

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 8, 2009

The Honorable Herb Kohl  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural  
Development and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Sam Brownback  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural  
Development and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Kohl and Ranking Member Brownback:

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 created a new agency within the U.S. Department of Agriculture — the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) — to provide enhanced support for the research, extension, and higher education programs conducted at America's land-grant universities and related institutions. NIFA is to be established by October 1, 2009, the beginning of FY 2010.

As you begin the arduous process of developing the subcommittee's FY 2010 appropriations bill, we urge you to consider providing expanded funding for the five NIFA programs that underwrite the research and extension capacity of the 1862 and 1890 land-grant institutions:

- Hatch Act appropriations support food and agricultural research at the land-grant universities created under the Morrill Act of 1862.
- Smith-Lever funding supports the full range of Cooperative Extension efforts at the 1862 institutions.
- McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry funding maintains forestry and natural resources research at the 1862 land-grants and other state universities.
- Evans-Allen Act appropriations support research at historically black land-grant universities established under the Morrill Act of 1890.
- 1890s Institutions Extension maintains Cooperative Extension programs at the 1890 land-grant universities.

Federal appropriations for these five capacity programs are matched by the states with at least a dollar-for-dollar basis, with many states providing much more than the minimum statutory match. Given the extreme budgetary pressure that many states face in the current recession, the federal funding is more essential than ever.

In addition to the five programs listed above, we also urge you to provide a major increase to NIFA's flagship competitive grants program, the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI). Given the

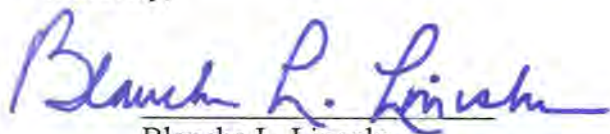
many critical national problems that AFRI is designed to address, it is important that you provide as much additional funding as possible.

Some key priorities that need immediate attention through enhanced funding for AFRI and the five capacity programs include:

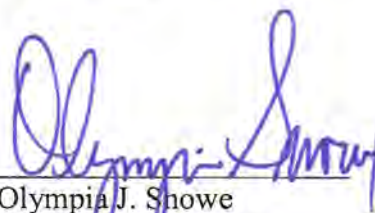
- **Bioproducts.** The U.S. has adopted policies promoting the production of renewable fuels (such as ethanol and biodiesel) and other bioproducts to improve national energy security and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. As the use of bioproducts increases, there is a pressing need for additional funding to assess the effects on water use, soil fertility, and related environmental conditions. Additional economic analyses are also needed to better understand how food, feed, and fuel prices are interrelated.
- **Climate Change.** A warmer planet will affect farms, ranches, and forests in many ways (water availability, pest damage, severe weather variability, etc.). To respond to changed climatic conditions, research funding must be greatly expanded and graduates of land-grant universities must receive enhanced and updated academic and practical training so that they obtain the requisite skills to help society cope with global climate change.
- **Human Nutrition.** As the U.S. struggles with the twin epidemics of obesity and diabetes, expanded research is critically needed to help understand the community and behavioral attributes of human nutrition. Such research will lead directly to more scientifically informed nutrition education and guidance programs delivered through the Cooperative Extension System.
- **Agricultural Workforce.** There is an urgent need to educate and support more young men and women — especially from diverse backgrounds and ethnic communities — to conduct agricultural research and outreach, to serve the nation as farmers, foresters, ranchers, and bioenergy producers, and to lead public and private sector organizations in the 21st century.

Thank you for your consistent support for the research, extension, and teaching programs conducted at America's land-grant institutions and for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Blanche L. Lincoln  
United States Senator



Olympia J. Snowe  
United States Senator



Tom Harkin  
United States Senator



Kit Bond  
United States Senator

Maria Cartwell

My Barnes

Robert A. Neuhoff

Amy Klobuchar

Pat Roberts

Chuck Sch

Carl Levin

John F. Kerry

Richard W. Burr

Kent Conrad

Russ Feingold

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Ben Cardin

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Ed Kennedy

Kirsten E. Gillibrand