



**National Rural Electric  
Cooperative Association**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

June 19, 2013

Dear Chairman Lucas and Ranking Member Peterson:

On behalf of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), I write to express strong support for the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act. Your efforts to ensure critical advancements are made in rural America are appreciated by more than 42 million electric cooperative consumer-members across the country.

Your bill displays a strong commitment to rural America by ensuring the availability of affordable capital for electric infrastructure, enhancing opportunities for rural broadband services, maintaining affordable rural transportation options and cutting red tape for maintaining utility rights-of-way.

As you work through the amendment process, we urge all Members to **oppose** Gingrey amendment #11 to eliminate the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) Rural Broadband loan program. No one understands better than electric cooperatives how difficult it can be to provide services in rural areas. The reforms proposed by H.R. 1947 strike a careful balance that will spur rural broadband investment and provide for increased transparency in program delivery. Bridging the digital divide is critical in bringing economic recovery to all Americans and if this program is ended, huge opportunities to improve broadband access will be lost.

**Support** Pearce amendment #23, to require the Secretary of Agriculture to conduct a study on the economic impacts of listing the lesser prairie chicken under the Endangered Species Act. Electric cooperatives in the five-state region home to the lesser prairie chicken are hard at work on state and local efforts to increase conservation of habitat vital to the species.

It is time for Congress to pass a five-year Farm Bill. Thank you for your efforts in ensuring that the bill before the House makes meaningful policy reforms and reduces the federal deficit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Kirk Johnson", is placed over a white rectangular redaction box.

Kirk Johnson  
Sr. Vice President, Government Relations  
NRECA

cc: Members of Congress