



September 16, 2013

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Chairwoman
Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee
United States Senate
133 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee
United States Senate
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank D. Lucas
Chairman
Agriculture Committee
United States House of Representatives
2311 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Collin Peterson
Ranking Member
Agriculture Committee
United States House of Representatives
2109 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Stabenow, Senator Cochran, Chairman Lucas and Representative Peterson,

I am writing to express our opposition to section 11312 of H.R. 2642, the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act of 2013. This section, also known as the King amendment, would nullify hundreds of state and local laws pertaining to agriculture products.

Passage of the King amendment would centralize decision making on an entire set of issues in the hands of the federal government, removing the rights of states, counties, cities and towns to enact our own standards for agricultural products based on the needs and interests of our local constituencies.

The King amendment would negatively impact laws and ordinances on everything from animal welfare issues to invasive pest management, from food labeling to environmental standards.



We were surprised to hear that this dangerous and overly broad amendment has come this close to final passage without ever having been vetted through the House and Senate Judiciary committees. No experts on the 10th amendment have had an opportunity to testify as to what this amendment will or will not do.

The Congressional Research Services stated in an analysis of the King amendment that “the effect this amendment may have on state and local laws is uncertain due to questions concerning how it would be interpreted.” It would be grossly irresponsible to pass such broad legislation when the Congress’s own research service is unsure how far reaching the King amendment may be.

Please reject this or any other version of the King amendment.

Sincerely,

Executive Director
County Executives of America