

December 12, 2007

United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator:

We urge you to vote “no” on amendment #3822 offered by Sen. Judd Gregg, which would eliminate the Supplemental Disaster Assistance Program. Each year, weather-related disasters are likely to occur in many communities across the country. While *ad hoc* assistance has always been appreciated in the past, the 2007 farm bill presents an opportunity to establish a predictable program for future disasters.

According to the Congressional Research Service, 34 *ad hoc* disaster packages have been approved since fiscal year (FY) 1989, totaling \$59 billion. Each approved measure requires the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to recreate an implementation plan that often results in new guidelines and sign up requirements. A standing disaster program will ensure a consistent and reliable implementation strategy is in place for any future weather-related disaster. Furthermore, the program works in concert with current risk management programs, such as crop insurance and the Non Insured Assistance Program, by requiring producers to purchase coverage and providing an incentive to purchase higher levels of coverage.

Many of our organizations have expressed strong support of *ad hoc* disaster assistance in the past, but have witnessed the increasing difficulty in securing help. Earlier this year, Congress approved emergency *ad hoc* disaster assistance for losses that occurred in 2005, 2006 or 2007. Unfortunately, the assistance is just now reaching producers for losses sustained in 2005.

Again, we urge you to oppose the Gregg amendment to eliminate the Supplemental Disaster Assistance Program from the farm bill.

Sincerely,

National Farmers Union  
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture  
American Farm Bureau Federation  
Agricultural Retailers Association  
American Agriculture Movement  
American Agri-Women  
American Association of Crop Insurers  
American Beekeeping Federation  
American Corn Growers Association  
American Sheep Industry Association  
American Soybean Association  
American Sugar Alliance  
Cape Cod Cranberry Growers Association  
Farm Credit Council  
Federation of Southern Cooperatives  
Independent Beef Association of North Dakota  
Independent Cattlemen’s Association of Texas  
Independent Community Bankers Association  
National Association of Farmer Elected Committees  
National Barley Growers Association

National Cotton Council  
National Family Farm Coalition  
National Farmers Organization  
National Grape Cooperative Association  
National Milk Producers Federation  
National Sunflower Association  
Northeast States Association for Agricultural Stewardship  
R-CALF United Stockgrowers of America  
Ricebelt Warehouses  
Southern Peanut Farmers Federation  
U. S. Canola Association  
United Dairymen of Arizona  
United States Cattlemen's Association  
US Rice Producers Association  
USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council  
USA Rice Federation  
Welch's a Cooperative  
Women Involved in Farm Economics  
Wyoming Stock Growers Association