



Forging a partnership between farmers and consumers
• Working together for Ohio's farmers •

April 29, 2015

To All Members of the Ohio Delegation:

I write today to urge your support for H.R. 1732, the *Regulatory Integrity Protection Act of 2015*. As farmers across Ohio engage in preparing their farms for this growing season, they are left with many questions about what can and cannot be done on their farms with or without a permit. The U.S. EPA "waters of the U.S." rule was created under the auspice of providing certainty but instead has left many farmers confused and worried about increased regulatory liability. Congress must act now on H.R. 1732 to ensure that the final rule addresses concerns of the agriculture community and provides regulatory clarity.

H.R. 1732 requires the agencies to withdraw the current proposed rule that defines "waters of the U.S." and charges them with developing a new proposed rule. The legislation also requires that the agencies solicit recommendations from and consult with state and local officials and other stakeholders on how to define "waters of the U.S." The agencies must prepare a new regulatory proposal that is consistent with Supreme Court rulings, the feedback from public comments and recommendations from the state and local officials and other stakeholders.

The agricultural community contributes over \$107 billion to Ohio's economy. Leaving this important sector vulnerable to an overreach of authority that creates confusion about farm practices and regulatory liability is not sound policy. Ohio farmers have worked extensively with the Ohio EPA and our conservation partners and together we have a proven track record of implementing water quality and conservation programs. Providing the U.S. EPA with unlimited authority to regulate at their discretion is counter to the established and effective regulatory structure already utilized in our state.

Ohio Farm Bureau believes it is critical for Congress to pass H.R. 1732 without weakening amendments and I encourage your yes vote on this bill.

Sincerely,

John C. Fisher
Executive Vice President

JCF/yl/alh

cc: Ohio Farm Bureau State Trustees