

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

November 30, 2017

The Honorable Mike Conaway  
Chairman  
Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Conaway:

As members who represent Wisconsin's vast dairy industry, we thank you for your early start to the 2018 Farm Bill process and we are grateful for your efforts to complete the bill on time. We appreciate your steadfast advocacy for rural America and your commitment to reforming dairy policy in the new Farm Bill.

As you know, Wisconsin is the second largest milk-producing state and is home to more dairy farms than any other in the nation. Wisconsin's roughly 9,500 family-owned dairy farms, totaling well over 1 million cows, produce roughly 14 percent of the U.S. milk supply each year. These farmers are the lifeblood of our communities and the fresh milk they produce supports many jobs in the agricultural and food manufacturing sectors of our state.

The dairy industry in Wisconsin and nationwide has faced significant struggles in recent years. Our current trade challenges with Canada are particularly acute in 'America's Dairyland', a major manufacturer of ultrafiltered milk, and our producers continue to struggle with labor costs and challenges. Moreover, milk prices deteriorated significantly last year, causing dairy farmers added pain during an already challenging climate.

With this in mind, a top priority for us in the Farm Bill is reforming the Margin Protection Program for Dairy (MPP-Dairy). While the program is fairly new, it has not performed to the expectations of our dairy farmers. In 2015 and 2016, the first two years of the program, dairy producers paid millions of dollars into the program but received very little return on this investment, even though last year was a very difficult year for our dairy farmers by all accounts.

Therefore, we look forward to working with you to improve MPP-Dairy to make it more responsive to farmers. We understand that the program's current feed cost formula does not fully reflect producer costs, so we are interested in improving the program to better reflect the margins producers face to provide them a viable safety net in the difficult years. We are also urging the U.S. Department of Agriculture to classify milk as a commodity under the federal crop insurance program, to provide producers with additional risk management options.

We recognize that there will be budgetary limitations in the Farm Bill process and we stand ready to work with you to craft a Farm Bill that supports all of rural America. We appreciate your consideration and we are eager to work with you.

Sincerely,



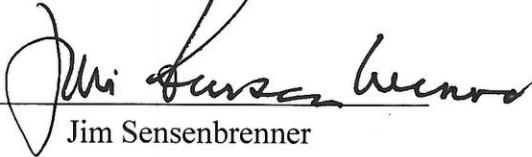
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Mike Gallagher  
Member of Congress



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Sean Duffy  
Member of Congress



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Jim Sensenbrenner  
Member of Congress