



Chair – Nate Beason, Nevada County
First Vice Chair – Lee Adams, Sierra County
Second Vice Chair – John Viegas, Glenn County
Past Chair – Kevin Cann, Mariposa County

President and CEO – Greg Norton
Executive Vice President – Patricia J. Megason
Chief Financial Officer – Karl Dolk

January 16, 2014

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Chairwoman
Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition & Forestry
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Frank Lucas
Chairman
Committee on Agriculture
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition & Forestry
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Colin Peterson
Ranking Member
Committee on Agriculture
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) Program

Dear Chairwoman Stabenow, Ranking Member Cochran, Chairman Lucas and Ranking Member Peterson:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), we write to request that the final Farm Bill Conference Report include a renewal for the Department of Interior's Payments In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program. The PILT program provides critical funding to nearly all of California counties, making up for diminished tax revenues stemming from federal ownership of land within county boundaries. Unfortunately, the FY 2014 Omnibus Appropriations Bill did not include resources for this vital program.

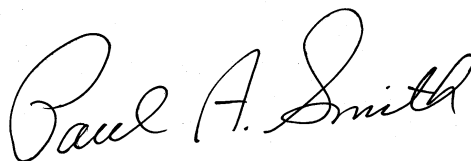
Many of California's counties, particularly those containing significant federal landholdings, rely on PILT funds as sizeable percentages of their budgets. And, many of the same rural counties that rely on programs in the Farm Bill also depend on PILT to sustain their economies and serve their citizens. These dollars help fund essential services like road maintenance, public safety departments and emergency medical services. Without continued funding of PILT, California's rural counties will face drastic budget cuts and will struggle to fund the most basic county services.

The Honorable Stabenow, Cochran, Lucas, and Peterson
January 16, 2014
Page 2

We believe the federal government must honor the pledge it made to rural counties over 30 years ago when PILT was created. As such, the program deserves funding.

We urge you to include a renewal of the PILT program in the final Farm Bill Conference Report. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at psmith@rcrcnet.org or 916-447-4806.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul A. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

PAUL A. SMITH
Senior Legislative Advocate

cc: RCRC Member County Congressional Delegation