

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 12, 2007

The President  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As strong supporters of U.S. farmers and ranchers, we write to express our deep concern about the direction of the World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations on agriculture. Our support for an agreement depends on achieving a balanced, ambitious outcome in which new market access and the elimination of export subsidies provide net gains for U.S. agriculture in relation to reductions in trade-distorting domestic support.

In October 2005, the United States put forward a proposal that would require substantial cuts in U.S. farm programs. This proposal was entirely conditioned on our trading partners making similarly ambitious concessions on market access. But our trading partners have refused to offer significant tariff reductions, and they insist on exceptions for sensitive and special products that will render meaningless the modest tariff reduction formulas they have proposed. In fact, many of them continue to call for greater cuts in U.S. farm programs, even as they reject any real improvements in market access.

Last summer, the U.S. rightly rejected this unbalanced approach. However, some recent press reports suggest that the U.S. may now consider even greater cuts in our farm programs without achieving the market access ambition included in the October 2005 U.S. proposal.

We hope these press reports are inaccurate. As 57 Senators wrote you last June, an unbalanced proposal that asks U.S. agriculture and rural communities to give more while getting less in market access is unacceptable. We cannot support a deal that directly reduces net farm income through steep cuts in farm programs in return for minimal market access gains whose effect on farm gate receipts is speculative at best.

The consensus among economists is that reducing agriculture market access barriers generates far greater economic gains than cutting domestic support. As a result, it is imperative that our trading partners dismantle barriers to imports if the Doha Round is to achieve a successful conclusion that will benefit not only U.S. agriculture but also the global economy and people around the world.

As discussions on the Doha Round resume, we urge you to direct your negotiators not to make further concessions on domestic support but instead to insist that our trading partners put

forward ambitious market access proposals that will produce sufficient market opening to ensure that any final deal will generate increased net income for America's farmers and ranchers.

Sincerely,

Kent Conrad

Max Baucus

Blanche R. Lincoln

Dick Durbin

Patty Murray

Rehmi Stebenew

Mary Landrieu

John

Savby Chambliss

Paul Roberts

Noam Coleman

Mike Crayon

Pat Roberts

Tim Witter

Ken Salazar

Bill

Bob Lacey, Jr.

E. Benjamin Feltman

Jim Tuck

Mark Poyar

Chuck Schum

Ron Wyden

Sam Bernbach

Olympia Snowe

John

Elizabeth Dole

John Cornyn

Jim Bunning

Jeff Bond

John

Byron G. Dorgan

Maria C. Sanchez

Erin O'Boyle

Daniel K. Akaka

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Almy

Jon Kyl

Bill Nelson

Allen Deek

Pat Harkin

Kay Bailey Hutchison

Mike Enzi

Chuck Hagel

Chris G. Hatch

George V. Kenovich

Chris Smith

Jim F. Kerry

Chris Dodd

Helmut Kohl

Barbara Byer

Dianne Feinstein

Mike Johanns

Amy Klobuchar

Carl Levin

Joe Webb

John McCain

Jay Rockefeller

Patrick Leahy

cc: The Honorable Mike Johanns  
The Honorable Susan Schwab