

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 12, 2017

Hon. Sonny Perdue  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave SW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue,

In the early part of March this year, a series of wildfires burned over 1.5 million acres of land in Western Oklahoma, Western Kansas, and the Texas Panhandle. These fires killed thousands of head of cattle and destroyed hundreds of miles of fence, impacting countless families, businesses, and communities. These initial numbers are staggering, but we will be unable to accurately assess the true impact these fires have had until months or years from now. With that in mind, we write you today to ask for long-term support for the farmers and ranchers hit the hardest by these devastating wildfires.

In response to a directive from President Donald J. Trump on April 4, 2017, the U.S. Department of Agriculture authorized emergency grazing on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) lands located in Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas for 90 days. This was a vital step in ensuring that producers had the ability to feed and contain the numbers of their herd that survived. The flexibility to graze on CRP land is critical to the survival of many operations throughout our districts. We thank President Trump and Acting Secretary Young for using their authority to provide much-needed relief for these producers.

On behalf of these producers, we request an extension of the emergency grazing authorization. It takes a significant amount of time to regrow the forage and rebuild the facilities that are needed to properly maintain, contain, and care for the surviving livestock. Farmers and ranchers will soon have to make other arrangements for their livestock to comply with the July 3<sup>rd</sup> removal deadline. We ask you to use your authority to avoid placing additional uncertainty on these farmers and ranchers by extending the original 90-day emergency grazing authorization. We look forward to working with you to continue to assist affected producers during this difficult rebuilding process.

Sincerely,



Frank D. Lucas  
Member of Congress

Mac Thornberry  
Member of Congress



Roger Marshall, M.D.  
Member of Congress