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United States Senate
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August 29, 2014

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250-0002

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

I am writing to ask for your assistance in a matter concerning a large number of Arkansas farmers who had contracts with the grain broker, Turner Grain Merchandising Inc., and have not received compensation for delivered grain. Turner Grain acts as an intermediary between producers and clients interested in buying their grain. Farmers get paid once their grain is sold; however, Turner Grain has defaulted on their payments, thereby leaving Arkansas producers with potential losses that are estimated to exceed \$50 million. Given that this is the peak season for harvesting, these farmers are facing significant financial difficulties if their contracts are not honored and Turner Grain files for bankruptcy.

One out of every six jobs in Arkansas is tied to agriculture, and this situation has the potential to have a crippling effect on the industry upon which our state heavily relies. I respectfully request that the Farm Service Agency (FSA) extend the Commodity Credit Corporation loan repayment date for those farmers awaiting payment from Turner Grain. I appreciate the 15-day extension granted by the FSA on August 20, 2014, but I believe more time is needed for these producers as legal issues are resolved. Additionally, I ask that you consider making affected producers eligible for low-interest, emergency loans that would provide them with much-needed operating money while the legal process proceeds. These farmers are victims of what appears to be gross financial mismanagement, and this assistance would alleviate some of their burden as they work hard to harvest the 2014 crop.

I appreciate your prompt attention to this issue. If you have any questions, please contact Jordan Forbes on my staff at 202-224-4843.

Sincerely,



John Boozman
U.S. Senator

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