



July 29, 2020

Dear Republican Members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives:

As a group of conservative voices, we jointly write to express our support for The Growing Climate Solutions Act (S.3894/H.R.7393), bipartisan legislation recently introduced by Senators Mike Braun (R-IN) and Lindsey Graham (R-SC) in the Senate and Representatives Don Bacon (R-NE), Elise Stefanik (R-NY), Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE), Jim Baird (R-IN), John Katko (R-NY) and John Curtis (R-UT) in the House. It is a limited government approach to addressing climate change that empowers farmers, ranchers, and private landowners to voluntarily implement agriculture and farming practices that will reduce emissions.

The agriculture and forestry sectors hold the potential to serve as a critical climate solution. Over the past few decades, a patchwork of standards and systems has emerged around the country to match market demand for carbon emissions reductions with supply of carbon credits. However, no federal coordinating entity exists to certify protocols and assure that quality accounting methodologies are being used. As a result, it has been difficult for farmers, ranchers, and land managers to tap these markets.

The Growing Climate Solutions Act of 2020 solves this challenge by establishing a voluntary framework for certifying third-party credits; providing technical assistance to land managers; and, establishing an Advisory Council of diverse environmental, agricultural, scientific, and business interests to help define the proper role for the federal government in these markets. Importantly, this much-needed bill would provide additional revenue streams to our struggling agricultural sector by sequestering greenhouse gases in soil. Additionally, it will reduce confusion among market participants and improve information sharing among farmers looking to implement best practices that capture carbon, reduce emissions, and improve soil health. As conservatives, we see this legislation as an opportunity to offer effective, meaningful, and fiscally responsible policies that can be enacted right now to mitigate the effects of climate change.

Most importantly, this proposal is not a carbon tax or cap and trade – two approaches that elicit varied opinions among us. Instead it opens the door for the private sector to lower costs for voluntary emissions reductions and it creates opportunities for farmers and ranchers who are interested in participating in carbon markets. Climate action should not be synonymous with big government. By incenting more people and companies to get credit for implementing carbon management best practices—or financing those practices—the scale of the solution grows.

As organizations who are working to make our energy sector cleaner and more reliable, while making our economy and country stronger, we respectfully request your support for the Growing Climate Solutions Act. Moreover, we look forward to working together to move this important legislation through Congress.

Sincerely,

Citizens for Responsible Energy Solutions
American Conservation Coalition
ConservAmerica
National Taxpayers Union
R Street Institute