



May 20, 2024

The Honorable Glenn 'G.T.' Thompson
Chairman
House Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives
1301 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Scott
Ranking Member
House Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives
1305 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Thompson and Ranking Member Scott:

On behalf of the USA Rice Federation (USA Rice), we write to express our support of the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2024.

We greatly appreciate all of the hard work undertaken by the Committee to develop legislation that is needed to provide long term certainty for producers and all segments of the U.S. rice industry. USA Rice looks forward to continuing our work with each of you, the Committee, and Congress in order to ultimately pass and enact a timely, bipartisan, bicameral, and highly effective farm bill before the current legislation expires on September 30 and certainly before the end of this year.

USA Rice's Farm Policy Task Force, which is comprised of rice producers from each of the major rice producing states, developed principles in preparation for the reauthorization of the Farm Bill and the ensuing debate. Many of these principles are reflected in the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2024. The rice industry is very grateful for the Committee's commitment to strengthening and bolstering the farm safety net. These programs are vital to ensuring an effective farm safety net going forward that will help maintain the stability of the U.S. rice industry, from our farms and through the rest of the rice value chain.

USA Rice is especially thankful for the meaningful increase to the rice Price Loss Coverage (PLC) reference price in Title I, which will ensure rice producers have a functioning and viable farm safety net over the next five years. As the top priority for USA Rice, we applaud the Committee for this much-needed improvement to the cornerstone of the rice farmer's safety net, which provides modest support during steep multi-year price declines.

USA Rice also appreciates the streamlining of payment limitation provisions which will allow farmers the ability to appropriately structure their farm businesses in the best way that works for their individual operations while having equitable access to Title I programs. Further, USA Rice applauds the Committee's commitment to modernizing Title I programs by providing provisions for increased payment limitations for many full-time farmers. Moreover, the increased marketing assistance loan rate for rice is a welcomed provision for those who need the post-harvest cashflow. This will also help facilitate the ability of farmers to better market their rice.

We are also grateful for the efforts of the Committee to provide essential and additional investments in the Conservation Title particularly in working lands conservation programs. Rice farmers have long been stewards of the land and having adequate access to programs, including the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), will facilitate continued on-farm conservation efforts that conserve and promote our cherished natural resources. Additionally, USA Rice welcomes the enhancements to the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), which has been an extremely successful program for

rice farmers. Since RCPP's inception in the 2014 Farm Bill, nearly one-third of U.S. rice acres have been beneficially impacted by this tremendously successful public-private partnership program. USA Rice also appreciates the Committee's commitment to these programs remaining voluntary, incentive-based, and locally led. The new funding and program flexibility included in the legislation will strengthen these programs and help farmers address important natural resource objectives.

Trade is essential to the U.S. rice industry, with nearly half of the U.S. crop being exported to more than 120 countries around the world each year. As we face high and rising foreign subsidies, tariffs, and non-tariff trade barriers and other predatory trade practices by countries including India and China, it is imperative that adequate resources are available to showcase to nations around the world the availability, quality, and sustainability of U.S. rice. The Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2024 does just that by doubling funding for the Market Access Program (MAP) and Foreign Market Development (FMD) Program. We thank the Committee for this investment that will help us maintain and expand our market presence worldwide.

Also in Title III, USA Rice is thankful for the Committee's focus on commodity-based, in-kind international food aid. By further prioritizing food over cash, these programs not only help U.S. farmers by purchasing U.S. commodities instead of our competitors' commodities, but this assurance ensures the U.S. maintains one of its most effective and affordable foreign diplomacy initiatives. It also helps maintain domestic political support for U.S. food aid to help those around the globe who are in need of our assistance.

There are a number of other provisions that could prove very beneficial to the U.S. rice industry, and we look forward to working with you on this front as the process moves forward. The passage of a multi-year Farm Bill is crucial for rice producers and the entire U.S. rice industry, especially under the current economic conditions the agriculture community is facing and with so much uncertainty ahead.

Again, we appreciate the Committee's hard work and commitment to the U.S. rice industry through the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2024. USA Rice supports passage of this legislation and stands ready to work with each of you to continue to work toward ensuring the enactment of the timely, bipartisan, bicameral, and highly effective Farm Bill you both are working hard to achieve. USA Rice is grateful to you both for your years of friendship and strong support and leadership for American agriculture, including America's rice farmers and the entire industry.

Sincerely,



Kirk Satterfield
Chair, USA Rice Federation
Mississippi Rice Farmer



Lowell 'L.G.' Raun, Jr.
Chair, USA Rice Farmers
Texas Rice Farmer