

April 3, 2003

The Honorable Don Nickles, Chairman  
Budget Committee  
United States Senate  
621 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jim Nussle, Chairman  
Budget Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
309 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Nickles and Chairman Nussle:

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (FSRIA) was enacted less than one year ago following two years of exhaustive debate in the House and Senate. It is not even fully implemented. The new farm law represents a delicate balance by effectively addressing the stability of our agricultural production base, protecting our important natural resources and enhancing nutrition and food assistance programs for our citizens. The careful allocation of resources evidenced by the new law should not be upset so soon after its enactment.

The mandatory programs administered by the Department of Agriculture (i.e., commodity, conservation, crop insurance, nutrition, forestry and other valuable programs) are of enormous importance to farmers, ranchers, rural businesses, low-income Americans and all our nation's children. Therefore, we respectfully urge the conferees to avoid reconciliation instructions to any committees other than the Finance and Ways and Means committees.

In addition, we urge the conferees to adequately fund discretionary spending, and ask that you adopt a discretionary spending total at the level of the Senate resolution, which is similar to the President's budget.

The undersigned organizations respectfully urge the conference committee not to include any reconciliation instructions in the final budget resolution to the Senate Committee on Agriculture, the House Committee on Agriculture, or the House Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Thank you for consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

National Farmers Union  
National Cotton Council  
Advocates for Better Children's Diets  
Afterschool Alliance  
American Association of Crop Insurers  
American Association of School Administrators  
American Commodity Distribution Association  
American Corn Growers Association  
American Dietetic Association  
American Farm Bureau Federation  
American Farmland Trust  
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees  
American Federation of Teachers  
American Friends Service Committee  
American School Food Service Association  
American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers  
American Soybean Association  
American Sugar Alliance

Americans for Democratic Action  
America's Second Harvest  
Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs  
Bread for the World  
Center on Hunger & Poverty, Brandeis University  
Child Nutrition Forum  
Children's Defense Fund  
Children's Foundation  
Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism  
Community Alliance with Family Farmers  
Congressional Hunger Center  
Crop Insurance Research Bureau  
Defenders of Wildlife  
Evangelical Church in America  
Farm Credit Council  
Food Research and Action Center  
Migrant Legal Action Program  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
National Association for the Education of Young Children  
National Association of Child Advocates  
National Association of Conservation Districts  
National Association of Farmer-Elected Committees  
National Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils  
National Association of State Conservation Agencies  
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture  
National Association Wheat Growers  
National Audubon Society  
National Barley Growers Association  
National Center on Poverty Law  
National Coalition for the Homeless  
National Corn Growers Association  
National Education Association  
National Grain Sorghum Producers  
National Grange  
National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty  
National Milk Producers Federation  
National Recreation and Park Association  
National School-Age Care Alliance  
National Sunflower Association  
National WIC Association  
National Wild Turkey Federation  
RESULTS  
Share Our Strength  
South East Dairy Farmers Association  
Southern Peanut Farmers Federation  
Soybean Producers of America  
U.S. Canola Association  
United Egg Producers  
United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association  
US Rice Producers Association  
USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council  
USA Rice Federation  
Western United Dairymen  
World Hunger Year

