

July 21, 2021

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

The Honorable John Boozman
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition, and Forestry
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Stabenow and Ranking Member Boozman:

We write to express our support for the nomination of Robert Bonnie to serve as the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation. The Under Secretary position is critical in overseeing the administration of a wide variety of USDA farm and conservation programs that directly serve farmers, ranchers, foresters, and landowners. Bonnie's prior experiences show he is dedicated to serving U.S. agricultural producers, and improving the lands Americans depend on for food, fiber, water, recreation, and environmental enhancement. These experiences and his deep background knowledge make Bonnie uniquely qualified to serve as the USDA's next Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation.

Robert Bonnie's understanding of agriculture and working lands can be traced back to his childhood when he was raised on his parents' horse farm near Louisville and spent time visiting Groton Plantation, which is where his passion for forestry and nature was developed. Bonnie went on to receive a master's degree in forestry from Duke University and later became a licensed forester. These experiences benefited Bonnie when he was nominated and later served as Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment at USDA. During his time in this position, Bonnie led the administration of the Natural Resources Conservation Service as well as the Forest Service. Bonnie was widely recognized as a hardworking, solutions-oriented public servant by public and private stakeholders, reflected by forest industry organizations, farm, conservation and environmental groups joining together to support his nomination.

Robert Bonnie is also uniquely qualified to lead the Farm Production and Conservation mission area due to his expertise in working lands approaches to conservation and voluntary incentive-based climate and conservation practices for farmers, ranchers, foresters, and landowners. Bonnie is a proven leader on working lands agriculture issues and his approach has been tested. Bonnie is someone who listens intently, gathers facts to understand various stakeholder positions, and weighs all options as he makes decisions. He is thoughtful and pragmatic, and someone who will hit the ground running on day one.

We strongly urge the Committee to advance Robert Bonnie's nomination in a timely manner, so he can continue the work of serving agricultural producers, foresters, and landowners. We

believe Bonnie's depth and breadth of experience and knowledge in working lands conservation and production will make him an excellent Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation.

Regards,

Agricultural Retailers Association
American Association of Crop Insurers
American Biogas Council
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Farmland Trust
American Feed Industry Association
AmericanHort
American Seed Trade Association
American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers
American Soybean Association
American Sugar Alliance
Association of Equipment Manufacturers
Biotechnology Innovation Organization
Corn Refiners Association
Cotton Warehouse Association of America
Crop Insurance and Reinsurance Bureau
Crop Insurance Professionals Association
CropLife America
Ducks Unlimited
Environmental Defense Fund
Farm Credit Council
The Fertilizer Institute
FMI – The Food Industry Association
International Dairy Foods Association
National Alliance of Forest Owners
National Association of Conservation Districts
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
National Association of State Foresters
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Conservation District Employees Association
National Cotton Council
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Farmers Union
National Grain and Feed Association
National Milk Producers Federation
National Oilseed Producers Association
National Pork Producers Council
National Potato Council
National Sorghum Producers
National Turkey Federation

National Wild Turkey Federation
National Wildlife Federation
Northwest Horticultural Council
Panhandle Peanut Growers Association
Pollinator Partnership
Produce Marketing Association
Rural & Agriculture Council of America
Society of American Florists
Southwest Council of Agribusiness
United Egg Producers
United Fresh Produce Association
U.S. Apple Association
United States Cattlemen's Association
USA Rice Federation
Western Growers Association
Western Landowners Alliance
Western Peanut Growers Association