



American
Conservation
Coalition



April 23, 2021

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

As a group of conservative voices, we jointly write to express our strong support for the reintroduction of the Growing Climate Solutions Act (S.1251/H.R.2820), by Senators Mike Braun (R-IN), Agriculture Ranking Member John Boozman (R-AR) and Agriculture Committee Chair Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), and in the House of Representatives, by Reps. Don Bacon (R-NE-2) and Abigail Spanberger (D-VA-7). It is a limited government approach to addressing climate change that empowers farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners to earn additional revenue from voluntary carbon credit markets for choosing to implement conservation practices that will reduce emissions while also addressing water quality concerns and improving soil productivity over time.

This bill enjoys bipartisan support and broad appeal within the Republican conference, as twenty-two Senators from the GOP co-sponsored its introduction. Joining Sens. Braun and Boozman were: Sens. Bill Cassidy (R-LA), Susan Collins (R-ME), John Cornyn (R-TX), Kevin Cramer (R-ND), Michael Crapo (R-ID), Joni Ernst (R-IA), Deb Fischer (R-NE), Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Chuck Grassley (R-IA), John Hoeven (R-ND), Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-MS), Cynthia Lummis (R-WY), Roger Marshall (R-KS), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Rob Portman (R-OH), Mitt Romney (R-UT), Marco Rubio (R-FL), John Thune (R-SD), Todd Young (R-IN), and Tommy Tuberville (R-AL). In the House, Rep. Bacon was joined by 9 members of the Republican conference, including: John Curtis (R-UT), Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE), Trey Hollingsworth (R-IN), John Katko (R-NY), Nancy Mace (R-SC), Elise Stefanik (R-NY), Rob Wittman (R-VA), and Mike Kelly (R-PA).

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 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,

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