

March 4, 2025

The Honorable John Boozman
Chairman
Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, and
Forestry Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
Ranking Member
Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, and
Forestry Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Boozman and Ranking Member Klobuchar:

We write to express our strong support for the nomination of Stephen Alexander Vaden as Deputy Secretary of Agriculture. As representatives of farmers, ranchers, agribusinesses, cooperatives, state departments of agriculture, processors, growers, and conservationists, we believe that Judge Vaden's extensive experience and deep-rooted commitment to American agriculture make him exceptionally well-qualified to serve in this critical leadership role at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

A native of Union City, Tennessee, Judge Vaden grew up working with his father on his family's diversified row crop farm, instilling in him a lifelong passion for agriculture. This passion has guided his impressive career, which spans agriculture, law, and public service. His academic credentials include a law degree from Yale University, and his professional background includes time at two prominent law firms and two federal clerkships.

Judge Vaden has already demonstrated outstanding leadership within USDA. During his tenure as General Counsel from 2017 to 2020, he supervised over 250 legal professionals across 13 offices, providing guidance on matters vital to the agricultural community. His accomplishments included successfully litigating two cases before the U.S. Supreme Court, implementing key provisions of the 2018 farm bill, and leading the development of critical regulations for the sale of hemp and bioengineered product labeling.

Currently serving as a judge on the United States Court of International Trade, Judge Vaden brings a unique understanding of agriculture's role in international markets. His work addressing federal trade issues, including those involving agricultural commodities, will be indispensable as USDA continues to navigate global trade challenges and create a level playing field and expanded opportunities for U.S. farmers, ranchers, and agribusinesses.

Judge Vaden's qualifications are further underscored by his prior Senate confirmations—both as General Counsel for USDA and as a federal judge.

We are confident that Judge Vaden's leadership alongside Secretary Brooke Rollins will ensure USDA remains a strong advocate for farmers, ranchers, agribusinesses, and rural communities. His deep understanding of the agricultural economy, regulatory landscape, and global trade dynamics will be instrumental as the department works to address challenges such as stabilizing the farm economy, strengthening supply chains, and implementing a new farm bill.

We urge your committee and the entire United States Senate to act swiftly to confirm Judge Stephen Vaden as the next Deputy Secretary of Agriculture. His leadership, experience, and dedication to American agriculture will make a profound impact on the success of our nation's farmers, ranchers, agribusinesses, and rural communities.

Thank you for your consideration and your continued support of American agriculture.

Sincerely,

Agriculture Retailers Association
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Feed Industry Association
American Seed Trade Association
American Soybean Association
American Sugarbeet Growers Association
CropLife America
Farm Credit Council
International Fresh Produce Association
Meat Institute
National Association of Conservation Districts
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Corn Growers Association
National Cotton Council
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Grain and Feed Association
National Milk Producers Federation
National Pork Producers Council
National Sorghum Producers Association
The Fertilizer Institute
USA Rice
Agribusiness Council of Indiana

Agricenter International
Agricultural Council of Arkansas
Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas
Alabama Agribusiness Council
Alabama Farmers Federation
Alabama Pork Producers
Almond Alliance
Amcot
American Association of Crop Insurers
American Cotton Shippers Association
American Livestock Markets and Dealers Association
American Pistachio Growers
American Sheep Industry Association
American Sugarbeet Growers Association
AmericanHort
Animal Health Institute
Arizona Cotton Growers Association
Arizona Crop Protection Association
Arizona Farm Bureau
Arizona Nursery Association
Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation
Arkansas Soybean Association
Berryman and Associates
Bush Hog, Inc
California Association of Winegrape Growers
California Citrus Mutual
California Farm Bureau
California Pork Producers Association
CEA Alliance
ClearPath Action
Colorado Farm Bureau
Connecticut Farm Bureau Association
Corn Refiners Association
Cotton Growers Warehouse Association
Cotton Warehouse Association of America
Council of Producers & Distributors of Agrotechnology

Crop Insurance and Reinsurance Bureau
Crop Insurance Professionals Association
Delaware Farm Bureau
Ducks Unlimited
Equine Sports Council
Farm Animal Care Coalition of Tennessee
Florida Citrus Mutual
Florida Farm Bureau Federation
Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association
FMI - The Food Industry Association
Forest Landowners Association
Georgia Farm Bureau
Global Cold Chain Alliance
Grain and Feed Association of Illinois
GROWMARK
Growth Energy
Idaho Dairymen's Association, Inc.
Idaho Farm Bureau Federation
Idaho Grain Producers Association
IL Corn Growers Association
Illinois Farm Bureau
Illinois Seed Trade Association, Inc.
Independent Bakers Association
Indiana Corn Growers Association
Indiana Farm Bureau, Inc.
International Dairy Foods Association
Iowa Farm Bureau
Iowa Pork Producers Association
Iowa Soybean Association
Kansas Agribusiness Retailers Association
Kansas Farm Bureau
Kansas Grain and Feed Association
Kansas Sorghum Producers
Kansas Soybean Association
Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation
Livestock Marketing Association

Livestock Marketing Association of Texas
Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation
Maine Sheep Breeders Association
Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation
Massachusetts Forest Alliance
McCurdy Sod Farms LLC
Michigan Agri-Business Association
Michigan Farm Bureau
Michigan Soybean Association
Mid Atlantic Soybean Association
Middle TN Nursery Association
Midsouth Grain Association
Midwest Council on Agriculture
Midwest Dry Bean Coalition
Midwest Food Products Association
Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation
Minnesota Lamb & Wool Producers Association
Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation
Mississippi Land Bank, ACA
Mississippi River Trust
Missouri Farm Bureau Federation
Missouri Soybean Association
Montana Farm Bureau Federation
National Cotton Ginners Association
National Council of Agricultural Employers
National Fisheries Institute
National Grocers Association
National Oilseed Processors Association
NC Agribusiness Council
NCA - The National Confectioners Association
Nebraska Farm Bureau Federation
Nebraska Pork Producers Association
Nebraska Soybean Association
Nevada Farm Bureau Federation
New Jersey Farm Bureau
New York Farm Bureau

North American Blueberry Council
North American Renderers Association
North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation
North Dakota Corn Growers Association
North Dakota Soybean Growers Association
Northeast Dairy Producers Association
Northwest Horticultural Council
Nutrien
Ohio AgriBusiness Association
Ohio Farm Bureau
Ohio Pork Council
Ohio Soybean Association
Oklahoma Farm Bureau
Oregon Farm Bureau
Pennsylvania Farm Bureau
Pheasants Forever
Pillen Family Farms & DNA Genetics
Plains Cotton Growers, Inc.
Plant Based Products Council
Quail Forever
Second Harvest Food Bank of East Tennessee
Snake River Sugarbeet Growers Association
Society of American Florists
South Carolina Corn and Soybean Association
South Dakota Farm Bureau
South Dakota Soybean Association
Southern Crop Production Association
Southwest Council of Agribusiness
Southwest Meat Association
Tennessee Association of Conservation Districts
Tennessee Beekeepers Association
Tennessee Cattlemen's Association
Tennessee Corn Growers Association
Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association
Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation
Tennessee Feed & Grain Assn

Tennessee Forestry Association
Tennessee Nursery & Landscape Association, Inc.
Tennessee Pork Producers Assn
Tennessee Sheep Producers Association
Tennessee Soybean Association
Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders' & Exhibitors' Association
Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders Foundation
Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration
Texas Cattle Feeders Association
Texas Citrus Mutual
Texas Farm Bureau
Texas Forestry Association
Texas Grain & Feed Association
Texas International Produce Association
Texas Pork Producers Association
Texas Vegetable Association
Texas Watermelon Association
The Center for Dairy Excellence
The Poultry Federation
TN Dairy Producers Association
TN Poultry Association
U.S. Beet Sugar Association
U.S. Custom Harvesters, Inc.
U.S. Dairy Export Council
U.S. Durum Growers Association
US Rice Producers Association
Utah Farm Bureau Federation
Virginia Agribusiness Council
Virginia Farm Bureau
Walking Horse Report
Washington Apple Commission
Washington Farm Bureau
Washington State Tree Fruit Association
Western Growers
Western Peanut Growers Association
Wildlife Mississippi

Wilson County-Tennessee State Fair

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation

Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation