

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 15, 2017

The Honorable John Hoeven  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and  
Drug Administration and Related Agencies

The Honorable Jeff Merkley  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and  
Drug Administration and Related Agencies

Dear Chairman Hoeven and Ranking Member Merkley:

We write to ask your support for a new program authorized under the Agricultural Act of 2014. The Acer Access and Development Program was included in the Farm Bill to support and enhance the growth of the maple syrup industry. To ensure that this new program is successful, we respectfully request no less than \$5 million for the Acer Access and Development Program in the FY2018 Agriculture appropriations bill.

Maple syrup is an important agricultural product across 10 states in the Northeast and Upper Midwest. According to the USDA, in 2014, the United States produced more than 3.2 million gallons of syrup, worth approximately \$75-\$100 million. Maple sugaring provides income to an estimated 10,000 maple producers spread across the country. Some are full time producers, while others are tapping trees to help supplement their income. Maple is also a critical conservation crop, which helps to keep our forests in production, conserves important lands, protects water quality, and provides a valuable economic benefit to rural communities.

The maple industry has shown significant growth in recent years. U.S. production has nearly doubled in the last decade thanks to recent innovations in vacuum tubing, sanitation practices, and better taps. The new Acer program will provide the opportunity for further investment and research in innovations like this to continue to increase production of this important crop, strengthen conservation, and help drive efficiency.

We are pleased that these new technologies are helping the United States to produce high quality maple syrup. While Canada is supplying 80 percent of the worldwide maple syrup market, increased production and efficiency in the U.S. is allowing domestic producers to gain ground. If provided appropriated funds, the Acer Access and Development Program will greatly help these efforts and allow for further investment in research, sustainability and increased production to allow U.S. producers to better compete in the global marketplace.

We understand that in the current fiscal climate budgets are constrained, which is why we are asking the Committee to fund this program at only one quarter of its authorized amount of \$20 million. We appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to working with you to support this important domestic agricultural product.


Sincerely,




Christopher S. Murphy  
United States Senate



Debbie Stabenow  
United States Senate



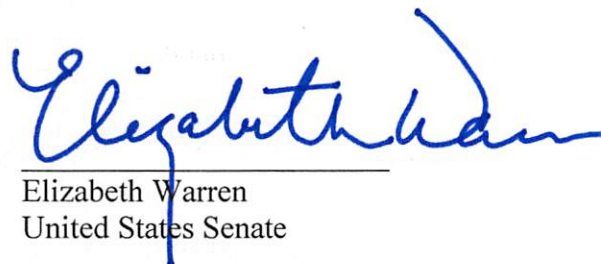
Angus S. King Jr.  
United States Senate



Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senate



Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senate



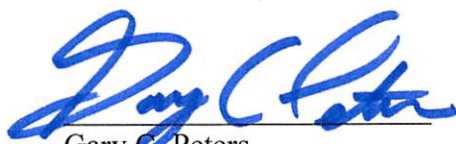
Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senate



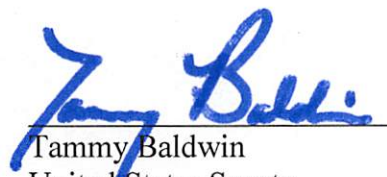
Bernard Sanders  
United States Senate



Margaret Wood Hassan  
United States Senate



Gary C. Peters  
United States Senate



Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senate



Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senate



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senate

J. W. M.

James W. M.

John W. M.

John W. M.

John W. M.

John W. M.

John W. M.

John W. M.

John W. M.

John W. M.

John W. M.

John W. M.