

MN Farmers to Rep. Peterson:

Protect Working Lands Conservation in the Farm Bill



The Honorable Collin Peterson
2204 Rayburn Office Building | United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Peterson,

We as farmers and ranchers across Minnesota believe that our federal farm policy should support our work to build soil health and conservation practices on our farms, especially as we are faced with a challenging farm economy. You are a national leader on the Farm Bill and we look to you to achieve a better Farm Bill that works for farmers and the land.

Both the House and Senate have passed versions of the Farm Bill that must now be reconciled. As an expected member of the conference committee, we ask that you do the two following things:

1. Support protecting the Conservation Stewardship Program as a stand-alone program with improvements, and work to maintain its current annual enrollment of 10 million new acres a year.

Minnesota farmers are leaders in the nation in enrolled acres in the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). The combined efforts of more than 4,300 farmers and ranchers in our state currently enrolled in CSP—totaling over 3.3 million acres and representing over 13% of Minnesota’s farmland—are generating positive outcomes for Minnesota’s soil, water and wildlife habitat. These outcomes benefit every Minnesotan. This provision is in the Senate bill.

2. Work to fix the federal crop insurance program by allowing farmers to use sound and voluntary “Good Farming Practices” like cover cropping on their farms without risk of losing their crop insurance coverage.

Incorporating cover crops into their operations is a practice more and more farmers are utilizing that has a multitude of benefits when it comes to soil health, nutrient and water retention, and long-term productivity. Federal crop insurance is also an important risk management tool for farmers, but crop insurance in its current form can deter the practice of cover cropping because of how it will impact their insurance policy. Crop insurance should encourage all conservation farming practices that mitigate risk, not act as barrier. This provision is in the Senate version of the bill.

Your leadership on the Farm Bill in past years has delivered results that have benefited family farmers and the land. Strong conservation policy in the 2018 Farm Bill is critical to providing farmers and ranchers with the tools and support needed to protect the land and water necessary for their livelihoods. It is also key to a good quality of life for all Minnesotans. We ask you to work in conference committee to support and advance strong conservation policy in the 2018 Farm Bill.

Sincerely, The 165 undersigned farmers & ranchers of Minnesota

landstewardshipproject.org

Cindy & Terry Hamilton, Adams
Steve Pearson, Atkin
Eric Kriedemacher, Altura
Michelle Torginson, Ashby
Denise Zabolnik, Ashby
Tim Stensland, Badger
Bryan Simon, Barrett
Alan Kaiser, Belgrade
Heidi Morlock, Belle Prairie
Paul Kivle, Bemidji
Matt Allford, Blue Earth
Jim Erdahl, Blue Earth
Dennis Binek, Bowls
Troy Thompson, Brewster
Mike Rooney, Brocton
Ted May, Brownville
David Rach, Brownville
Bonnie Haugen, Canton
Charles Kohnmeyer, Chatfield
Annette Sirokoud, Chatfield
Megan Falvey, Clarkfield
Glenn Gehring, Clarkfield
Dennis Compton, Cassel
Bruce West, Dilworth
Peter Little, Dnidas
Elizabeth Olson, Dodge Center
Brad Giese, Donnelly

Sue & Charles Henry, Dover
Clinton Farlee, Dupree
Maurice Schimek, Easton
Bill Schrader, Easton
Larry Schmeebarger, Elbow Lake
Roberta Muellerhelle, Elyson
Scott Marpe, Emmons
Darvin Rocholl, Erhard
Bill Hein, Faribault
Nick Danielson, Farwell
John Butenhoff, Ferguson Falls
Hannah Bernhard, Finlayson
Jason Miskil, Finlayson
Eric Samerud, Foley
Ted Winter, Fulda
Charles Schmidt, Garden City
Kathryn Oldenburg, Garfield
Danel Misset, Gaylord
Mark Berle, Gibbon
Loretta & Martin Jues, Gibbon
Kurt Schulz, Glencoe
Bill Gorman, Goodhue
Duane Hoefl, Grand Meadow
Dwain Schaffer, Hastings
Evan Schelling, Hayfield
Kally Goschke Shelley, Henderson
Sally Reintz, Henderson

Scott Vaseky, Hendricks
Harold Freyholtz, Hewitt
Diane Crane, Houston
Michael Gilles, Houston
Laura Frerichs, Hutchinson
Irene Genelin, Hutchinson
Irene Baker, Isanti
Dennis Kowalik, Isanti
Matthew Tertis, Kellogg
Melissa Driscoll, Kenyon
James Van Der Pol, Kerkrhoven
Charles Skemp, La Crescent
Chris Hitzeman, Lake Andes
Pan Deutz, Lake Benton
Steven Schwen, Lake City
Shawn Simonson, Lake Crystal
Jerry & Nancy Ackermann, Lakefield
Ryan Baladen, Lambertson
Jane Peck, Lanesboro
Timothy Nuessmeier, Le Sueur
Jennifer Rupperecht, Lewiston
Linda Altmot, Litchfield
Joan & Nick Olson, Litchfield
Bruce Marquette, Little Falls
Doug Ploof, Little Falls
Carol Schmidt, Little Falls
Arlene Brinkmann, Long Prairie

Tom Gray, Long Prairie
Paul Aukes, Luverne
Gerald Peter, Mabel
James Connor, Madison
Carmen Fernholz, Madison
August Goetti, Marikato
Jerry Cooper, Marlette
Rod VanderZiel, Marshall
Marvin Boike, Maynard
Candace Marx, Mazeppa
Robert Thompson, McIntosh
James Myhre, Minnesota
Elizabeth Oness, Minnesota City
Ernie Broekemeier, Morgan
Terry Dybdahl, Morris
Kathy Zeman, Nerstrand
Carolinevan Schalk, New Hartford
Frank Bisek, New Prague
Susan Griebel, New Ulm
Linda Dahl, Northfield
Angela Smith, Oronoco
Karen & Timothy Burdick, Ortonville
Mike Souhrada, Ostrander
Duane Goeden, Park Rapids
Linda Liesman, Paynesville
Richard Mueller, Paynesville
Michael Kaminski, Perham

Tom Pfleroen, Pine Island
Lisa Smith, Pipestone
Thomas Hoekstra, Plainview
Paul Krueger, Prior Lake
Randall Freitag, Renville
Mike Steinfeldt, Ridgeway
Loren Donovan, Rochester
Wesley Otto, Roseau
Don Hannaman, Rosemount
Leann Jacobson, Rushford
Jerome Graff, Sanborn
Stanley Kuehn, Sanborn
Beth Everett, Scotsbluff
Lorin Helget, Steeple Eye
Randy Kzmarzick, Steeple Eye
Madonna & David Sellner, Steeple Eye
Paul Conklin, Sully
Dayna Burthess, Spring Grove
Myron Sylling, Spring Grove
Vincent Ready, St. Charles
Mike Martinson, St. Charles
Dean Richards, St. Charles
Bob Christie, St. Charles
Tom Nuessmeier, St. Peter
Mary Jo Fortbord, Starbuck
Rod Morlock, Stewarville
Brian Audaht, Stillwater

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John Mueller, Stillwater
Guy Wolf, Stoddard
Steven Fettema, Swanville
Jay Jones, Trail City
Tom Hunter, Wabasha
Paul Sobocinski, Wabasso
Chris Von Hollen, Walnut
Scott Patten, Warroad
Betsy Palister & Andrew Ehmann, Waterford Township
Todd Lemke, Watkins
Anna Racer, Webster
Peter Skold, Webster
Beth Stocum, Welch
Gerald Butenhoff, Winona
Helen Davis, Winona
Doug Nopar, Winona
Dean Nordausa, Woodake
Paul Hohensee, Worthington
Alan Langseth, Worthington
Janaki Fisher-Merritt, Wrenshall
Joe Austin, Wukoff
Rodney Vorwerk, Wukoff

If you agree with this letter, call Rep. Peterson and let him know at (202) 225-2165.