

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 2, 2011

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
128, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Vice Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
146-A, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Herb Kohl
Chairman
Subcommittee on Agriculture,
Rural Development and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
129 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture
Rural Development and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
190 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye, Chairman Kohl, and Ranking Members Cochran and Blunt:

As you continue drafting the Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 Agriculture Appropriations bill, we would urge you to recognize the value of independent agricultural research on our nation's economy and the role it plays in maintaining our nation's competitive lead in this critical area.

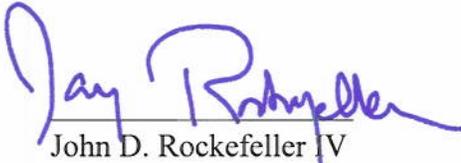
The proposed Agricultural Research Service laboratory closures in FY 2012 will weaken the ability of the American agriculture industry to successfully compete in the global economy. These closures could hamper further progress in the output of commodities such as beef, small livestock, cotton, specialty and forage crops. Some vital research aimed at protecting American agriculture against difficult-to-control, invasive insects and diseases would also be impacted. Progress in developing sustainable agriculture technologies to support high output of these commodities, efficient utilization of energy and other inputs, clean water and the environment will also be negatively affected.

In order to ensure a proper commitment to the our nation's agricultural research needs we strongly urge the Committee to reject the President's proposed cuts to the Agricultural Research Service and sustain investment in agriculture research in support of global food security, American rural economic development and job creation.

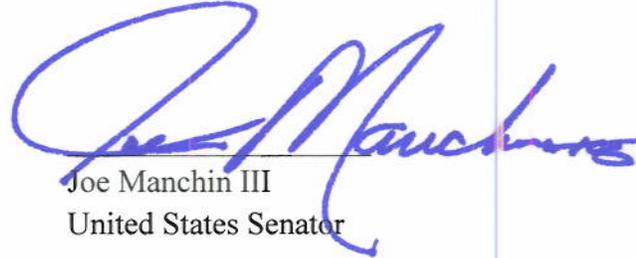
This funding should be used to maintain the Fiscal Year 2010 activity and staffing levels for the entire ARS research laboratory system to ensure that existing and emerging agriculture challenges across the country can be addressed.

Thank you for your careful attention to this matter.

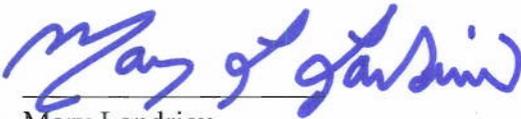
Sincerely,



John D. Rockefeller IV
United States Senator



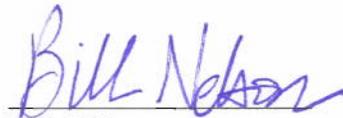
Joe Manchin III
United States Senator



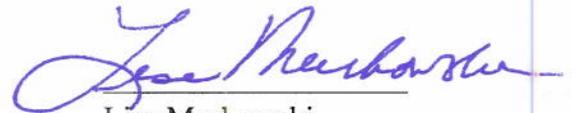
Mary Landrieu
United States Senator



Mark Begich
United States Senator



Bill Nelson
United States Senator



Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator