

September 18, 2019

The Honorable Jeff Merkley, Ranking Member  
Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee  
190 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Merkley:

Thank you for your vocal leadership in protecting the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Economic Research Service (ERS) and National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) during markup of the FY 2020 Agriculture Appropriations bill. We share a common goal of ensuring that these two agencies remain among the most effective research institutions in the world.

Each of our organizations, and the hundreds of thousands of members we collectively represent, stand behind you and look forward to continuing to work with you to protect these agencies, their staff, and the important work they do for farmers and eaters. We hope you will continue to press the issue in full committee tomorrow and then as work proceeds to negotiating a final bill later this year.

Thank you for your commitment to this important work.

Sincerely,

American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE)  
American Statistical Association (ASA)  
Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics (COPAFS)  
National Farmers Union (NFU)  
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC)  
National Young Farmers Coalition (NYFC)  
Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS)