



RESOLUTION ON REAUTHORIZATION OF THE FARM BILL

WHEREAS, the Farm Bill supports our nation's farmers, ranchers, forest owners, food security, natural resource and wildlife habitats, rural communities and the 16 million Americans whose jobs directly depend on the agriculture industry; and

WHEREAS, the Farm Bill addresses America's critical farm, nutrition, and conservation needs and requires strong bipartisan support; and

WHEREAS, the total cost of the Farm Bill is less than 1 percent of the total federal budget, and communities nationwide of every size rely upon a sound, stable, and fully funded Farm Bill.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that The Council of State Governments (CSG) urges Congress to enact a 2018 Farm Bill reauthorization that:

- **Includes a strong domestic hunger and nutrition safety net, in recognition that the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition assistance for victims of hurricanes, floods and other disasters.** More than \$100 million in SNAP benefits are redeemed at military commissaries annually. Rural residents have the highest percentage of households receiving SNAP benefits. Farmers receive approximately 20 percent of the money spent on SNAP benefits.
- **Expands broadband to ensure that rural residents have the same economic opportunity resulting from high speed internet as those in urban areas.** Only 55 percent of people living in rural areas have access to speeds that qualify as broadband, compared to 94 percent of the urban populations.
- **Provides a strong federal investment in agricultural research and extension programs.** Federal investment in agricultural research has been shown to provide returns on investment of 20-60 percent and is vital to ensuring producers remain competitive domestically and globally.
- **Invests in voluntary, incentive-based conservation programs that are implemented in coordination with state and local intergovernmental partners.** The Farm Bill is the most important legislation for conserving private lands in America, as it provides incentives that result in cleaner water, improved soil conservation, enhanced wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation opportunities, increased flood control, and economic benefits for local communities and rural economies.
- **Provides the necessary tools to undertake measures preventing the spread of invasive species.** Invasive species continues to be one of the country's biggest environmental problems and are causing economic and environmental damage throughout all 50 states.



- **Invests in animal and plant disease programs to safeguard food production and prevent catastrophic events that could threaten the nation's food supply.** Food production has been challenged in recent years with the emergence of invasive animal and plant diseases.
- **Ensures a flexible and responsive state-led Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG) Program.** A secure SCBG program will enhance the competitiveness of specialty crop production and promote the production of foods with critical health benefits to the American people.

Adopted by The Council of State Governments' Executive Committee this 16th Day of December, 2017 in Las Vegas, Nevada.