

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 2, 2013

The Honorable Collin Peterson
Ranking Member
House Committee on Agriculture
1305 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ranking Member Peterson:

We are writing to voice our strong opposition to Sec. 11312 of the House-passed Farm Bill (H.R. 2642), a provision that was offered by Rep. Steve King during Agriculture Committee mark-up. This provision threatens to undermine an untold number of duly-enacted state laws and regulations affecting agricultural production, and create uncertainty in the agriculture sector. We urge you to ensure that neither the King language nor anything like it is included in the final conference report on the Farm Bill.

We believe that Congress should not usurp the power of states to address the concerns of their citizens on animal protection or any number of other subjects. The breadth and ambiguity of Rep. King's amendment are striking. It would nullify state laws that impose "a standard or condition" on agricultural products, and has the potential to repeal a vast array of state laws and regulations covering everything from food safety to environmental protection to child labor to animal welfare. For example, labeling and other rules for products and ingredients such as artificial sweeteners, maple syrup, milk fat, farm-raised fish, tobacco, and additives in alcohol could be swept away, as could restrictions on import of firewood carrying invasive pests, rules on pesticide exposure and lagoon siting, safety standards for farm workers handling dangerous equipment, and laws restricting practices such as the killing of sharks for their fins and the sale of dog and cat meat.

Although this legislation could have a vast impact, it has not been subject to rigorous scrutiny. Such a sweeping change in law should only be considered after a thorough hearing process and an absolute understanding of its full impact on state laws. Furthermore, the Rules Committee denied us the opportunity to have a floor debate on the issue by ruling out of order an amendment by Congressmen Denham, Schrader, Campbell, Meeks, Fitzpatrick and Cárdenas to strike the King provision.

The King amendment represents an additional layer of serious controversy on already controversial legislation. As you work with colleagues to develop a final Farm Bill package for consideration by the House and to find sufficient votes to pass it, we strongly urge you to do all you can to keep out the King amendment and any provision like it.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,



KURT SCHRADER
Member of Congress



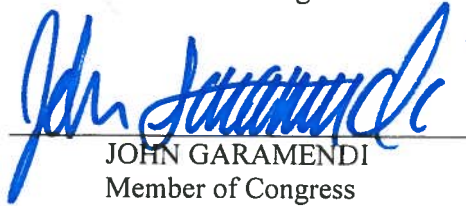
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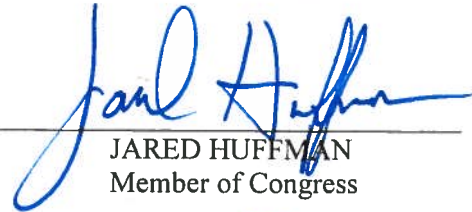
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NICK RAHALL
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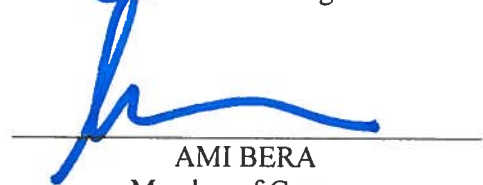
JERRY McNERNEY
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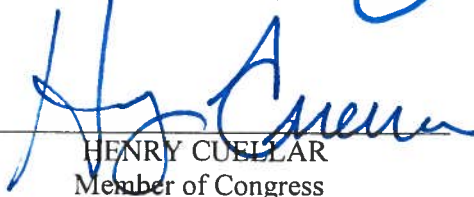
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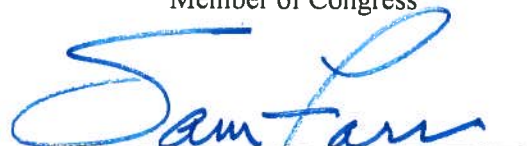
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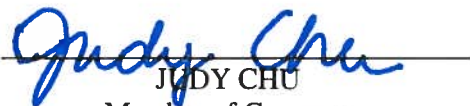
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Member of Congress



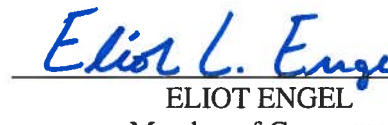
BRAD SHERMAN
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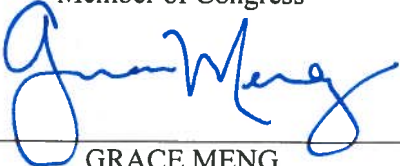
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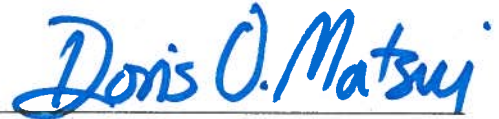
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CAROL SHEA-PORTER
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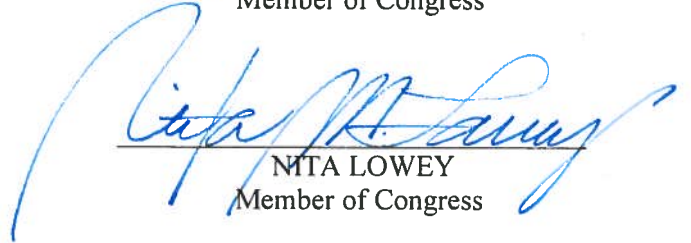
Linda J. Sanchez

LINDA SANCHEZ
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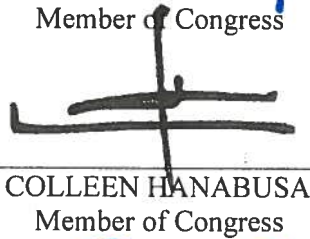

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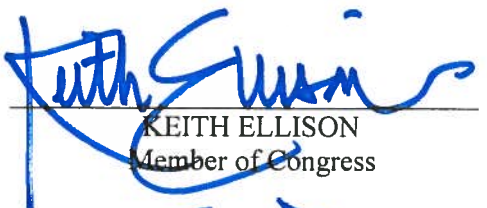

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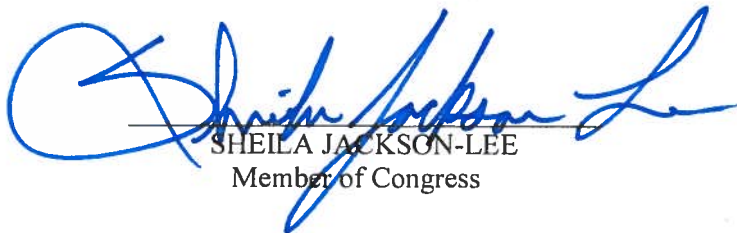

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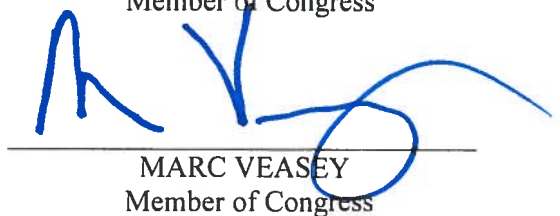

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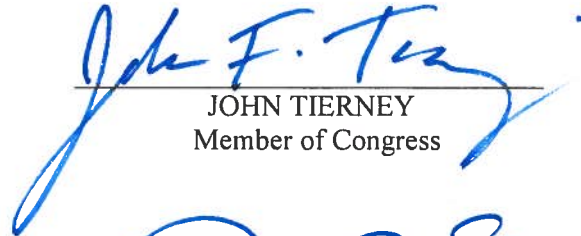
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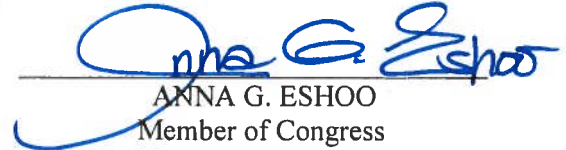
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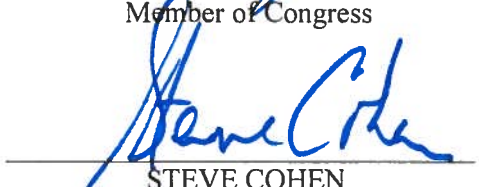
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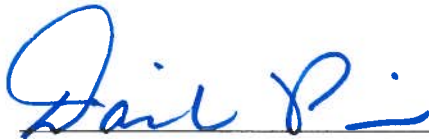
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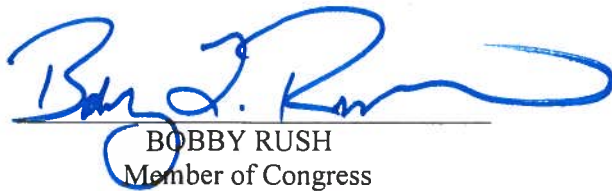
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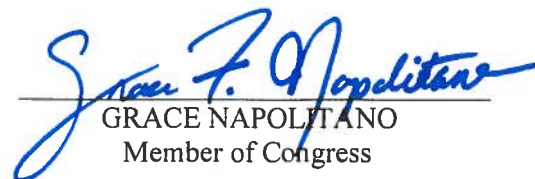
MICHAEL MICHAUD
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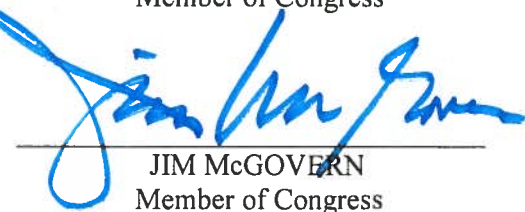
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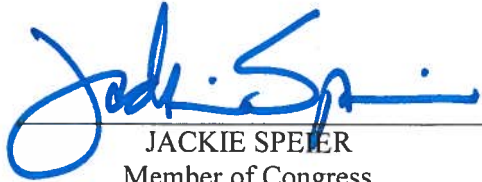
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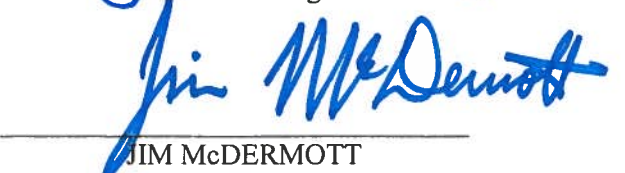
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ELIZABETH ESTY
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Member of Congress



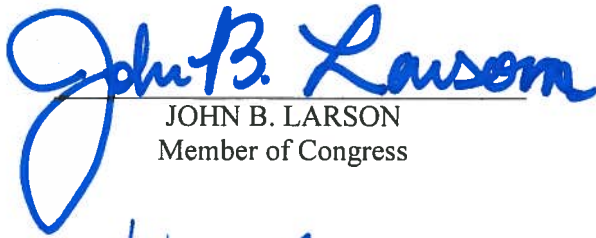
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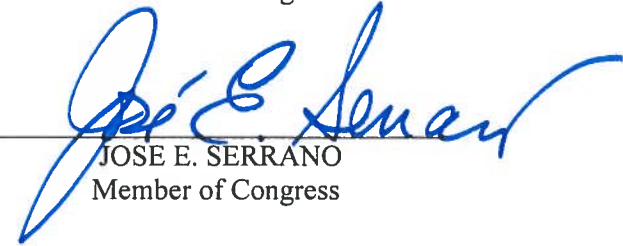
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