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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION AND FORESTRY

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6000

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April 13, 2011

The Honorable Deborah Stabenow  
Chairwoman  
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry  
328A Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Stabenow:

We write to address the continued regulatory overreach by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that is a growing concern of farmers, ranchers, foresters and agribusinesses throughout the nation. One of the top issues in need of immediate action is the requirement that a significant number of pesticide applications will soon need a permit under the Clean Water Act (CWA). This permit is in addition to compliance requirements already mandated under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA).

Last week, we introduced S. 718. This legislation eliminates this costly, duplicative and ineffective administrative burden. At the same time, the House of Representatives passed legislation clarifying that no additional permitting is needed. H.R. 872, which overwhelmingly passed the House with a strong, bipartisan vote of 292 to 130, amends both FIFRA and the CWA and has been referred to the Senate Agriculture Committee. Given the bipartisan support for H.R. 872, we request the Senate Agriculture Committee take immediate action on this critical legislation. Specifically, we ask that the Committee approve H.R. 872 as soon as possible when the Senate returns from the Easter recess. We also request that you schedule an oversight hearing for the wide range of environmental regulatory actions impacting agriculture.

While we have agreed to sit down with you and EPA to hold working group discussions on many environmental issues impacting agriculture, this issue requires immediate legislative action. We understand the federal court has extended the deadline for compliance with this additional requirement through October 2011. However, agriculture producers, forestry interests, public health officials, states, municipalities, and other impacted stakeholders have told us they are in imminent need of certainty for what may be required of them in the near future. State and local officials have made clear that this is not merely a regulatory burden but could endanger public health as we enter mosquito season.

Thank you for your consideration of our request on this important legislation. We stand ready to continue in the bipartisan manner of the House to protect public health and reduce duplicative regulations.

Sincerely,

Pat Roberts

Dick Lugar

Paul Cochran

Mitch McConnell

Sayby Chaulkin

Mike Johanns

John Boozman

Chuck Grassley

John Thune

John Hoeven