



National Association of Conservation Districts

November 6, 2007

Senator Tom Harkin
Chairman
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and
Forestry
328 A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Saxby Chambliss
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and
Forestry
328 A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Chambliss:

On behalf of the 3,000 conservation district across the country the National Association of Conservation Districts would like to thank you for your efforts in developing the Food and Energy Security Act of 2007. Your legislation includes a strong commitment to conservation on working farms, ranches and forest lands across the country. This bill continues all current conservation programs, provides additional funding and allows for the creation of a few new conservation programs.

Technical assistance and conservation planning are the backbone of conservation practice adoption and we are pleased that the Food and Energy Security Act recognizes these critical to find solutions to today's environmental challenges. We appreciate that you have taken a comprehensive approach in addressing the needs of farmers, ranchers and forest landowners in protecting our natural resources. The bill protects the locally led conservation delivery system that is vital in working with local landowners to garner input and recommendations regarding the local natural resource concerns.

NACD has long championed the concept of stewardship incentives and we believe that funding must be included in the Farm Bill for this type of program. We look forward to working with you to ensure that the Conservation Stewardship Program is implemented nation wide and is accessible to all types of producers. NACD believe that conservation program should be available regardless of the crop in production – row crops, fruits and vegetable, forest landowners, conventional and organic and that conservation program should work in a variety of areas.

We appreciate that your proposal does not include provisions to alter conservation program administration. We are happy to participate in future discussion on USDA reorganization and program efficiencies, but believe this should be done after thorough review of the delivery system, computer and other technical requirements and expected gains from any alterations.

Thank you for your work on the 2007 Farm Bill. We look forward to working with you on a final bill by the end of the year.

Sincerely,

Olin Sims
President

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