

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 13, 2022

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Mr. President:

Long before Russia's invasion of Ukraine, America's farm families and consumers were struggling with fractured supply chains, skyrocketing input costs, and historic levels of inflation, each of which continue to contribute to increased food prices and diminished inventories. U.S. consumers are experiencing the largest price increase in nearly 40 years, with the U.S. Consumer Price Index (CPI) for food rising by 9.4 percent between April 2021 and April 2022. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service (ERS), the cost of eggs increased 22 percent, beef increased by over 14 percent, and dairy product increased over 9 percent.

The war between Russia and Ukraine, two of the world's biggest suppliers of wheat and sunflower oil, further disrupted the global food system resulting in increased energy prices, fertilizer cost spikes and shortages, and worsening food shortages in developing countries. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' (FAO) latest scenarios, the conflict could increase chronic undernourishment by an additional 18.8 million people by 2023.

Despite these impending crises, your Administration has neglected to take serious action to increase American production. In fact, you have proposed massive new tax liabilities for farmers, and your regulatory agenda would further limit American farmers' ability to meet global food demand. America's agriculture sector is vital to alleviating global food crises, and we urge your Administration to take the following actions to strengthen that role.

Address Farm Input Costs:

Historic inflation has significantly increased the cost of farm inputs, including energy and fertilizer costs. America's energy independence is compromised, which sends additional shockwaves through our already fractured supply chain. Producers are paying 115 percent more for diesel, while natural gas is up 202 percent. Fertilizer inputs such as nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium increased 125 percent in cost from January 2021 to January 2022 and an additional 17 percent in the first three months of 2022.

To provide immediate relief from the energy and fertilizer crisis plaguing the agriculture industry, we request you:

- Withdraw recently proposed revisions to the National Environment Policy Act (NEPA);
- Allow phosphogypsum (PG) to be safely recycled in road construction or other uses (which eliminates hundreds of millions of dollars in compliance costs);

- Update the definition of critical minerals to include potash and phosphate; and
- Take immediate steps to increase domestic energy exploration, production, and transport, including increasing oil and gas leasing on federal lands and waters, expediting pipeline permitting, and abandoning rulemakings designed to discourage investment in American energy.

Stop WOTUS Changes:

Recently proposed changes to the Waters of the United States (WOTUS) rules create enormous uncertainty for farmers, ranchers, and landowners. The underlying law is vague in defining what constitutes a federal waterway, noting only they are "navigable," which has historically resulted in egregious, nationwide land grabs by the government. In 2020, this was largely resolved with the Navigable Waters Protection Rule. However, your Administration thwarted that progress last year by reopening the WOTUS regulations, plunging producers into a regulatory red tape nightmare once again.

To address this uncertainty, we respectfully ask your Administration to:

- Reverse its position and allow the overall objective of the Clean Water Act to be realized: to restore and maintain the integrity of the nation's navigable waters.

Refocus EPA on Sound Science:

Exacerbating an already untenable position for American agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has recently made decisions impacting the ability of producers to access crop protection tools necessary to combat pests and disease and improve soil health. These decisions include, but are not limited to, EPA's decision to prohibit the use of chlorpyrifos on food crops grown in the U.S., recent biological evaluations (BEs) and proposed interim decisions (PIDs) for a variety of crop protection tools, and the reversal of longstanding policy relating to federal preemption. This Administration's decision to undermine its career scientists has created additional uncertainty for producers, leaving them without readily available alternatives for key planting decisions.

The politicization of crop protection tools was further heightened in a May 2022 Solicitor General's brief in the case of *Monsanto Company v. Edwin Harderman* regarding the doctrine of federal preemption. In the brief, which was submitted at the request of the Supreme Court, the Solicitor General surprisingly reversed course on the federal government's once consistent and scientifically-sound position regarding the labeling of pesticides. On May 23, 2022, fifty-four agricultural groups sent you a letter expressing their "grave concern" with the Solicitor General's brief and the "change in long-standing policy regarding the regulation and labeling of pesticide products relied upon by farmers and other users."

American farmers use glyphosate on roughly 40 percent of their acres, helping to enable higher productivity, greater yields, and improved soil quality. At this vital time when our producers are striving to feed a world threatened by food shortages and insecurity, this reversal of policy further undermines the ability of U.S. agriculture to meet global food needs.

To return EPA to its science-driven, risk-based, congressionally mandated review process for these and all other critical crop protection tools, we request the Administration:

- Rescind the EPA's August 2021 final rule revoking food tolerances for chlorpyrifos;
- Proceed with reviewing current uses under the ongoing registration review of this chemistry;
- Reassert EPA's clearly defined federal preemption of crop protection tools and immediately withdraw the Solicitor General's current brief before the Court.

End Onerous Climate Rules:

The war on agriculture has even expanded to other Federal agencies, most recently through the proposed Securities Exchange Commission (SEC) rule, "The Enhancement and Standardization of Climate-Related Disclosures for Investors," issued on March 21, 2022. This rule, through so-called scope 3 emissions, would require farmers, regardless of size, to track and report data to the companies with which they work. Many small farmers do not have the time or resources to comply with such onerous requirements. During a time when this Administration purports to support deconsolidation in the agricultural system, this rule would result in the exact opposite.

- To prevent increased costs and risks for producers and consumers, we request that your Administration withdraw this harmful rule.

In short, your Administration's federal regulatory barriers and policies are undermining America's ability to meet the food and fiber needs of the globe by creating uncertainty for U.S. farmers and ranchers. We cannot afford to continue without a comprehensive plan to reverse course on this destructive agenda and address this crisis. We request that you immediately meet with Congressional Members to develop a plan that restores domestic production and allows American farmers to lower food prices at home and provide critical humanitarian aid abroad.

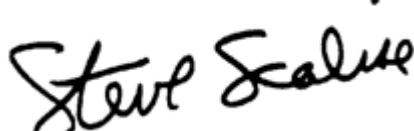
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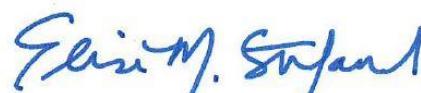
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Republican Leader



Glenn "GT" Thompson
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House Committee on Agriculture



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Blake D. Moore

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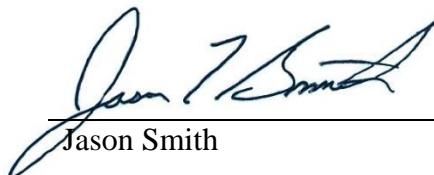
Guy Reschenthaler



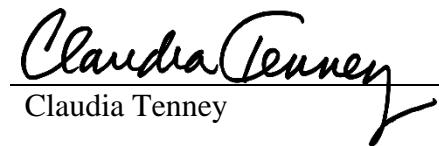
Mike Rogers



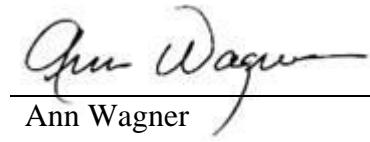
Pete Sessions



Jason Smith



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Dan Newhouse



Steven M. Palazzo



Bill Posey



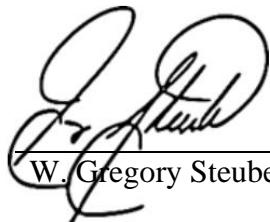
Cathy McMorris Rodgers



John W. Rose



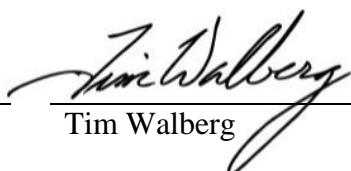
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