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May 14, 2013

Farm Bill Revival

After months of quiet on the Farm Bill front, things have changed – *fast*. Both the Senate and the House Agriculture Committees have released drafts of a five-year Farm Bill, and there is plenty of room for improvement.

One of the most important things the farm bill does is help farmers steward their land and protect our nation's air, soil, and water. But while some support for conservation was included in the bill, key pieces that farmers need were left out. And, to make matters worse, they're trying to gut basic protections for independent family livestock producers at the request of a few large corporate interests.

California has six representatives on the House Agriculture Committee, and we're counting on their support for our conservation priorities. If you are in the districts of any of the committee members (see below), we are asking you to make calls *today*. The committee will vote on amendments to the bill tomorrow, so now is the time to call!

Jeff Denham (Turlock, Patterson, Ripon) — (202) 225-4540
Doug LaMalfa (Red Bluff, Chico, Yreka) — (202) 225-3076
Jim Costa (Merced, Madera, Los Banos) — (202) 225-3341
Gloria Negrete McLeod (Ontario, Fontana, Pomona) — (202) 225-6161
John Garamendi (Sacramento, Fairfield, Yuba City) — (202) 225-1880
Juan Vargas (El Centro) — (202) 225-8045

If you are unsure if you are in any of these districts, enter your address here:
<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/members>

Today is your chance to reach the House with a loud and clear message – will you call right now?

We can't emphasize it enough - the next 48 hours will have an impact on food and farms for years to come. And we won't get a better farm bill — and a better future for our nation's food, farmers, air, soil, and water — without your help. Make that quick call right now — and help us spread the word!

Call your Representative to ask for their support on three amendments: Nolan #58 and #59 and Kuster #28. Representative Nolan's amendments will protect our nation's air, soil, and water by increasing the enrollment cap for the Conservation Stewardship Program and streamlining the program's ranking process to encourage more efficient conservation practices. Representative Kuster's amendment will improve the Environmental Quality Incentives Program so that organic and transitioning farmers can better access the program.

The message is simple, and it will take just a few minutes -- call the number above and ask to leave the following message for the Representative's agriculture legislative assistant:

"Hello, my name is _____ and I'm a constituent and a voter (and tell them if you're a farmer!). I would like to leave a message for Representative _____'s agriculture staffer. Can you take a message for me, please? The message is: I urge the Representative to support three key amendments in tomorrow's markup session: Kuster #28, Nolan #58, and Nolan #59. Thank you."

If you'd like more background on the status of the Farm Bill, please refer to the [National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition's website](#) for complete, breaking news.

Thanks for all you do!

P.S. When you call, tell us how it went! Email info@calclimateag.org.

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