

May 21, 2024

The Honorable Glenn “GT” Thompson  
Chairman  
1301 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Scott  
Ranking Member  
1301 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Thompson and Ranking Member Scott,

The National Association of Wheat Growers (NAWG) is pleased that the House of Representatives is taking the first step in the farm bill reauthorization process by introducing and scheduling a markup of the Farm, Food, and Natural Security Act of 2024. NAWG is committed to working with committee members and their staff to ensure that the bill addresses the priorities of wheat farmers and can move forward in a bipartisan fashion to allow for its ultimate passage in both chambers.

NAWG continues to advocate for a strong crop safety net. Integral to this will be ensuring that there are no cuts that could undermine the crop insurance program. Crop insurance is a critical public-private risk management tool for wheat growers. NAWG urges lawmakers to protect and strengthen crop insurance in this bill, which is the cornerstone of the farm safety net. NAWG appreciates that the bill increases the maximum coverage level for the Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO) to 90 percent of the county yield and the premium discount to 80 percent. Additionally, we appreciate the inclusion of the bipartisan Crop Insurance for Future Farmer Act (H.R. 3904), which expands premium discounts for beginning and veteran farmers for the first ten years of farming.

The Title I farm safety net programs Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) help protect wheat growers from significant crop price or revenue declines. To this end, NAWG is incredibly grateful to see a meaningful increase to the statutory wheat reference price addressed in the bill. The current statutory reference price of \$5.50 is not an adequate safety net for wheat production, and the proposed statutory reference price of \$6.35 is a meaningful improvement to help address the rising cost of production and increased input costs. We also appreciate the increase in the ARC guarantee, increased maximum payment rate, continuation of the annual election between ARC and PLC, and opportunity to expand base acres.

The conservation title includes several provisions NAWG supports including an increased focus on technical assistance and staffing for conservation program delivery and the bill’s continued strong funding for the voluntary incentive-based programs, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and the Conservation Stewardship Program. NAWG appreciates the focus on highly erodible land in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and increasing the payment limit in the program to \$125,000 per year. Additionally, NAWG welcomes the updated rental rate development process for CRP and additional transparency on the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) decisions on county rental rates.

The trade title includes several NAWG priorities, including the doubling of the Market Access Program (MAP) and Foreign Market Development Program (FMD), which are critical to building and expanding United States wheat into new markets and increasing wheat demand worldwide. Additionally, we appreciate elements of the American Farmers Feed the World Act (H.R. 4293) being included in the base text, notably the prioritization of U.S. commodities, increased consultation between the U.S. Agency for

International Development and USDA, and streamlining the release mechanism for the Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust to better respond to humanitarian crisis.

The farm bill also includes many other important programs for wheat growers, such as research, rural broadband, credit, and certainty in crop protection product labeling. As Congress continues its work on the farm bill, we urge you to include these bipartisan policy priorities and advance legislation that will provide a strong safety net for our farmers, prioritize working lands conservation programs, and help to build new markets for United States wheat. Ultimately, Congress must produce a farm bill that can pass the House and Senate this year to give certainty about the structure of the safety net moving forward. We urge Congress to move forward to secure the best farm policy options for wheat growers.

Sincerely,



Keeff Felty  
President

CC: Members of the House Agriculture Committee