

**California Farm Bureau Federation
Western Growers Association
Agricultural Council California
California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation
California Association of Winegrape Growers
Marrone Organic Innovations, Inc.
American Farmland Trust
Environmental Defense
San Joaquin Resource Conservation District
Richard Rominger
Roots of Change**

October 2, 2007

RE: Support for AgJOBS (S. 340 and H.R. 371)

Dear Representative Woolsey,

As members of the California Roundtable on Agriculture and the Environment (CRAE), we are writing you to urge you to support AgJOBS (S. 340 and H.R. 371). CRAE represents diverse constituencies; including agricultural, environmental and labor organizations. CRAE provides a forum for these constituencies to identify common interests and opportunities for collective action and advocacy. The passage of AgJOBS is of great importance to all CRAE members.

Attached is a list of agricultural policy goals important to California that we have agreed to work on together, including the importance of developing a legal workforce. AgJOBS will provide an opportunity for a stable workforce that can develop a higher skill level required to better manage our farm and range lands. AgJOBS will increase the stability of our local economies and the stewardship of our environment.

This bipartisan bill would help California by keeping our farms in operation and providing American households with access to safe, homegrown food.

Sincerely,

Ed Thompson, American Farmland Trust
Noelle G. Cremers, California Farm Bureau Federation
Kathryn Phillips, Environmental Defense
Molly Watkins Smiles, San Joaquin Resource Conservation District
Martha Guzman, California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation
Donald G. Gordon, Agricultural Council California
Karen Ross, California Association of Wine Growers
Rich Rominger
Pam Marrone, Marrone Organic Innovations, Inc.
Michael Dimock, Roots of Change
Hank Giclas, Western Growers Association

Policy objectives of the California Roundtable on Agriculture and the Environment

PROTECT LANDS AND HABITAT: Maximize the retention of private farm, range and forest

lands as working landscapes and habitat, and minimize the conversion of those lands to residential or commercial development. Programs that foster this goal include the Grasslands Preserve Program (GRP), the Farm and Ranchland Preserve Program (FRPP), and the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP).

REWARD STEWARDSHIP ON WORKING LANDS: Increase funding for farm bill conservation programs that promote improvements to, and reward good stewardship for, environmental quality on working farm, range and forest lands, including the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) and the Conservation Security Program (CSP). Recognize state programs that demonstrate cost-efficiency and environmentally effective performance.

INCREASE AGRICULTURE RESEARCH AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: Provide more resources for research and extension to colleges and universities to stimulate innovation and accelerate the adoption of agricultural stewardship practices. Revitalize technical assistance capacity at NRCS and cooperating agencies to more effectively implement conservation programs.

IMPROVE PROGRAM PERFORMANCE: Demonstrate on-the-ground environmental performance (such as protection of species habitat, soil conservation, and water and air quality) of farm bill conservation programs (e.g. through EQIP's previous education program) through outreach and demonstration projects, targeting specific problems or regions, improved monitoring, and increasing incentives for higher levels of performance, among other strategies.

PROMOTE RENEWABLE ENERGY: Promote the development of technologies for converting agricultural waste and byproducts to useful products or energy.

DEVELOP A LEGAL AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE: Invest in collaborative programs that improve the skill and stabilize the seasonality of the agricultural workforce.

IMPROVE RURAL COMMUNITY QUALITY OF LIFE: Increase resources for Rural Development for housing, water, sewer, broadband and other much needed infrastructure to provide the essential base for community sustainability. Ensure that California's demographically unique rural communities are competitively eligible for such funds.

MANAGE INVASIVE SPECIES AND PROMOTE INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT:

Increase

resources for states to detect, monitor and mitigate invasive species using least-toxic methods to the extent practicable. Increase NRCS' capacity to promote Integrated Pest Management, particularly for specialty and minor crops.

PROVIDE MARKETING ASSISTANCE: Increase investment in programs and research to enhance market and trade development.