

April 27, 2009

Honorable Tom Harkin, Chairman
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
United States Senate
328-A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Saxby Chambliss, Ranking Member
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry
United States Senate
416 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Chambliss:

We are writing in support of the nomination of Krysta Harden as Assistant Secretary of Congressional Relations at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Ms. Harden has dedicated her professional career to agricultural policy, and she is well-qualified for this position. She understands the importance of coalition building and has a full understanding of how USDA can work hand-in-hand with Congress.

Ms. Harden grew up on a family farm in Georgia. She has first-hand knowledge of how policies that Congress and the Administration develop impact producers at a grassroots level.

Ms. Harden worked in the U.S. House of Representatives for twelve years, including serving as Staff Director of the House Agriculture Committee Subcommittee on Peanuts and Tobacco. She subsequently worked on renewable energy, transportation, research, conservation and nutrition policy for a number of producer-led agriculture organizations, including the American Soybean Association and the National Biodiesel Board.

For the last five years, Ms. Harden has been Chief Executive Officer of the National Association of Conservation Districts, working to promote adoption of conservation practices in local communities, by agricultural operations, and on forest lands. As head of a major national conservation organization, she demonstrated commitment to protection of natural resources while proving her leadership skills in managing and serving a broad-based membership.

Throughout her career, Ms. Harden has been recognized for her integrity and ability to work with diverse stakeholders. She will be an outstanding liaison between USDA and Congress. We urge you to approve the nomination of Krysta Harden as Assistant Secretary of Congressional Relations at USDA.

Sincerely,

Ag Processing Inc (AGP)
Agricultural Retailers Association
Amcot
American Association of Crop Insurers

American Farm Bureau Federation
American Farmland Trust
American Forest Foundation
American Mushroom Institute
American Peanut Shellers Association
American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers
American Soybean Association
American Sugar Alliance
Biobased Products Coalition
C & H Sugar Company, Inc.
Center for Agricultural Partnerships
CropLife America
Domino Foods, Inc.
Environmental Defense Fund
Florida Crystals Corporation
Food Marketing Institute
Georgia Association of Conservation District Supervisors
Georgia Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association
Hardwood Federation
Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar
National Association of Conservation Districts
National Association of Crop Insurance Agents
National Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils
National Association of State Conservation Agencies
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Barley Growers Association
National Biodiesel Board
National Cattlemen's Beef Association
National Chicken Council
National Conservation District Employees Association
National Corn Growers Association
National Cotton Council
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Farmers Organization
National Farmers Union
National Milk Producers Federation
National Oilseed Processors Association
National Potato Council
National Renderers Association
National Sunflower Association
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
National Wild Turkey Federation
National Wildlife Federation
Pollinator Partnership
Produce Marketing Association
Public Lands Council
Rain and Hail, LLC
Rio Grande Valley Sugar Growers, Inc.
Rural Community Insurance Services
Society of American Florists
Society of American Foresters

South East Dairy Farmers Association
Soyfoods Association of North America
Sweetener Users Association
The Florida Sugar Cane League
The Macon Edwards Company
United Egg Producers
United Egg Association
United Fresh Produce Association
US Apple Association
US Beet Sugar Association
US Canola Association
US Rice Producers Association
United States Sugar Corporation
USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council
USA Rice Federation
Western Peanut Growers Association
Wildlife Mississippi