



May 3, 2018

Dear Representatives,

On behalf of our organizations and the millions of individuals, families and business owners they represent, we write to you today in strong opposition to H.R. 2, the Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018, recently passed out of the House Agriculture Committee and awaiting consideration by the full chamber.

This farm bill comes on the heels of the reckless budget deal and the irresponsible omnibus bill recently passed by Congress. Runaway spending is already unsustainable and increasingly a concern for many Americans. Congress should undertake a fundamental re-assessment of all government programs, including those for agriculture and nutrition programs, and respect American taxpayers by putting them on a fiscally responsible path. The farm bill should not be an exception.

There are some positive elements in the bill. The reforms to SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, would help preserve taxpayer resources for those who need benefits the most and institute stronger work requirements to help the least fortunate to move themselves out of poverty. Changes along these lines were successful in welfare reform, and should be an element of reform consistent across anti-poverty programs. But then the bill redirects savings from the SNAP reforms into unsuccessful training programs. These programs have a [poor track record](#) for delivering results to help prospective workers gain employment or increase their earnings and improve their well-being.

As for the farm side of the farm bill, these programs – subsidies, marketing orders, quotas, and tariffs – are rife with corporate welfare and, [according to the American Enterprise Institute](#), primarily benefit very wealthy owners of large farm businesses at the expense of ordinary taxpayers and consumers. Regrettably, badly needed reforms here are entirely absent.

These lavish programs already vastly exceed a reasonable safety net, yet this bill expands them further. For example, [according to the Environmental Working Group](#), each family member in a family-owned farm can now collect subsidies worth up to \$125,000 *per year*. They don't even have to live or work on the farm. This bill expands those subsidies by allowing cousins, nieces, and nephews to qualify. The bill also makes it easier for multiple owners of large farm corporations to receive subsidies.

These are just a few examples of the expensive, unfair policies pervasive in farm policy. President Trump's budget made a number of [commonsense recommendations](#) for reform, such as limiting crop subsidy eligibility for wealthier farmers, reducing subsidies to crop insurance companies, and eliminating payment limit loopholes, among others. But not one of the

President's agriculture proposals made it into this bill. This isn't acceptable. Including any or all of these proposals would have been a positive down-payment on transforming farm policy to get the federal government out of the farming business.

Reforms are needed on both sides of the farm bill – not just SNAP. We stand ready to work with lawmakers to ensure that reforms that will abolish corporate welfare, preserve resources for those who truly need it, and prioritize taxpayers, are included in both sides of the farm bill.

Sincerely,



Nathan Nascimento
Executive Vice President
Freedom Partners, Chamber of Commerce



Brent Gardner
Chief Government Affairs Officer
Americans for Prosperity

Americans for Prosperity (AFP) exists to recruit, educate, and mobilize citizens in support of the policies and goals of a free society at the local, state, and federal level, helping every American live their dream – especially the least fortunate. Freedom Partners is a non-profit, non-partisan chamber of commerce dedicated to protecting freedom and expanding opportunity for every American—no matter where they live, what they do or how much money they have.

###