



Agricultural Leaders OF MICHIGAN

December 17, 2015

Honorable Members of the U.S. House of Representatives:

We are writing to urge your support of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, the omnibus spending bill currently pending before the House of Representatives.

Michigan agriculture is working hard to continue growing, creating jobs and boosting the rural economy – and approval of the omnibus bill will eliminate roadblocks to growth while providing certainty in the coming year.

Specifically, we are pleased to see a resolution in the bill that will resolve the Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) issue that has threatened to harm U.S. agriculture. The fix will repeal COOL and prevent Canada and Mexico from leveraging more than \$1 billion in retaliatory tariffs on U.S. agricultural products and other U.S. exports that were approved just a few days ago by the World Trade Organization. Without a resolution of COOL, Canada and Mexico will be free to retaliate against agriculture and other important sectors, dealing a significant blow to Michigan's economy.

The omnibus bill is a pro-agriculture bill for many other reasons. It boosts critical agricultural research to address challenges like avian influenza. It directs substantial resources to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and U.S. Department of Agriculture to ensure safe food for families. It provides funding to ensure the availability of the school lunch and school breakfast programs. It provides opportunity to expand renewable energy generation across the United States by extending the Production Tax Credit and Investment Tax Credit for wind and solar.

Most important, the bill will provide certainty for farmers, producers, agribusinesses and all industries by funding the Federal government, and ensuring that critical functions of government continue unhindered, into the New Year.

For all of these reasons, we urge your support of the Consolidated Appropriations Act when taken up by the House. A vote to pass this legislation is a vote to support Michigan agriculture.

Sincerely,

Dave Armstrong
CEO, GreenStone Farm Credit Services
(517) 318-4105

Ken Nobis
President, Michigan Milk Producers Association
(248) 474-6672

Mike Wenkel
Executive Director, Potato Growers of Michigan, Inc.
(517) 253-7370

Sam Hines
Executive Vice President, Michigan Pork Producers Association
(517) 853-3782

Jim Byrum
President, Michigan Agri-Business Association
(517) 336-0223

Jim Zook
Executive Director, Michigan Corn Growers Association
(517) 668-2676

Gail R. Frahm
Executive Director, Michigan Soybean Association
(989) 652-3294

Joe Cramer
Executive Director, Michigan Bean Commission
(989) 860-5423