

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

Dear Colleague:

I hope you will join us in signing the attached letter to the Senate Appropriations Committee asking that they do not place limitations on funding provided in the 2002 Farm Bill for the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP).

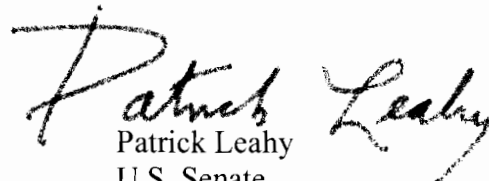
The funding shortfall in recent years has had a real impact on landowners who seek to place conservation easements on their farmland. In 2005, 35 states had landowners unsuccessfully apply for conservation easements to preserve these lands for future generations due to the shortage of federal funding in FRPP. In fact, just last year, over 127,000 rural acres would have been protected in perpetuity had the full federal funding been available.

The preservation of our open spaces is beneficial to our farm economy, our food security, our rural landscapes, and our way of life. The Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program plays an important role by providing incentives for the preservation of farm and ranchland.

I hope you will join us in urging the Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture not to reduce funding for the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program from its farm bill level of \$97 million. To sign onto this letter, please contact Matt Beynon in Senator Santorum's office (4-6324) or Brian Baenig in Senator Leahy's office (4-4242).

Sincerely,


Rick Santorum
U.S. Senate


Patrick Leahy
U.S. Senate

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March xx, 2006

The Honorable Robert Bennett, Chairman
The Honorable Herb Kohl, Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies
188 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairmen Bennett and Ranking Member Kohl:

As you develop the Fiscal Year 2007 Agriculture Appropriations bill, we urge you not to reduce the \$97 million provided in the 2002 Farm Bill for the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP).

As you know, FRPP helps farmers and ranchers across the nation preserve their land and the essential character of rural communities by providing incentives to keep farm and ranchland in production. Each day, nearly 3,000 acres of farmland is permanently lost to development. However since the 2002 Farm Bill, FRPP has preserved more than 300,000 acres of farm and ranchland across the country. The program has leveraged more than \$250 million in federal funds with over \$500 million in local funding to help farmers and ranchers preserve their identity and rural landscapes.

Furthermore, FRPP helps ensure the food security of the nation, stabilizes rural communities by protecting high quality farm and ranchland, ensures regional food production, saves critical wildlife habitat, and helps family farmers and ranchers pass their land on to future generations of producers. We believe that FRPP is a vital tool in helping to preserve agricultural land that is being lost at an alarming rate. Unfortunately, once these lands are lost to outside pressures they are lost to agriculture forever.

For these reasons, we urge you not to place limitations on the funding provided in the 2002 Farm Bill for FRPP. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Rick Santorum

Patrick Leahy
