

May 15, 2024

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow  
Chair  
Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry Cmte  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Boozman  
Ranking Member  
Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry Cmte  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Glenn “G.T.” Thompson  
Chair  
Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

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

Dear Chairwoman Stabenow, Ranking Member Boozman, Chairman Thompson, and Ranking Member Scott:

We support robust funding in this year’s Farm Bill to support voluntary programs that help agricultural producers reduce nutrient pollution to our nation’s waterways. These programs help protect the water sources that many craft breweries depend on to produce high-quality beer.

Beer is mostly water, a resource that our businesses care about deeply. The quality of our source water significantly affects our finished product. Compounds present in brewing water can affect pH, aroma, and taste. Trace quantities of contaminants can affect the metabolism of yeast and the physical properties of beer, including its color and stability. Even small chemical disruptions in our water supply could influence the quality of our brews.

For breweries that depend on surface water, changes in water quality due to pollution can affect the brewing process and our bottom line. We need reliable sources of clean water to consistently produce the great beer that is key to our success. It is thanks in part to this important natural resource that the craft brewing industry contributes about \$72 billion to the U.S. economy each year, along with more than 460,000 jobs.<sup>1</sup>

The Farm Bill funds important programs that help keep our source waters clean and safe to use. Agricultural pollution from fertilizers and pesticides is the leading cause of water quality impairments in the United States, creating aquatic “dead zones” and contaminating drinking water sources. Fortunately, agricultural practices such as planting cover crops, reducing tillage, and planting vegetated buffer zones along streams can reduce this pollution and protect our water supply.

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<sup>1</sup> Brewers Association statistics from 2022. <https://www.brewersassociation.org/statistics-and-data/economic-impact-data/>.

We support robust funding for the voluntary Farm Bill programs that incentivize these practices. Specifically, we ask that the COVER Act and the Healthy Soils Healthy Climate Act be included in this year's Farm Bill and that the resources provided for these programs in the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 not be reduced or eliminated.

We also ask that you oppose any efforts to attach harmful policy riders to the Farm Bill that would exempt pesticides applied to waterways from the Clean Water Act. The Clean Water Act provides critical information to the public about what chemicals are in our waters and helps keep our water sources safe.

Thank you for considering our views on this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Rob Tod  
Founder  
Portland, ME



Seth Gross  
Owner  
Durham, NC



Sandy & Jay Boss  
Febbo  
Owners/Brewers  
St. Paul, MN



Judy Neff  
Owner  
Baltimore, MD



Peggy Zwerver  
Owner  
Philadelphia, PA



Brent Schwoerer  
Owner/Founder  
Springfield, IL



Kris Spaulding  
President  
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