



National Association of Conservation Districts

December 10, 2010

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

Dear Chairman Inouye and Ranking Member Cochran:

As you debate Fiscal Year 2011 federal funding, we urge you to support full funding for Farm Bill conservation programs.

The conservation programs in the 2008 Farm Bill provide critical assistance to farmers, ranchers and forest landowners to address local natural resource concerns. Applied conservation on the nation's farms, ranches and private forestlands provides clean water, healthy, productive soils and wildlife habitat, and other important public benefits that should not be lost.

The demand for technical and financial assistance provided through the Farm Bill far exceeds available funding. Cuts to these important programs will weaken our efforts to increase the adoption of conservation practices on the ground.

It is vital that 2008 Farm Bill conservation programs are fully funded to ensure the continuation and success of locally-led conservation efforts on private working lands. These programs help our nation's producers provide natural resource benefits in addition to food, fuel, feed and fiber for the world's growing population.

While we certainly understand and appreciate the need to remain fiscally conservative in the current budgetary climate, the health of our land, water and soil are too important to be put on the back-burner. We urge you to keep intact the funding for Farm Bill conservation title programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Steve Robinson'.

Steve Robinson
President, National Association of Conservation Districts