Dear Chairmen Roberts and Conaway and Ranking Minority Members Stabenow and Peterson:

As members of the Coalition to Promote U.S. Agricultural Exports, we want to thank you for your leadership as you work to resolve differences in the two versions of the reauthorized Farm Bill.

Throughout the Farm Bill deliberations, we shared our position that a significant phased-in increase in funding for the Market Access Program (MAP) to $400 million per year and a commensurate increase in Foreign Market Development (FMD) program funding was urgently needed. We continue to believe that these increased funding levels are justified. The times and circumstances have greatly changed since MAP funding was last increased in 2006 and FMD funding in 2002.

We appreciate your strong support for these programs and your work to find a solution that maintains MAP, especially given the baseline issues that emerged. We are now facing significant adverse effects of trade policies and global retaliation that threaten overseas markets for our farm products and harm our producers and small business enterprises. Now, more than ever, greater resources are urgently needed.

These programs provide an excellent return to our agricultural industry and the American economy (see www.agexportscout.org). New econometric findings by Dr. Harry M. Kaiser of Cornell University, looking at just 30% of the funding, show that MAP and FMD investments directly increased jobs by 75,000 and government tax revenue by 20 to 30 times the investment.

At a minimum, we strongly urge support for the Senate level of funding of $259.5 million annually for MAP, FMD, and other trade programs. We also greatly appreciate your work to ensure that MAP will receive no less than $200 million annually and FMD no less than $34.5 million annually, and that the programs will continue to operate in their current forms. We also see merit in the Senate's approach in creating a Priority Trade
Fund ($6 million of the annual total of $259.5 million), given the uncertain trade environment facing U.S. agriculture, as well as the ability for the Secretary of Agriculture to allocate those funds to programs that have requests that exceed available funds.

In addition, we strongly support the Senate language that authorizes such sums to be appropriated as are necessary to carry out the programs, which would give the House and Senate Appropriations Committees the ability to use discretionary funds for administrative costs. Currently, those costs come out of program funds, which for MAP and FMD totaled about $7 million in FY 18.

In conclusion, the Coalition to Promote U.S. Agricultural Exports strongly believes that MAP and FMD have been crucial in helping to maintain and expand U.S. agricultural exports, protect American jobs, strengthen farm income and help offset the government-supported financial resources afforded our international competitors. They have helped make agriculture one of the few sectors of the American economy that provides a positive contribution to our nation’s overall trade balance. Therefore, we urge you to do everything you can to increase funding for these vital agricultural export programs.

We very much appreciate this opportunity to share our views and look forward to working with you as you work through the conference process.

Sincerely,

Coalition to Promote U.S. Agricultural Exports (See attached)

cc: House-Senate Farm Bill Conferees
COALITION TO PROMOTE U.S. AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS
LETTER TO HOUSE-SENATE CONFEREES ON THE 2018 FARM BILL
JULY 31, 2018

Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute
Almond Alliance of California
American Cotton Shippers Association
American Cranberry Growers Association
American Feed Industry Association
American Hardwood Export Council
American Peanut Council
American Pistachio Growers
American Quarter Horse Association
American Seed Trade Association
American Sheep Industry Association
American Soybean Association
American Sweet Potato Marketing Institute
American Walnut Manufacturers Association
Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers Association
Blue Diamond Growers
Brewers Association
California Agricultural Export Council
California Apple Commission
California Association of Wheat Growers
California Avocado Commission
California Blueberry Association
California Blueberry Commission
California Cherry Export Association
California Date Commission
California Dried Plum Board
California Farm Bureau Federation
California Fig Advisory Board
California Fresh Fruit Association
California Pear Growers
California Raisin Marketing Board
California Strawberry Commission
California Table Grape Commission
California Walnut Commission
California Wheat Commission
Cherry Marketing Institute
CoBank
Colorado Association of Wheat Growers
Cranberry Institute
Distilled Spirits Council of the United States
Florida Department of Citrus
Florida Peanut Producers Association
Florida Tomato Exchange
Food Export Association of the Midwest USA
Food Export USA - Northeast
Fruit Growers Supply Company
Georgia Poultry Federation
Global Food & Nutrition, Inc.
Grain and Feed Association of Illinois
Gulf Citrus Growers Association
Hardwood Federation
Hardwood Plywood and Veneer Association
Hardwood Manufacturers Association
Highlands County Citrus Growers Association, Inc.
Hop Growers of America, Inc.
Idaho Grain Producers Association
Illinois Corn Growers Association
Kansas Association of Wheat Growers
Kansas Livestock Association
Kentucky Thoroughbred Owners & Breeders, Inc.
Leather Industries of America, Inc.
Louisiana Cotton & Grain Association
Michigan Apple Association
Minnesota Association of Wheat Growers
Minnesota Wheat Research and Promotion Council
Missouri Forest Products Association
National Association of Egg Farmers
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Barley Growers Association
National Cattlemen’s Beef Association
National Confectioners Association
National Corn Growers Association
National Cotton Council
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Grain and Feed Association
National Grape Cooperative Association, Inc.
National Hardwood Lumber Association
National Hay Association
National Milk Producers Federation
National Oilseed Processors Association
National Peanut Buying Points Association
National Pork Producers Council
National Potato Council
National Renderers Association
National Sorghum Producers
National Sunflower Association
National Wood Flooring Association
New York Wine & Grape Foundation
North American Blueberry Council
North American Meat Institute
North Dakota Grain Growers Association
North Dakota Wheat Commission
Northeast Loggers Association
Northwest Horticultural Council
Northwest Wine Coalition
Ohio Corn and Wheat Growers Association
Olive Growers Council of California
Oregon Wheat Growers League
Oregon Wine Board  
Oregon Winegrowers Association  
Peace River Valley Citrus Growers Association  
Softwood Export Council  
Southern Forest Products Association  
Southern U.S. Trade Association  
Sunkist Growers  
Sun Maid Growers of California  
Sunsweet Growers, Inc.  
Texas Cattle Feeders Association  
Texas Grain Sorghum Association  
Texas Wheat Producers Association  
The Popcorn Institute  
United Egg Producers  
USA Dry Pea and Lentil Council  
USA Poultry & Egg Export Council  
USA Rice Federation  
U.S. Apple Association  
U.S. Apple Export Council  
U.S. Cattlemen's Association  
U.S. Dairy Export Council  
U.S. Dry Bean Council  
U.S. Hides, Skins & Leather Association  
U.S. Livestock Genetics Export, Inc.  
U.S. Meat Export Federation  
Valley Fig Growers  
Washington Apple Commission  
Washington Association of Wheat Growers  
Washington Grain Commission  
Washington State Fruit Commission  
Washington State Potato Commission  
Washington Winegrowers Association  
Washington Wine Institute  
Welch Foods Inc., A Cooperative  
Western Hardwood Association  
Western U.S. Agricultural Trade Association  
WineAmerica (The National Association of American Wineries)  
Wine Institute  
Wood Component Manufacturers Association  
Wyoming Crop Improvement Association  
Wyoming Wheat Marketing Commission