

The Honorable Charles Grassley
United States Senate
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Joni Ernst
United States Senate
730 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

December 28, 2020

Dear Senators Ernst and Grassley:

Farmers have completed the 2020 harvest and there's a lot to reflect upon as we look towards the future. From protracted trade tensions to pandemic supply chain disruption and the historic derecho weather event that managed to impact 4 million acres of corn and 2.5 million acres of soybeans; the last year has presented challenges to our rural communities unlike any seen in recent history.

Now, more than ever, Iowa farmers, agribusinesses, and farm families are grateful to be represented in the U.S. Senate by strong leaders who understand agriculture and work tirelessly to increase the economic opportunities for Iowa farmers and rural America. Because of our resilient farmers, Iowa is uniquely positioned to work through these challenging times. With your continued support, we believe Iowa's agriculture sector can see our way through the hardship and emerge in a stronger position for sustainable growth in the future.

On behalf of the members of the undersigned agricultural organizations, we write to you today urging you to increase economic opportunities for Iowa farmers by cosponsoring S.3894, the Growing Climate Solutions Act. We hope that Iowa's farm and ag support for the proposal will be represented by the addition of Iowa's Senate delegation to the growing list of cosponsors before the end of the year as a benchmark of our voice and objectives for the climate conversations that the new year and new congress will bring.

Consumers are demanding a lot more with regard to sustainability and companies are responding with voluntary environmental standards. Businesses such as Walmart, McDonald's, General Mills, Levi Strauss and Co. and Danone have made expansive pledges to consumers and investors to slash the carbon emissions in their supply chains and just last week, Nestlé announced plans to halve the company's emissions by 2030 and realize net zero by 2050. Conversations in Washington are beginning to reflect these private market pledges and the policy outcomes could shape the future of farming for decades to come. Iowa's agricultural sector and the families who rely on it are counting on you to take every opportunity available to proactively join these critical conversations.

The most immediate opportunity to proactively join the conversation is by cosponsoring the Growing Climate Solutions Act (GCSA). Showing your support for the GCSA now will ensure that sustainable policies that invigorate the agricultural economy and make it easier for farmers, producers, and foresters to voluntarily deploy their land in the fight to build climate resiliency by solving the technical entry barriers to carbon markets are included in policy proposals next year. These markets aren't only important to farmers, but also to the producers of renewable fuels, biobased products, food and animal feed.

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Today, more farmers across our state are adopting innovative farming practices that put them at the forefront of reducing overall U.S. greenhouse gas emissions through voluntary solutions. Action now in support of the Growing Climate Solutions Act will not only ensure that farmers are able to monetize their sustainable practices by removing barriers to participating in voluntary carbon markets, but also ensure America's farmers are viewed as part of the climate solution in the policy discussions likely to dominate the first year of the 117th Congress.

As we look to the year ahead and the new Congress, there is a great opportunity to pursue farmer-centered, voluntary solutions rather than allowing non-ag interests to lead the climate policy decisions that would affect the livelihoods of farmers and the communities that depend on a strong recovery in our ag sector. This bipartisan effort recognizes agriculture's role in mitigating the impact of a changing climate and promotes voluntary, agriculture-friendly ideas into the discussion.

We understand the pressure to maintain the status quo during a lame duck session, but urge you to consider cosponsoring the Growing Climate Solutions Act as one of the few actions that could be taken before sine die adjournment of the 116th Congress that would greatly shape the year ahead.

As this historically challenging year comes to a close, we're grateful for Iowa's tight-knit and resilient farming community – and leaders like you to represent our voice in Washington. For the producers struggling today, and the future generations of farmers –we are confident that you'll continue to fight to ensure Iowa's farmers have access to every market opportunity, including the voluntary carbon credit market by cosponsoring the Growing Climate Solutions Act.

Sincerely,

