

**Animal Legal Defense Fund • Animal Welfare Institute  
ASPCA (American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals)  
Center for Biological Diversity • Center for Environmental Health • Center for Food Safety  
Center for Science in the Public Interest • Clean Air Task Force  
The Compassion In Action Club (Newport Beach, CA) • Compassion in World Farming  
Compassion Over Killing • Consumer Federation of America • Consumers Union  
Defenders of Wildlife • Environment America • Environmental Working Group • Farm Forward  
Farm Sanctuary • Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT) • Food and Water Watch  
Friends of the Earth U.S. • Friends of Family Farmers • Government Accountability Project  
Greenpeace USA • Humane Society Legislative Fund • The Humane Society of the United States  
Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association • Illinois Citizens for Clean Air & Water  
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy • Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future  
Mercy For Animals • Minnesota Food Association • National Consumers League  
National Organic Coalition • National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition  
Natural Resources Defense Council • Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA)/Mass. Chapter  
Organic Consumers Association • People for Animal Rights of Central New York  
Pesticide Action Network • The Pew Charitable Trusts  
Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine • San Diego County Green Party • Sierra Club  
Socially Responsible Agricultural Project • Sonoma County Conservation Action  
Union of Concerned Scientists • The Urban Cat Project • Waterkeeper Alliance  
World Society for the Protection of Animals**

June 17, 2013

Dear Senator/Representative:

The undersigned groups write to express strong opposition to Amendment #71 offered by Representative Steve King and adopted during the House Agriculture Committee's markup of H.R. 1947 (the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act of 2013). Rep. King's amendment aims to block state laws protecting farm animals. The provision is so broad and overreaching that it could also preempt a wide swath of state laws covering everything from child labor to dangerous pesticides to labeling of farm-raised fish to alcohol and tobacco products. It seeks to negate most state and local laws regarding the production or manufacture of agriculture products, directing:

“[T]he government of a State or locality therein shall not impose a standard or condition on the production or manufacture of any agricultural product sold or offered for sale in interstate commerce if (1) such production or manufacture occurs in another State; and (2) the standard or condition is in addition to the standards and conditions applicable to such production or manufacture pursuant to (A) Federal law; and (B) the laws of the State and locality in which such production or manufacture occurs.”

Agricultural products are defined as in 7 U.S.C. 1626, which includes “agricultural, horticultural, viticultural, and dairy products, livestock and poultry, bees, forest products, fish and shellfish, and any products thereof, including processed and manufactured products, and any and all products raised or produced on farms and any processed or manufactured product thereof.”

**UNPRECEDENTED ASSAULT ON HISTORIC POWER OF STATES TO PROTECT HEALTH AND WELFARE OF THEIR OWN CITIZENS:**

The King amendment tries to force states to authorize the purely local sale and consumption of “any agricultural product” – no matter how dangerous, unethical, environmentally destructive, or otherwise of concern. In other words, if any one state in the union tolerates the production or sale of a particular agricultural product, under the King amendment the other 49 must do so as well. This violates the Tenth Amendment's guarantee that the

states' sovereign rights cannot be abridged by Congress, and tries to eliminate states' historic police powers within their borders and destroy the fundamental principles of federalism that have guided our nation since its founding. The King amendment seeks to trigger a race to the bottom, forcing states to allow commerce in products they have banned. As the Supreme Court has made clear, the Commerce Clause allows Congress to regulate commerce; it doesn't give Congress the authority to mandate its creation, nor to require citizens to participate in commerce they find objectionable. The King amendment is so vaguely worded, it could stop states from regulating strictly in-state producers, as long as the agricultural product is sold into the interstate commerce stream at some point by someone in another state. Interpretation of this amendment would likely be litigated for years, creating uncertainty that stifles business and limits economic growth.

**STATE LAWS UNDER THE KING AMENDMENT AX:**

Rep. King's amendment takes aim at state laws approved overwhelmingly by voters through ballot initiatives or by state legislatures. The King amendment could negate a wide range of measures regarding animal welfare, food safety, labeling, environmental requirements, labor standards, and other issues. It is standard practice for states to impose conditions relating to the production or manufacture of agriculture products in order to safeguard their citizens. Some examples include state laws regarding use of dangerous pesticides on crops; arsenic in poultry feed; rules on raw milk, milk fat, and milk solids; standards on alcohol production such as additives, container sterilization, and age limits for manufacturer employees; tobacco laws; labeling of farm-raised fish, artificial sweeteners, maple syrup, alcohol, distiller's grains, and other products; rules on firewood transported into the state in order to protect against invasive pests and damage to local forests; shipment of Christmas trees; labeling requirements and germination standards for seeds; listing of chemicals known to cause cancer, birth defects, or other reproductive harm, and notification of significant amounts of chemicals in products; state pollution standards, such as bans on spraying sewage on crops directly before they are fed to people, and requirements for lagoon siting, wastewater discharge, and use of licensed sludge applicators; agricultural employment, including child labor laws, standards for inspections and certifications, and health and safety standards for agricultural employees involving use of dangerous farm machinery, field sanitation, exposure to pesticides, respiratory hazards, heat-illness, and hearing loss prevention; and animal welfare laws restricting practices such as intensive confinement of animals on large farms, horse slaughter, the killing of sharks for their fins, and the sale of dog and cat meat. States require disclosure of certain ingredients, restrict the sale of products that citizens and state legislators have determined have a negative impact on the environment or population, protect against public nuisance, require certain certifications – the sweeping language of Amendment #71 could brush away countless laws adopted by states with regard to agriculture.

We urge Congress to reject the King amendment or any similar radical assault on duly-enacted state and local laws. We appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

Stephen Wells  
Executive Director  
**Animal Legal Defense Fund**

Cathy Liss  
President  
**Animal Welfare Institute**

Matthew Bershadker  
President and CEO  
**ASPCA (American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals)**

William Snape  
Senior Counsel  
**Center for Biological Diversity**

Michael Green  
Executive Director  
**Center for Environmental Health**

Andrew Kimbrell  
Executive Director  
**Center for Food Safety**

David Plunkett, J.M., J.D.  
Senior Food Safety Attorney  
**Center for Science in the Public Interest**

Conrad Schneider  
Advocacy Director  
**Clean Air Task Force**

Karen Coyne  
President and CEO  
**The Compassion In Action Club** (Newport Beach, CA)

Leah Garces  
USA Director  
**Compassion in World Farming**

Erica Meier  
Executive Director  
**Compassion Over Killing**

Chris Waldrop  
Director, The Food Policy Institute  
**Consumer Federation of America**

Jean Halloran  
Director, Food Policy Initiatives  
**Consumers Union**

Mary Beth Beetham  
Director of Legislative Affairs  
**Defenders of Wildlife**

Anna Aurilio  
Director, Washington DC Office  
**Environment America**

Scott Faber  
Vice President of Government Affairs  
**Environmental Working Group**

Ben Goldsmith  
Executive Director  
**Farm Forward**

Bruce Friedrich  
Senior Director for Advocacy  
**Farm Sanctuary**

Richard R. Wood  
Executive Director  
**Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT)**

Wenonah Hauter  
Executive Director  
**Food and Water Watch**

Lisa Archer  
Director, Food and Technology Program  
**Friends of the Earth U.S.**

Ivan Maluski  
Policy Director  
**Friends of Family Farmers**

Amanda Hitt  
Director, Food Integrity Campaign  
**Government Accountability Project**

Kyle Ash  
Senior Legislative Representative  
**Greenpeace USA**

Danielle Diamond  
Attorney  
**Illinois Citizens for Clean Air & Water**

Jim Harkness  
President  
**Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy**

Michael Markarian  
President  
**Humane Society Legislative Fund**

Wayne Pacelle  
President and CEO  
**The Humane Society of the United States**

Barry Kellogg, V.M.D.  
Senior Veterinary Advisor  
**Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association**

Dr. Robert Lawrence  
Director  
**Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future**

Nathan Runkle  
Executive Director  
**Mercy For Animals**

Glenn Hill  
Executive Director  
**Minnesota Food Association**

Sally Greenberg  
Executive Director  
**National Consumers League**

Liana Hoodes  
Executive Director  
**National Organic Coalition**

Martha Noble  
Senior Policy Associate  
**National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition**

Franz A. Matzner  
Associate Director of Government Affairs  
**Natural Resources Defense Council**

Jack Kittredge  
NOFA/Mass Policy Director  
**Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA)/Massachusetts Chapter**

Ronnie Cummins  
Executive Director  
**Organic Consumers Association**

Linda A. DeStefano  
President  
**People for Animal Rights of Central New York**

Margaret Reeves  
Senior Scientist  
**Pesticide Action Network**

Seth Horstmeyer  
Director, Reforming Industrial Animal Agriculture  
**The Pew Charitable Trusts**

Neal D. Barnard, M.D.  
President  
**Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine**

Hugh Moore  
Treasurer  
**San Diego County Green Party**

Debbie Sease  
National Campaigns Director  
**Sierra Club**

Kendra Kimbirauskas  
CEO  
**Socially Responsible Agricultural Project**

Dennis Rosatti  
Executive Director  
**Sonoma County Conservation Action**

Andrew Rosenberg, Ph.D.  
Director  
Center for Science and Democracy  
**Union of Concerned Scientists**

Anne Feingold  
Director  
**The Urban Cat Project**

Kelly Hunter Foster  
Senior Attorney  
**Waterkeeper Alliance**

Anne Lieberman  
Executive Director  
**World Society for the Protection of Animals**