

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 26, 2010

The Honorable Herb Kohl  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural  
Development, Food and  
Drug Administration and Related Agencies  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
129 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20150

The Honorable Sam Brownback  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural  
Development, Food and  
Drug Administration and Related Agencies  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
190 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Kohl and Ranking Member Brownback:

We write to express support for the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program and request that the Subcommittee include \$30 million in the FY 2011 Agriculture Appropriations bill to help launch a new era of research advancing the profitability, productivity, and environmental services of sustainable agriculture.

SARE is a competitive research, education, and extension grant program with a twenty-two year history of ensuring that farmers and ranchers have the tools necessary to meet new economic and environmental challenges in agriculture. Unique in its function and form – SARE is a farmer-driven, regionally-led, and outcome-oriented program which has resulted in new production techniques, higher sales, and greater environmental stewardship.

In recent years, SARE has been funded at less than a third of its original authorized funding level of \$60 million. Year in and year out, SARE is consistently over-subscribed, and the program has only been able to fund between 8% - 10% of the proposals submitted. The U.S. Government Accountability Office, independent evaluators, farmer surveys, and stakeholder reviews all indicate the award-winning nature of this program and its ability to produce real-world outcomes that benefit farmers and communities.

Funding SARE at \$30 million will finally jumpstart the federal-state matching grant program and will support President Obama's FY 2011 budget request, with a specific designation of \$10 million for the matching grants program. By funding the matching grants program as envisioned by Congress, we will increase the capacity and long-term commitment of our states sustainable agriculture centers and institutes to develop innovative agriculture programs to address high-priority agricultural problems.

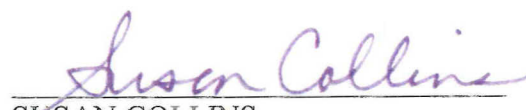
The Honorable Herb Kohl  
The Honorable Sam Brownback  
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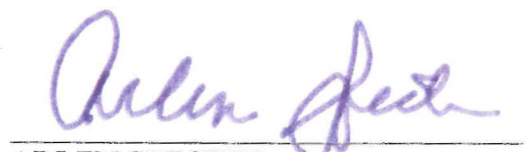
We have a historic opportunity to build on the past successes and current popularity of SARE to fund farmer-driven, cutting-edge research. Funding SARE at \$30 million in FY 2011 is making a down-payment on innovation in agriculture for generations to come.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

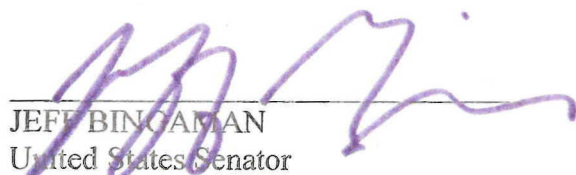
Sincerely,

  
PATRICK LEAHY  
United States Senator

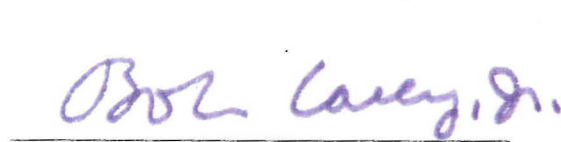
  
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United States Senator

  
DANIEL AKAKA  
United States Senator

  
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United States Senator

  
BENJAMIN CARDIN  
United States Senator

  
ROBERT P. CASEY, Jr.  
United States Senator

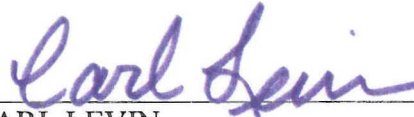
  
DICK DURBIN  
United States Senator

  
RUSS FEINGOLD  
United States Senator

  
KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND  
United States Senator



TOM HARKIN  
United States Senator



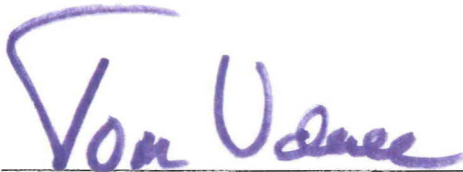
CARL LEVIN  
United States Senator



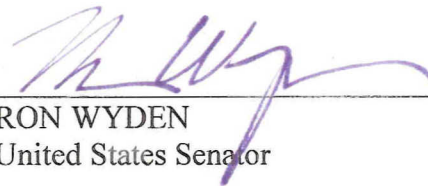
BERNIE SANDERS  
United States Senator



CHUCK SCHUMER  
United States Senator



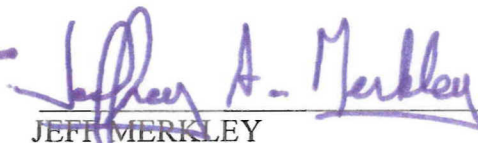
TOM UDALL  
United States Senator



RON WYDEN  
United States Senator



DEBBIE STABENOW  
United States Senator



JEFF MERKLEY  
United States Senator