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AFBF Backs Bipartisan Chesapeake Bay Bill

WASHINGTON, D.C., June 17, 2010 – The American Farm Bureau Federation supports a bipartisan bill introduced by Reps. Tim Holden (D-Penn.) and Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.) that seeks to address water quality problems in the Chesapeake Bay.

In a letter to Holden and Goodlatte earlier this week, AFBF President Bob Stallman said the Chesapeake Bay Program Reauthorization and Improvement Act, H.R. 5509, is “a common-sense approach to help agriculture, business, states and local governments within the Chesapeake Bay watershed work together to improve water quality.”

Stallman said the bill is a reasonable and bipartisan solution that farmers and ranchers can support.

“H.R. 5509 provides a viable, effective alternative to other measures that view this problem as a ‘zero-sum’ game,” Stallman said. “Other measures are not just aiming to limit opportunities for agriculture in the watershed but would, in all likelihood, spell the end of agriculture for many farm families.”

Stallman said the H.R. 5509 provides important incentives to farmers to implement additional environmental best management practices that go above and beyond minimum state regulatory compliance requirements.

“Those incentives, like interstate nutrient trading opportunities and an environmental assurance program, not only will help farms but also will benefit communities in the bay’s watershed,” Stallman said. “They also help balance environmental protection with the essential need to expand economic activity, provide affordable housing and a secure and abundant food supply.”

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