



MISSOURI FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

P.O. Box 658, 701 South Country Club Drive, Jefferson City, MO 65102 / (573) 893-1400

February 22, 2022

The Honorable Roy Blunt
260 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Blunt:

Following Missouri Farm Bureau's (MOFB) Annual Meeting in December, as well as the American Farm Bureau Annual Meeting in January, we identified the following priorities as key issues at the national level for 2022. Our organization will focus heavily on the issues listed below, in addition to other issues that may arise that are consistent with our member-adopted policy. The Missouri Farm Bureau policy book can be found on our website by visiting www.mofb.org.

Revitalizing Rural Communities. Our farm and rural economies have been struggling in recent years. It is more critical now than ever to invest in rural infrastructure, including broadband, to improve the overall quality of life and access to services in rural America. As historic amounts of federal dollars are appropriated, Missouri Farm Bureau is committed to ensuring investments in projects that are scalable into the future, including raising the standard speed for broadband projects funded by state or federal dollars to 100mbps/100mbps. Missouri Farm Bureau is committed to engaging on issues impacting the rural way of life, including transportation, energy, healthcare, and other issues that are integral to ensuring new generations can return to and thrive in our communities.

Addressing Input Costs, Concentration, and Supply Chain Issues. Farmers and ranchers across the nation are feeling the impacts of out-of-control inflation as we enter the 2022 growing season. In some cases, we are not able to access products at all. If the product is available, farmers are paying anywhere from two to three times the cost of necessary agriculture inputs, including fertilizer and crop protection products.

Promoting Transparency in Cattle Markets. In recent years, farmers and ranchers have seen a record spread between the price they receive for cattle and the price consumers pay for beef. For instance, in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic in early April to mid-May 2020, the live-to-cutout spread nearly quadrupled. Packers experienced record profits while farmers received record low prices for their cattle. Many were lucky to break even at all. The resulting financial strain at the farm gate has left farmers with questions about the lack of price transparency in the marketplace. Missouri Farm Bureau is committed to seeking additional ways to provide transparency in the marketplace through legislative, regulatory, and private sector solutions. More specifically, Missouri Farm Bureau supports the establishment of a Beef Contracts Library and efforts to increase the share of cash trade in cattle markets on a regional basis.

Regulatory Oversight. Missouri farmers and ranchers need clarity when it comes to federal regulation. Given the Biden Administration's efforts to rewrite the Navigable Waters Protection Rule, our organization is positioned to defend farmers' property rights and ensure that agriculture is

protected in discussions surrounding federal regulation of water. We vigorously oppose efforts to place unnecessary regulatory burdens on our farmers, ranchers, and small business owners.

International Trade. Maintaining access to current markets and expanding potential trade partnerships is a priority of our organization. Farmers and ranchers rely heavily on international trade to market our products, and we are prepared to work with your office, as well as your colleagues in the Administration, to implement new trade agreements that expand market access while ensuring farmers and ranchers are getting a fair shake. We continue to monitor implementation of the China Phase One Deal. We also will be leaning on the Administration to nominate qualified individuals to positions important to international trade.

Laying the Groundwork for the 2023 Farm Bill. Work will begin this year to craft a new, five-year Farm Bill for eventual consideration in 2023. Missouri Farm Bureau will be engaged in these conversations and vetting various proposals that may be considered by Congress. Our organization looks forward to these conversations and intends to communicate any specific policy priorities in the latter part of this year. As a general rule, protecting crop insurance and Title I farm programs will be high priorities for our organization. In addition, climate and conservation will continue to be hot topics as we consider this important legislation. These issues have the potential to have major impacts on the agriculture sector. Many Missouri producers already utilize one or multiple conservation practices on their farms; highlighting the important work our farmers do to care for the environment will be key to demonstrating the needs of agriculture in these conversations. As “climate-focused” proposals are considered, we strongly believe practices should be voluntary, incentive-based and practical/flexible (i.e. recognize the challenges associated with production agriculture and the difficult decisions farmers face throughout the year).

Thank you for all of the work you do to advocate on behalf of Missouri agriculture. We are incredibly appreciative of the strong partnership we have formed over the years, and we look forward to continuing our relationship this year and beyond. If you have any questions about these priority issues please contact Spencer Tuma, Director of National Legislative Programs, or me at (573) 893-1402. Your team can reach Spencer directly at spencer.tuma@mofb.org or (573) 893-1408.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Garrett Hawkins".

Garrett Hawkins
President