August 23, 2018

The Honorable Pat Roberts  
Chairman  
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry  
U.S. Senate  
328A Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-6000

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry  
U.S. Senate  
328A Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-6000

Dear Farm Bill Conferee:

We are Senators who voted in favor of the Senate Farm Bill, which passed our chamber in a bipartisan vote of 86-11. As you begin your conference committee discussions to reconcile the Senate Farm Bill with the House-passed Farm Bill, we write to oppose environmental riders.

Avoiding controversial provisions that erode landmark environmental laws could pave the way to an on-time and widely supported reauthorization of the Farm Bill. Including environmental riders in the conference committee’s deliberations will undoubtedly yield a partisan and protracted process that will prolong uncertainty for stakeholders and may ultimately produce a conference report that lacks the requisite votes for passage.

The Senate Farm Bill is the product of thoughtful, bipartisan negotiations, which resulted in a historic vote in favor of the bill’s passage. We hope the President can sign a Farm Bill conference report into law before the current legislation expires on October 1. Unfortunately, the House Farm Bill contains a number of damaging anti-environment provisions that now make meeting the upcoming reauthorization deadline exceedingly difficult. These harmful riders, spread throughout the Forestry, Horticulture, and Miscellaneous titles of the House bill, subjected the legislation to unnecessary opposition on the House floor and now complicates the bipartisan cooperation needed to pass a final conference report.

Again, we write to express our strong opposition to gutting bedrock U.S. environmental and public health protections with provisions that threaten our air, water, lands, and wildlife. We urge you to bring forward a reconciled 2018 Farm Bill that is free of ideological distractions.

Sincerely,

Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator

Thomas R. Carper  
United States Senator
Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator

Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator

Michael F. Bennet  
United States Senator

Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator

Christopher A. Coons  
United States Senator

Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator

Brian Schatz  
United States Senator

Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator

Christopher S. Murphy  
United States Senator

Mazie K. Hirono  
United States Senator

Martin Heinrich  
United States Senator

Tim Kaine  
United States Senator

Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator

Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator
Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator

Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator

Margaret Wood Hassan  
United States Senator

Catherine Cortez Masto  
United States Senator

Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator

Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator

Kamala D. Harris  
United States Senator

Tina Smith  
United States Senator
cc: The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Senate Majority Leader
The Honorable John Boozman, Senate Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable John Hoeven, Senate Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Joni K. Ernst, Senate Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy, Senate Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Sherrod Brown, Senate Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Heidi Heitkamp, Senate Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable K. Michael Conaway. Chairman, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Glenn Thompson, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Bob Goodlatte, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Frank D. Lucas, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Bill Rogers, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Austin Scott, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Rick Crawford, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Vicky Hartzler, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Rodney Davis, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Ted Yoho, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable David Rouzer, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Roger Marshall, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Jodey Arrington, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Collin C. Peterson, Ranking Member, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable David Scott, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Jim Costa, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Tim Walz, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Marcia Fudge, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Jim McGovern, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Filemon Vela, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Michelle Lujan Grisham, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Ann Kuster, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Tom O’Halleran, House Agriculture Committee Conferee
The Honorable Virginia Foxx, Chair, House Education and Workforce Committee Conferee
The Honorable Rick W. Allen, House Education and Workforce Committee Conferee
The Honorable Alma Adams, House Education and Workforce Committee Conferee
The Honorable John Shimkus, House Energy and Commerce Committee Conferee
The Honorable Kevin Cramer, House Energy and Commerce Committee Conferee
The Honorable Paul Tonko, House Energy and Commerce Committee Conferee
The Honorable Jeb Hensarling, Chairman, House Financial Services Committee Conferee
The Honorable Sean P. Duffy, House Financial Services Committee Conferee
The Honorable Maxine Waters, Ranking Member, House Financial Services Committee Conferee
The Honorable Ed Royce, Chairman, House Foreign Affairs Committee Conferee
The Honorable Steve Chabot, House Foreign Affairs Committee Conferee
The Honorable Eliot Engel, Ranking Member, House Foreign Affairs Committee Conferee
The Honorable Mark Walker, House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Conferee
The Honorable James Comer, House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Conferee
The Honorable Stacey E. Plaskett, House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Conferee
The Honorable Rob Bishop, Chairman, House Natural Resources Committee Conferee
The Honorable Bruce Westerman, House Natural Resources Committee Conferee
The Honorable Raúl Grijalva, Ranking Member, House Natural Resources Committee Conferee
The Honorable Ralph Lee Abraham, House Science, Space, and Technology Committee Conferee
The Honorable Neal P. Dunn, House Science, Space, and Technology Committee Conferee
The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson, House Science, Space and Technology Committee Conferee
The Honorable Jeff Denham, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Conferee
The Honorable Bob Gibbs, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Conferee
The Honorable Cheri Bustos, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Conferee