



June 17, 2021

**Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader Schumer, Leader McCarthy, and Leader McConnell:**

We the undersigned individuals are writing to urge you to include family farmers, ranchers, and rural communities as a part of the climate solutions and to acknowledge that a regenerative diverse food system is critical infrastructure with serious investment needs. **We believe the Agriculture Resilience Act (ARA; H.R. 2803/S. 1337) and the Climate Stewardship Act (CSA; H.R. 2534/S. 1072) provide a strategic model for making these critical investments.**

**We are calling for investments of at least \$200 billion over the next 10 years**, which will begin to repair the damage from decades of failed policy, disenfranchisement, and the monopolistic abuses committed by agrifood corporations. Such an investment in new and existing USDA programs — including land conservation programs, local food system programs, on-farm renewable energy incentives, and other job-creating initiatives — will transform our agriculture system, benefit American consumers, and offer both immediate and long-term relief to farmers struggling to navigate a brittle, consolidated food system in the face of extreme weather events.

More broadly, we urge Congress to make serious investment in farmers, ranchers, and rural communities as part of any infrastructure, climate, or jobs-creating legislation. The below recommended policy provisions prove a commitment to protecting our natural resources, creating jobs, mitigating climate change, and empowering this nation's farmers, ranchers, and rural communities.

- Plant billions of trees on a combination of federal, state, local, tribal, and non-governmental lands.
- Support voluntary climate stewardship practices on over 100 million acres of farmland, reducing or offsetting agricultural emissions by one-third by 2025, by:
- Providing tens of billions of dollars of supplemental funding for USDA working lands conservation programs, with new funding dedicated to stewardship practices such as rotational grazing, compost application, and planting tens of millions of new acres of cover crops.



- Enrolling 40 million acres of environmentally sensitive land in the Conservation Reserve Program to remove that land from production and instead plant species that will improve environmental health and carbon sequestration.
- More than doubling funding for agricultural research programs, including more funding for soil health demonstration trials.
- Tripling USDA funding to provide farmers with expert technical assistance on climate stewardship practices.
- Providing grant funding to tens of thousands of farmers, ranchers and rural businesses for renewable energy production, such as solar panels and wind turbines, and energy efficiency improvements.
- Invest in local and regional food systems to increase resilience in rural and urban communities.
- Establish a Civilian Climate Corps to provide people with skills and work experience, prioritizing people from marginalized communities.
- These programs and policies are proven to create jobs, reduce emissions, sequester carbon, and make the food system both more resilient and equitable.

**As infrastructure, climate, or jobs-creating legislation develops, we urge you to support the funding measures necessary to rebuild resilience, equity, and opportunity into the U.S. food and agriculture system.**