



# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 15, 2006

Chairman Henry Bonilla  
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development and FDA  
Room 2362-A Rayburn  
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro,  
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development and FDA  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington DC 20515

Dear Chairman Bonilla and Ranking Member DeLauro:

The challenges that you face in assembling the annual agriculture appropriations bill are always great and we are certain that this year will be no different. We appreciate your support last year in defeating the President's FY 2006 Budget proposals to drastically reduce critical base funds.

Again this year, we and our colleagues are writing to urge you to protect funding to support America's land-grant university system and to reject the changes to the base funding accounts proposed in the President's FY 2007 Budget.

There are eight base fund accounts administered by the USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service: (1) Hatch Act; (2) McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry; (3) Animal Health and Disease; (4) Evans-Allen; (5) 1890s Extension; (6) Smith-Lever 3(b) and 3(c); (7) Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program; and (8) Institution Challenge Grants.

While these base fund programs were authorized at different times and for specific purposes, they share one important attribute: federal appropriations are matched—at least dollar-for-dollar and often at a much higher multiple—by state and county appropriations. Together, these combined county, state, and federal resources leverage billions of dollars in competitive grants and private funding. ***But, all of this starts with and depends upon the federal base fund appropriations.***

As you are well aware, these base funds are also critical to sustain the research, education, and extension efforts which are advancing human knowledge and scientific understanding in numerous fields and helping U.S. food and fiber producers maintain their global leadership. Unfortunately, the United States is not keeping pace with other nations (most notably China and India) when it comes to public expenditures on food, agriculture, and natural resources programs. Statistics released by the Food and Agriculture Organization's Science Council in December 2005 show that India and China increased public agricultural R&D spending from

1981 to 2000 by 248 percent and 200 percent (respectively), while similar spending in the United States did not experience growth by more than double digits over the same 20 year period. Moreover, the base fund accounts at CSREES have actually lost buying power over the past decade while other U.S. science programs have increased dramatically.

Last year you stood with us and the University system to defeat the drastic reductions proposed in the President's budget. We are writing to urge you, once again, to reject the proposals that would fundamentally change the Hatch Act and McIntire-Stennis funding allocation policies to the detriment of many institutions, and would eliminate completely the Animal Health and Disease Program. This year, like last year, such drastic changes are unwarranted.

To the contrary, it is clear that a sustained effort will be required for the United States to maintain its leadership position with respect to food, agriculture, and natural resources research, extension, and education. We urge the subcommittee to address this situation through continued funding for the base fund programs at CSREES, with reasonable increases in these key programs as proposed by the State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges who carry out these programs, to the greatest extent possible within your allocation.

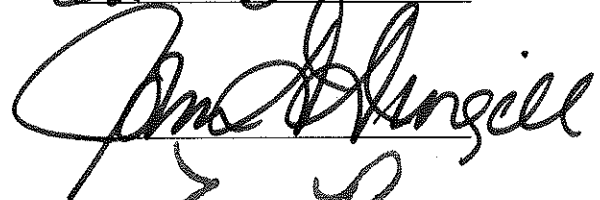
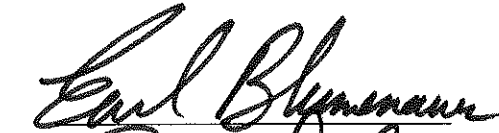
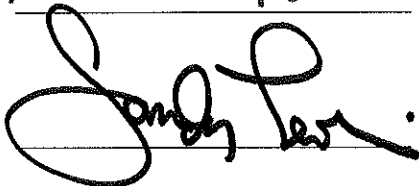
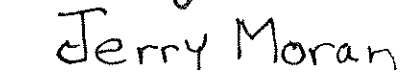
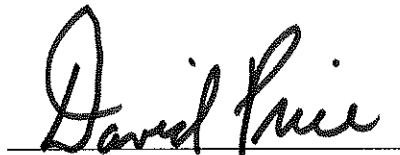
Thanking you for your continuing support and consideration, we remain,

Sincerely,



Collin Peterson  
Member of Congress

Chip Pickering  
Member of Congress



Dale E. Corder      Jim M. Quatt

Billy McAdams      John B. Ruan

Bess Lamb      Marilyn Musgrave

William Jenkins      Tom Allen

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Ed Case

Pring, pm