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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6175

RICHARD M. RUSSELL, MAJORITY STAFF DIRECTOR
MARY FRANCES REPKO, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

April 16, 2018

The Honorable Pat Roberts
Chairman
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition,
& Forestry

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition,
& Forestry

Dear Chairman Roberts and Ranking Member Stabenow:

We write to express our concerns regarding the possibility that the upcoming reauthorization of the Farm Bill may deviate from the bill's traditional focus on consensus-based, bipartisan priorities and, instead, become a vehicle to undermine landmark environmental laws. As you know, many of us have voted for past Farm Bills and enthusiastically supported their swift progression through the legislative process and into enactment. We look forward to working with you to continue this tradition as you draft the 2018 Farm Bill.

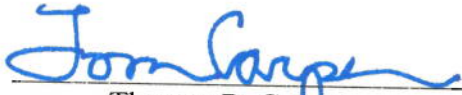
We do not believe the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry should include polarizing and controversial environmental policy riders, particularly those which have implications for statutes and matters that fall under the jurisdiction of the Committee on Environment and Public Works (EPW). Doing so will unduly harm efficient and expeditious consideration and approval of the Farm Bill by the full Senate.

Specifically, our constituents have reached out to us with worries that the Farm Bill will contain provisions that have significant implications for the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the Clean Water Act (CWA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), four statutes under the jurisdiction of the EPW Committee. The EPW Committee has already had several hearings this Congress on bills that address the application or implementation of environmental laws to agriculture and forestry. We believe that solutions to issues involving these statutes should be developed and considered in the EPW Committee. With all due respect, we do not believe they should be resolved in the Farm Bill.

Having said that, we stand ready to work with you and with other Members of the Senate to help craft, consider and pass an on-time reauthorization of the Farm Bill. However, we fear the addition of controversial environmental policy riders will bog down the bill with protracted floor debate over jurisdictional matters and poison pill amendments. For these reasons, we ask that you not include such provisions in the 2018 Farm Bill.

With best personal regards, we are

Sincerely yours,



Thomas R. Carper
Ranking Member



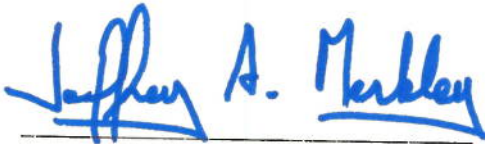
Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



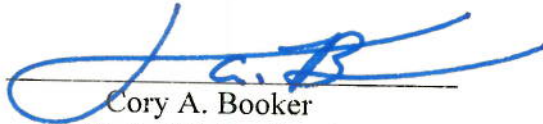
Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



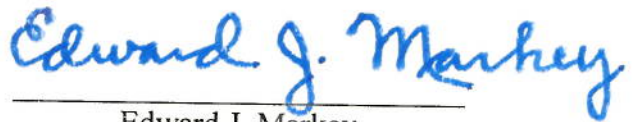
Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



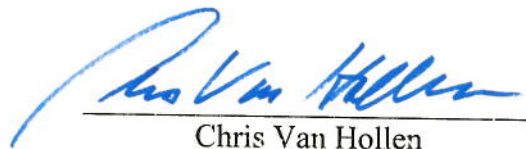
Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator