United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 12, 2007

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As strong supporters of U.S. farmers and ranchers, we write to express our deep concern about the direction of the World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations on agriculture. Our support for an agreement depends on achieving a balanced, ambitious outcome in which new market access and the elimination of export subsidies provide net gains for U.S. agriculture in relation to reductions in trade-distorting domestic support.

In October 2005, the United States put forward a proposal that would require substantial cuts in U.S. farm programs. This proposal was entirely conditioned on our trading partners making similarly ambitious concessions on market access. But our trading partners have refused to offer significant tariff reductions, and they insist on exceptions for sensitive and special products that will render meaningless the modest tariff reduction formulas they have proposed. In fact, many of them continue to call for greater cuts in U.S. farm programs, even as they reject any real improvements in market access.

Last summer, the U.S. rightly rejected this unbalanced approach. However, some recent press reports suggest that the U.S. may now consider even greater cuts in our farm programs without achieving the market access ambition included in the October 2005 U.S. proposal.

We hope these press reports are inaccurate. As 57 Senators wrote you last June, an unbalanced proposal that asks U.S. agriculture and rural communities to give more while getting less in market access is unacceptable. We cannot support a deal that directly reduces net farm income through steep cuts in farm programs in return for minimal market access gains whose effect on farm gate receipts is speculative at best.

The consensus among economists is that reducing agriculture market access barriers generates far greater economic gains than cutting domestic support. As a result, it is imperative that our trading partners dismantle barriers to imports if the Doha Round is to achieve a successful conclusion that will benefit not only U.S. agriculture but also the global economy and people around the world.

As discussions on the Doha Round resume, we urge you to direct your negotiators not to make further concessions on domestic support but instead to insist that our trading partners put

forward ambitious market access proposals that will produce sufficient market opening to ensure that any final deal will generate increased net income for America's farmers and ranchers.

Sincerely,

Kent Conrad

Max Baucus

Saxby Chambliss

Blanche L. Lincoln

Richard Lugar

Dick Durbin

Norm Coleman

Patty Murray

Mike Crapo

Debbie Stabenow

Pat Roberts

Mary Landrieu

David Vitter

Ken Salazar

Sam Brownback

Bob Casey, Jr.

E. Benjamin Nelson

Elizabeth Dole

Jim Talent

John Cornyn

Mark Pryor

Jim Bunning

Chuck Schumer

Kit Bond

Ron Wyden

Byron L. Dorgan

Arlen Specter

Maria Cantwell

Pat Roberts

Ben Nelson

Kay Bailey Hutchison

Daniel K. Akaka

Mike Enzi

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Chuck Hagel

Larry

Orrin G. Hatch

Jon Tester

George V. Voinovich

Bill Nelson

C. H. Smith

cc: The Honorable Mike Johanns
The Honorable Susan Schwab