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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1502

July 18, 2012

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The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Lucas
Chairman
House Agriculture Committee
1301 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Chairman Lucas,

I write to bring to your attention to the expiration of two critical USDA disaster programs and respectfully urge you to ensure disaster programs are considered when the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act of 2012 (FARRM Act) is brought to the floor of the House. The Midwest, and throughout the South, is currently experiencing worsening drought and recently experienced a long period of abnormally high temperatures leading to numerous livestock deaths, and the USDA lowering their corn outlook to 40% in good or excellent condition, down from 69% last year.

Traveling extensively throughout Eastern Iowa, I have met with numerous farmers and have heard firsthand of the worsening conditions. Corn farmers are concerned about lowered crop yields, turkey producers have lost thousands of birds, and livestock producers have started feeding hay to cattle already and some are calling for CRP land to be released for grazing because of dried up grazing fields.

Unfortunately, two disaster relief programs authorized in the last farm bill have expired. Specifically, the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) program will no longer cover disaster losses after September 30, 2011 and the Livestock Indemnity Program will no longer cover livestock losses after October 1, 2011, leaving a large gap in critical assistance for farmers experiencing extraordinary losses that insurance won't cover. I appreciate the extension of the livestock program in the FAARM Act and that it would apply to 2012 losses of livestock and urge inclusion in the final legislation. The National Weather Service Drought Outlook for July-September states that drought is likely to persist or intensify across the Midwest with the U.S. Drought Monitor for Iowa already showing Eastern Iowa and much of the Midwest in moderate to severe drought conditions.

I am concerned disaster assistance for this crop year was overlooked during consideration of the FARRM Act when it was passed by the House Agriculture Committee on July 12, 2012. Given the worsening conditions and losses that have occurred in the Midwest and throughout the South, I again respectfully urge you to consider disaster programs when the FARRM Act is brought to the floor of the House. Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,



Dave Loeb sack
Iowa's Second District