



WORKING FOR BUSINESS. BELIEVING IN LUBBOCK.

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May 24, 2017

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Hon. Jodey Arrington  
United States House of Representatives  
1029 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Arrington,

As the largest business federation on the Texas South Plains representing 2,000 employers and as an organization accredited at the highest, five-star level by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, we write today to express our disappointment and disagreement with the cuts made to agriculture in President Trump's FY 2018 Budget Proposal. These cuts would be detrimental to the thousands of family farmers in the Lubbock area. The Chamber is well aware of the economic challenges agriculture and allied industries in this area face which will soon translate to challenges for the many and diverse job creators the Chamber represents as well as for area rural communities.

It is our understanding that the total mandatory spending cuts to agriculture that the President proposes are unprecedented at \$240.4 billion over ten years, or a 27.5 percent budget cut. Most concerning to us among these cuts include those to crop insurance, targeted for more than \$28 billion in cuts over 10 years, or a 36 percent reduction. This includes an unworkable payment limit on crop insurance premium discounts and an AGI means test, both of which fail to account for farming in an economy of scale such as that required in an area like the Texas South Plains if farmers are to continue producing reliably and efficiently. Additionally, we are disturbed that the Conservation Title is cut by \$5.755 billion over 10 years, or 9.6 percent through the "streamlining" of programs.

To compound all this, the President's proposal to extend budget sequestration for the period of FY2025-2027 falls disproportionately on agriculture, as cuts to agriculture accounted for 30 percent of total sequestration cuts in FY 2016.

Were these cuts ever adopted as part of a Congressional budget they would inflict extraordinary injury on rural America and our nation's farmers and ranchers as well as agriculture as an important part of our nation's security and prosperity.

We respectfully but firmly urge you to stand by agriculture and oppose this misguided and detrimental budget proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eddie McBride'.

Eddie McBride  
President and CEO

Cc: U.S. Chamber of Commerce  
Texas Association of Business  
Texas Chamber of Commerce Executives

