



**National Rural Electric  
Cooperative Association**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



**Electric Cooperatives  
of Arkansas**



**Georgia EMC**

Representing Georgia Electric Cooperatives



**KEC**  
Kentucky Association of  
Electric Cooperatives

*Our Power is Our People*



**NDARECs**  
North Dakota Association of  
Rural Electric Cooperatives

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Northeast Association of Electric Cooperatives  
Maine - New Hampshire - Vermont - New York



April 24, 2012

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow  
Chairwoman  
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry  
SR-328A Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Pat Roberts  
Ranking Member  
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry  
SR-328A Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Stabenow and Ranking Member Roberts:

We are writing to respectfully request your support for Lugar Amendment No. 9, making the Rural Energy Savings Program Act (RESPA) a part of the Farm Bill Reauthorization in 2012.

NRECA is the national service organization representing over 900 not-for-profit, member-owned, rural electric cooperative systems, which serve 42 million customers in 47 states. NRECA estimates that cooperatives own and maintain 2.5 million miles or 42 percent of the nation's electric distribution lines covering three-quarters of the nation's landmass. Cooperatives serve approximately 18 million businesses, homes, farms, schools and other establishments in 2,500 of the nation's 3,141 counties. There are 17.5 million electric cooperative member owners in the states represented on your committee.

Improving energy efficiency is a critical step in lowering electricity costs, while helping the environment and creating jobs. RESPA would boost needed investments in energy efficiency in rural areas by providing rural electric cooperative members access to low-interest loans through USDA's Rural Utilities Service (RUS). Through these loans, rural consumers will be able to make upgrades to their homes and small businesses that

may otherwise be out of reach, and will ultimately conserve energy and save money on their electric bills.

The RESPA program builds on USDA's successful RUS electric loan platform which provides loans to cooperative borrowers (and other qualified entities) to build infrastructure for the generation and distribution of electric service to their member owners. Under this program, the cooperatives first use their own funds for such projects. After completion, the co-ops submit documentation and are reimbursed by RUS only after the expenses are found to be within the federal purpose. We believe that this new efficiency program under continued careful RUS management will also garner stellar results.

NRECA and our statewide organizations listed below urge you to support Lugar Amendment No. 9 on RESPA. We thank you for your leadership on agriculture and rural development policy, and appreciate your efforts to ensure that these critical investments are made in rural America.

Sincerely,



Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas, Colorado Rural Electric Association, Georgia Electric Membership Corporation, Indiana Statewide Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives, Inc., Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc., Kentucky Association of Electric Cooperatives, Inc. Michigan Electric Cooperative Association, Minnesota Rural Electric Association, Electric Power Association of Mississippi, Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association, Nebraska Rural Electric Association, North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives, Northeast Association of Electric Cooperatives, Ohio Rural Electric Cooperatives, Inc., Pennsylvania Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc., & South Dakota Rural Electric Association

Cc: Leahy, Patrick J.  
Harkin, Tom  
Conrad, Kent  
Baucus, Max  
Nelson, Ben  
Brown, Sherrod  
Casey, Robert P.  
Klobuchar, Amy  
Bennet, Michael F.  
Gillibrand, Kirsten E.

Lugar, Richard G.  
Cochran, Thad  
McConnell, Mitch  
Chambliss, Saxby  
Johanns, Mike  
Boozman, John  
Grassley, Chuck  
Thune, John  
Hoeven, John