

September 16, 2015

The Honorable Pat Roberts  
Chairman  
Senate Agriculture Committee  
328A Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow  
Ranking Member  
Senate Agriculture Committee  
28A Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Roberts and Ranking Member Stabenow:

The U.S. Grain Standards Act needs to be passed as several provisions of the Act expire September 30. This issue is important to many Washington agriculture sectors as grain producers grow other commodities impacted by this reauthorization.

Events at the Vancouver, Wash.-based United Grain Corporation in 2014/2015, when state delegated inspectors eventually refused to cross picket lines and the Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) failed to send in inspectors, has simultaneously served to obscure and clarify the importance of this legislation. We agree with Congress that FGIS should not be allowed to disavow their responsibility to grade grain in the absence of delegated state inspectors under any circumstances. A provision requiring FGIS to step in during disruptions is needed to assure trading partners of the integrity of our system.

At the same time, we believe FGIS's close relationship with the Washington State Department of Agriculture, which serves as the federal agency's delegated inspection authority, has proven value. That said, we do not object to a more transparent process for selecting delegated partners.

We have been pleased by the progress the 114th Congress has made on many fronts, not the least of which was the recent passage of the President's Trade Promotion Authority. Trade is not only important for our economy, it ties the world together in a way that is better for everyone. The re-authorization of the U.S. Grain Standards Act is another link in that chain, assuring international buyers of the trustworthiness of our grain export system.

We understand time is short. Please pass the re-authorization of the U.S. Grain Standards Act.

Respectfully,

Washington Association of Wheat Growers  
Washington Grain Commission  
Washington State Council of Farmers Cooperatives  
Washington State Farm Bureau  
Washington State Potato Commission  
Western Washington Agricultural Association