DATE

The Honorable [First Name Last Name]

Office

City, State Zip

Dear Senator [Last Name]:

On behalf of [insert name of organization], we encourage you to support the $8.8 million Senate funding level for the US Department of Agriculture Rural Cooperative Development Grant (RCDG) program.

The Senate Agriculture Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2014 provides $8.8 million for RCDG funding that is critical to the development of cooperatives and businesses in rural America. The Senate’s support for the program this year is made all the more important by the House’s bill that would eliminate funding for this vital program.

Without sufficient funding for the RCDG program, cooperative development centers providing hands-on assistance will be unable to operate, and the only existing program in the federal government dedicated to cooperative development would be hindered significantly or possibly eliminated.

Cooperatives and their supporters worked with Congress in the 1990’s to create this important program that serves a specific need which is providing technical assistance to create and develop cooperatives in rural America. The program encourages the development of new economic activity and the creation of critically needed jobs in rural areas. Over the years, RCDG funding has been a key foundation for building such economic development in many rural communities across the country.

We hope you will continue to be supportive of this vital and effective program as the bill moves forward in Congress.

Sincerely,

NAME

TITLE