

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 13, 2011

The Honorable Jack Kingston  
Chairman  
Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Agriculture, Rural Development,  
Food and Drug Administration  
and Related Agencies

The Honorable Sam Farr  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Agriculture, Rural Development,  
Food and Drug Administration  
and Related Agencies

Dear Chairman Kingston and Ranking Member Farr:

We are writing to ask for your support in restoring funding for the Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Program in the FY 2012 budget. As you know, the FY 2011 budget agreement eliminates all funding for the RC&D Program. The members of the Subcommittee have demonstrated strong support for the RC&D Program in the past and we are hopeful you will restore full funding for the RC&D Program for FY 2012 at \$50.73 million, the funding level since FY 2003.

Last year the nation's 375 RC&D Councils leveraged almost \$7.00 for every dollar provided by Congress---adding more than \$351 million to financially strapped rural America. According to the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, the following are just some of the many RC&D accomplishments in FY2010:

- \$351.1 million in external grant funds was obtained for projects;
- 808 new businesses were created;
- 6,199 businesses were expanded or retained;
- 5,929 jobs were created and 6,398 retained;
- 1.1 million people acquired new knowledge or skills;
- 2.2 million economically or socially disadvantaged people were helped nationwide;
- For Tribal Nations, the needs of 187,831 Native Americans were addressed;
- Improvements were made on 2.8 million acres of wildlife habitat, 169,000 acres of lakes, and 7,182 miles of streams;
- More than 2.1 million acres of agricultural land were preserved or protected;
- 413 flood control structures were constructed or rehabilitated.

Local RC&D Councils focus on projects that stimulate the economy and create green jobs, conducting farm energy audits and showing the nation's producers how they can save energy by using farming methods that are less energy intensive. In addition, they offer a wide variety of technical assistance to farmers and foresters to develop crop and other on-farm energy sources such as cellulosic ethanol, conversion of waste to fuel, use of woody biomass, other advanced bio-fuels, and wind energy. They also help producers address the problems associated with animal waste.

Since 1964, RC&D Councils have created jobs and businesses, increased economic development in rural communities, and preserved and protected precious natural resources. As of last year the RC&D Councils completed more than 100,000 projects. The nation's 375 RC&D Councils cover more than 85 percent of the nation's counties and serve over 80 percent of the U.S. population. During these challenging economic times, these locally-led councils are more important than ever before.

We appreciate your consideration of our request and hope you will restore funding for the RC&D Program.

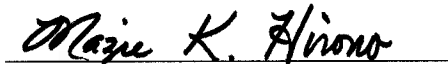
Sincerely,



Tim Holden  
Member of Congress



Joe Courtney



Mazie Hirono

*Viki*

Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan



Peter Welch



Barney Frank



Dave Loebsack



Glenn Thompson



David Wu