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May 15, 2023

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Chairwoman
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture
United States Senate
Washington, DC, 20510

The Honorable John Boozman
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture
United States Senate
Washington, DC, 20510

Dear Chairwoman Stabenow and Ranking Member Boozman,

The upcoming farm bill reauthorization provides a unique opportunity to strengthen our rural economy. As you begin drafting legislative text, I urge you to preserve a strong farm safety net in the 2023 Farm Bill.

I proudly represent one of the most diverse and productive agriculture states in the country. With 27.8 million acres of farmland production, Missouri farmers are leaders in cattle, corn, soybean, rice, cotton, hay production and more. At 95,000 farms, Missouri has the second highest number of farms in the country. Maintaining funding levels for these programs will help preserve small and mid-sized family farms in my state for generations to come.

In the five years since the 2018 Farm Bill was passed, inflation of essential farm inputs has been one of the most pressing issues for Missouri farmers. I share producers' concerns that current Price Loss Coverage (PLC) and Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) calculations do not reflect market conditions. For some commodities, PLC reference prices are lower than breakeven costs. This undermines the intent of the commodity price support programs, which is to help farmers navigate volatile market conditions. For this reason, I am supportive of efforts to increase Price Loss Coverage reference prices in the 2023 Farm Bill.

Maintaining crop insurance authorization levels should be a priority for Congress in the 2023 Farm Bill. It may also be necessary to direct the Risk Management Agency to expand starting and final planting dates across all insurable commodities. Farmers are the best equipped to decide when to plant their crops. Current planting dates can be restrictive on farmers in warmer climates. In addition, the next farm bill should not attempt to link crop insurance funding with "climate smart" practices.

Over the next year, I plan to be actively engaged in the farm bill process to ensure Missouri producers have a seat at the table. I look forward to working with you in the coming months to craft a farm bill that will serve the needs of farmers in my state and across the country.

Sincerely,



Josh Hawley
United States Senator