



LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS

December 11, 2007

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Amendments to H.R. 2419, the 2007 Farm Bill

Dear Senator:

The League of Conservation Voters (LCV) is the independent political voice for the environment. Each year, LCV publishes the *National Environmental Scorecard*, which details the voting records of members of Congress on environmental legislation. The *Scorecard* is distributed to LCV members, concerned voters nationwide, and the press.

The five-year reauthorization of the Farm Bill is one of the largest pieces of conservation legislation considered by the Congress, impacting global warming, air and water quality, and critical habitat for birds and wildlife. As such, **LCV urges you to SUPPORT the following amendments to the 2007 Farm Bill (H.R. 2419):**

- **Dorgan-Grassley amendment:** Caps farm commodity payments at \$250,000 a year, savings from which will help fund the Grassland Reserve Program and the Farmland Protection Program as well as aid several food, nutrition, and rural development programs.
- **Klobuchar amendment:** Ensures that commodity program payments go to working farmers and ranchers rather than the wealthy by limiting payments to those with an Adjusted Gross Income of less than \$750,000—even less if that income is not from farming. The savings from this amendment go to conservation programs and renewable energy development.
- **Brown-Durbin amendment:** Reduces the administrative costs and company subsidies that currently consume more than 40 cents of every dollar taxpayers put into crop insurance without increasing the cost of crop insurance for farmers. Savings will be invested in conservation and nutrition programs.
- **Lugar-Lautenberg amendment:** Replaces current commodity programs, which disproportionately benefit the biggest producers of a handful of crops, with an insurance-based farmer safety net that helps all farmers weather the ups and downs of agriculture and is provided at no cost to the farmer. Savings will be directed to conservation, nutrition and other programs and will also help reduce the federal budget deficit.
- **Wyden-Harkin amendment:** Improves the Biomass Crop Transition Program to help farmers begin growing next generation biomass energy crops without creating incentives to destroy native habitats and wildlife or allowing planting of invasive species.

Further, LCV urges you to OPPOSE the following amendments:

- **Domenici-Thune amendment:** Attempts to add a Renewable Fuels Standard to the farm bill. The amendment lacks essential safeguards to keep its five-fold ramp-up in biofuels production from increasing greenhouse gas emissions, harming human health, degrading water quality, and incentivizing the loss of critical wildlife habitat, natural forests and grasslands. Moreover, the appropriate place to address an RFS is in the context of the Energy Bill. When the Senate considers the final Energy Bill it is important that any RFS provision include adequate environmental safeguards to protect land and air quality.
- **Bond amendment:** Creates new obstacles to needed regulatory protections for consumers, workers, the environment and public health, while giving industry special access to rule-making processes and facilitating legal challenges.

LCV also urges you to OPPOSE any attempt that would impose severe federal sanction on any state or unit of local government that exercises its constitutional power of eminent domain for parks, recreation open space, conservation preservation, or similar purposes, if these lands are currently in agriculture use.

The 2007 Farm Bill will have tremendous impacts on our air, land and water, and could have profound impacts on global warming as well. We urge you to vote YES on the Dorgan-Grassley, Klobuchar, Brown-Durbin, Lugar-Lautenberg, and Wyden-Harkin amendments and to oppose the Domenici-Thune amendment as well any other attempt to include an RFS in the Farm Bill or change existing rules to eminent domain. LCV has scored Farm Bill related votes in the past, and will be considering including votes on this legislation in the 2007 *Scorecard*. If you need more information, please contact Tiernan Sittenfeld or Tim Greeff in my office at (202) 785-8683.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gene Karpinski".

Gene Karpinski
President