

August 6, 2018

The Honorable Pat Roberts
Chairman
Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition, & Forestry
United States Senate

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition, & Forestry
United States Senate

The Honorable K. Michael Conaway
Chairman
House Committee on Agriculture
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Collin C. Peterson
Ranking Member
House Committee on Agriculture
United States House of Representatives

Dear Farm Bill Conference Leadership,

The world's population is set to exceed nine billion by 2050 and the growing number of potentially unemployed youth is an equally staggering statistic. A third of the world's population is between the ages of 15-34 with many living in lower and middle-income countries. More than sixty percent of the population in sub-Saharan Africa is under the age of 25, and by 2050 the youth population on the continent is expected to double, reaching one billion. A growing and unemployed youth sector is not only detrimental to that country's economic development, it also threatens U.S. economic and national security interests.

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs' recent report, *Youth for Growth: Transforming Economies through Agriculture*, extensively highlights the role agriculture can play to develop economic opportunities for youth and create a more food secure world. Recommendation three, in particular, encourages Congress to "invest in the human capital development necessary to advance rural youth and to drive agricultural transformation." The report suggests that development organizations use "the best models of agricultural and entrepreneurial education" and that "Congress should encourage the administration to use all levers of government to expand education through programs and exchanges."

We are pleased to see language in line with these recommendations included in the House-passed farm bill. Section 3207 authorizes Congress to fund fellowships for U.S. citizens to build capacity for school-based agricultural education and youth extension programs, such as FFA and 4-H, in developing countries. The fellowships are intended to develop globally minded United States agriculturalists with experience living abroad, to help meet the food and fiber needs of developing countries, and to ultimately strengthen and enhance the trade linkages between such countries and the United States agricultural industry.

The undersigned organizations appreciate Congress's recognition of the importance of addressing this issue and encourage the inclusion of Section 3207 of the House-passed bill—or a similar provision—within the final conference report.

Respectfully,

AgriCorps

Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU)

National FFA Organization

National 4-H Council

Agriculture Future of America (AFA)

American Farm Bureau Federation

National Farmers Union

National Association of State Departments of Agriculture

Farm Journal Foundation

National Cotton Council

National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research

Center on Conflict & Development at Texas A&M University

Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges

CropLife America

American Society of Animal Science

National Association for the Advancement of Animal Science

Federation of Animal Science Societies

U.S. Dairy Forage Research Center Stakeholder Committee

American Dairy Science Association

American Association of Mycobacterial Diseases

Mycobacterial Diseases of Animals Multi-state Initiative

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Bobby J. Pittman, Chicago Council Task Force Co-chair, *Youth for Growth:*

Transforming Economies through Agriculture

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Felix K. Yeboah, Ph.D., Author, Chicago Council Report: *Youth for Growth:*

Transforming Economies through Agriculture

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