MARK PRYOR
ARKANSAS
COMMITTEES:
APPROPRIATIONS
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION
SELECT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

255 DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
(202) 224-2353

500 PRESIDENT CLINTON AVENUE
SUITE 401
LITTLE ROCK, AR 72201
(501) 324-6336
TOLL FREE: (877) 259-9602
http://pryor.senate.gov

July 11, 2012

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, Southwest
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

We write in support of the State of Arkansas's request for federal disaster assistance for farmers and ranchers in Arkansas who are facing significant losses due to extreme weather conditions in the spring and summer of 2012. Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe has requested a Secretarial Disaster Designation to cover all 75 counties in Arkansas.

Arkansas has suffered agricultural devastation including damage and losses to crops and pastures due to the effects of a severe drought throughout the entire state that began April 1, 2012, and continues today. As of today, persistently dry conditions have caused 88 percent of the state to be in a severe drought and 36 percent of the state to be in extreme drought.

A U.S. Department of Agriculture disaster declaration will provide farmers the necessary option of applying for emergency loans through the Farm Service Agency. This will allow producers to continue operations despite shortcomings due to the record-breaking drought. For many farmers in Arkansas, this will provide the essential lifeline to meet financial obligations. Emergency loans are vital to farmers who may have no other source of revenue over the next year.

We respectfully request your swift consideration and approval of this request. If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Mark Pryor

U.S. Senator Mark Pryor

John Boozman

U.S. Senator John Boozman

U.S. Representative Rick Crawford

U.S. Representative Tim Griffin

U.S. Representative Steve Womack

U.S. Representative Mike Ross