

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

October 16, 2018

The Honorable Pat Roberts, Chairman
United States Senate
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow, Ranking Member
United States Senate
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Conaway, Chairman
United States House of Representatives
1301 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Collin Peterson, Ranking Member
United States House of Representatives
1301 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Roberts, Chairman Conaway, Ranking Member Stabenow, and Ranking Member Peterson:

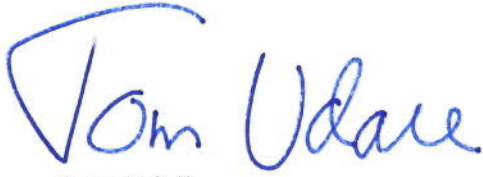
We write today to request you maintain the Senate language for acequias to assure access conservation programs, most importantly the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), which are critical to continued operation and maintenance of acequias. The House Farm Bill includes language that would enable acequias to access EQIP and CSP, which was improved upon in the Senate Farm Bill.

In addition, we also ask that you include Senate language for land grant-mercedes as eligible entities for EQIP and CSP. These traditional communities are a core part of New Mexico's agricultural industry and cultural heritage and their sustainment is the lifeline that conserves our land, water, and natural resources while providing food security for families in New Mexico and across the nation.

Strategic investments from EQIP and CSP for acequias and land grant-mercedes will provide increased agricultural water efficiency and further conservation of soil, water, and other natural resources through technical assistance. As you may know, New Mexico is an arid state. Acequias, irrigation districts, and other water users benefit from EQIP and CSP funds to increase cost savings, reduce water consumption, address water quality, and advance soil health. By including the Senate language to grant acequias and land grant-mercedes access to EQIP and CSP, farm and ranch operations can sustain cultural traditions, institute sustainable practices, and protect our natural resources.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to working with you during your continued negotiations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Udall". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Tom Udall
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Martin Heinrich". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Martin Heinrich
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michelle Lujan Grisham". The signature is cursive and flows across the line.

Michelle Lujan Grisham
United States Representative

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Pearce". The signature is cursive and features a large, stylized "P".

Steve Pearce
United States Representative

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ben Ray Lujan". The signature is cursive and includes a large flourish at the end.

Ben Ray Luján
United States Representative