

September 17, 2007

The Honorable  
U.S. Senate, Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the undersigned conservation, agriculture, and sporting organizations, we urge you to encourage the Chairman to include the provisions of S. 469, which would permanently extend the new tax incentive for donations of conservation easements, in the tax title to the farm bill to be reported out of the Finance Committee this month. This legislation works hand-in-glove with the farm bill's conservation programs to help farmers, ranchers and other landowners enhance long-term conservation of our natural resources. This provision has immense potential to help private landowners keep agricultural lands in productive use, protect important fish and wildlife habitats, and conserve our scenic and historic heritage in your state and across America.

Donating valuable development rights to land – often a farm or ranch family's most valuable asset – requires careful planning and consideration. On average it takes roughly four years from the initial conversations with a landowner before a conservation easement is executed. Eliminating the current expiration date at the end of this year on the new favorable tax treatment of conservation donations by farmers is both good conservation policy and will help ensure that such donations are not made under the pressure of an expiration deadline.

Thank you for your concern for conservation.

Sincerely,

American Bird Conservancy  
American Farmland Trust  
American Fisheries Society  
American Sportfishing Association  
Archery Trade Association  
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies  
BASS  
Berkley Conservation Institute  
Bowhunting Preservation Alliance  
The Campfire Club of America  
Civil War Preservation Trust  
Congressional Sportsman's Foundation  
Conservation Force  
The Conservation Fund  
Delta Waterfowl Foundation  
Ducks Unlimited  
Federation of Fly Fishers  
Houston Safari Club  
Izaak Walton League of America  
Land Trust Alliance  
Mule Deer Foundation  
The Nature Conservancy  
National Audubon Society  
National Cattleman's Beef Association

National Marine Manufacturers Association  
National Rifle Association  
National Trust for Historic Preservation  
National Wild Turkey Federation  
North American Bear Foundation  
North Dakota Natural Resources Trust  
Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association  
Pacific Forest Trust  
Partnership of Rangeland Trusts  
Piedmont Environmental Council  
Pheasants Forever  
Pope & Young Club  
Quail Unlimited  
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation  
Safari Club International  
Texas Wildlife Association  
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation  
Partnership  
Trust for Public Land  
The Vital Ground Foundation  
Wildlife Management Institute  
The Wildlife Society  
Whitetails Unlimited