



November 27, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
U.S. Capitol Building, Room S-230  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker of the House  
United States House of Representatives  
U.S. Capitol Building, Room 232  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
U.S. Capitol Building, Room S-224  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
U.S. Capitol Building, Room 204  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Leader McConnell, Speaker Ryan, Leader Schumer and Leader Pelosi:

On behalf of our states' governors, legislators and departments of agriculture, we strongly urge Congress to prioritize and pass a bipartisan Farm Bill before the end of the year.

Across the country, agriculture and the industries it supports are vital to the health of state economies, contributing about \$1 trillion to the GDP and supporting more than 21 million jobs across every state. In addition to providing certainty to America's farmers and ranchers, the Farm Bill is integral to national security and the economic vitality of communities both large and small.

Without congressional action, farmers and ranchers will operate in an environment of uncertainty as they make business decisions for the coming year. Failure to act would result in cascading negative impacts at a time when production costs often exceed commodity prices. For example, without action from this Congress, the price of dairy is expected to drastically raise the retail cost of milk. The Farm Bill also authorizes the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which provides a key benefit to more than 40 million low-income individuals and families in our states. Having a stable and authorized SNAP program is important to those administering benefits across the country.

An extension of the 2014 Farm Bill would be an imperfect solution. Thirty-nine programs are already without baseline funding as of September 30, 2018. While these programs account for only 0.6 percent

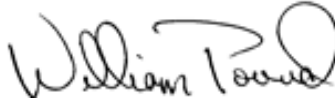
of projected spending in a 2018 Farm Bill, they are vitally important to the constituencies they serve and would not be continued with an extension of the 2014 Farm Bill.

As you well know, our agricultural economy fuels and feeds the world, while keeping us nourished and prosperous at home. As the 115th Congress finishes its work over the next month and a half, we look forward to working with you to finish this critical legislation.

Sincerely,



**Scott D. Pattison**  
Executive Director & CEO  
National Governors Association



**William T. Pound**  
Executive Director  
National Conference of  
State Legislatures



**Barbara P. Glenn, Ph.D.**  
*Chief Executive Officer*  
National Association of State  
Departments of Agriculture

cc: Chairman Roberts, Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry  
Ranking Member Stabenow, Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry  
Chairman Conaway, House Committee on Agriculture  
Ranking Member Peterson, House Committee on Agriculture