

April 5, 2018

Senator Pat Roberts  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry  
328A Russell S.O.B.  
Washington, DC, 20510

Senator Debbie Stabenow  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry  
328A Russell S.O.B.  
Washington, DC, 20510

CC: Members of the U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee

**RE: Reject H.R. 4879/3599's attempt to override the right of citizens to maintain local control of food and farming**

Dear Senators Roberts and Stabenow:

We the undersigned organizations urge you to preserve the right of local and state governments to create policies that provide market opportunity and protect rural communities by stopping Congressman King's efforts to pass H.R. 4879/3599 in the new Farm Bill.

H.R. 4879/3599 would negate most state and local laws regarding the production or manufacture of agricultural products. In short, this legislation would limit consumer choice, negate the ability of local governments to protect citizens, and sacrifice market opportunities for family farmers, only to benefit a few corporate agribusiness interests.

Food and farm markets continue to be highly consolidated, providing farmers with few opportunities to find fair returns on their products. However, the opportunity to create product differentiation through local or regional standards provides the prospect of keeping family farmers and ranchers on the land. Consumers also rely heavily on mandated production standards and conditions to ensure products are safe, healthy, and responsibly produced. Many of the laws governing these market opportunities and consumer protections would be void if H.R. 4879/3599 becomes law.

Farming practices and environmental conditions vary widely throughout the United States and largely are governed by those at the local level who best understand their community. H.R. 4879/3599 seeks to mandate a one-size-fits-all approach by establishing a race to the bottom

on any standard of production or manufacture of agricultural products. If enacted, this legislation would eliminate laws governing animal health and welfare, transport and sale of forest products, community health standards related to water and air pollution, and many more. H.R. 4879/3599 seeks to dismiss the long-held U.S. Constitutional principle that states maintain broad power to protect the health, safety, and welfare of their citizens by regulating the sale of goods and services within their borders. This bill would clearly be detrimental to family farms and ranches and only advantage a very small group of mega-farms and agribusinesses.

We urge you to side with farmers, small businesses, consumers, and local governments over corporate agribusiness interests by rejecting H.R. 4879/3599's attempt to override the right of citizens to maintain control of food and farming locally.

Sincerely,

Alabama Poultry Growers Association  
Alaska Farmers Union  
Alianza Nacional de Campesinas (The National Farmworker Women's Alliance)  
American Agriculture Movement Inc.  
American Grassfed Association  
American Indian Mothers Inc.  
Association of American Indian Farmers  
California Dairy Campaign  
California Farmers Union  
Campaign for Contract Agriculture Reform  
Carolina Farm Stewardship Association  
Citizens Sustainability League--North Dakota  
Community Alliance for Global Justice  
Community Farm Alliance  
Contract Poultry Growers Association of the Virginias  
Crawford Stewardship Project  
Cultivate Kansas City  
Dakota Rural Action  
Dawson Resource Council  
Domestic Fair Trade Association  
Fair World Project  
Family Farm Action  
Family Farm Defenders  
Farm Aid  
Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance  
Food & Water Watch

Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT)  
Food Chain Workers Alliance  
Food For Maine's Future  
Food Policy Action  
Food Policy Council of San Antonio  
Friends of Family Farmers  
Future Harvest CASA  
HEAL Food Alliance  
Health Care Without Harm  
Illinois Farmers Union  
Illinois Stewardship Alliance  
Indian Nations Conservation Alliance  
Indiana Farmers Union  
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy  
Iowa Farmers Union  
Iowa Organic Association  
Jewish Farm School  
Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future  
Kansas Farmers Union  
Land Stewardship Project  
Local Matters  
Michael Fields Agricultural Institute  
Midwest Organic Farmers Cooperative  
Minnesota Food Association, a Program of The Food Group  
Mississippi Sustainable Agriculture Network (MSAN)  
Missouri Coalition for the Environment  
Missouri Farmers Union  
Missouri Rural Crisis Center  
Missouri's Food for America  
National Black Farmers Association  
National Dairy Producers Organization  
National Family Farm Coalition  
National Farmers Organization  
National Hmong-American Farmers Inc.  
National Organic Coalition  
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition  
National Women's Farming Association  
Nebraska Farmers Union  
Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance  
Northeast Organic Farming Association of Connecticut  
Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Hampshire

Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York  
Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont  
Northeast Organic Farming Association/Massachusetts Chapter  
Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group  
Northern Plains Resource Council  
Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance  
Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association  
Ohio Farmers Union  
Ohio Sustainable Business Council  
Oklahoma Stewardship Council  
Organic Consumers Association  
Organic Farmers' Agency for Relationship Marketing, Inc. (OFARM)  
Organic Farmers Association  
Organic Seed Alliance  
Organizacion en California de Lideres Campesinas, Inc.  
Organization for Competitive Markets  
Pesticide Action Network  
Powder River Basin Resource Council  
Real Food Challenge  
Rio Grande Community Farm  
Rocky Mountain Farmers Union  
Rural Coalition  
Rural Vermont  
Slow Food USA  
Sustainable Food Center  
Socially Responsible Agricultural Project  
Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group  
Sustain LA  
Sustainable Food Center  
Texas Organic Farmers and Gardeners  
The Carrot Project  
The Cornucopia Institute  
The Farmworker Association of Florida, Inc.  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
Virginia Association for Biological Farming  
West Virginia Food & Farm Coalition  
Western Colorado Congress  
Western Organization of Resource Councils  
Women Involved in Farm Economics (WIFE)