Reject H.R. 3599's Attempt to Override the Right of Citizens to Maintain Local Control of Food and Farming

Dear Members of Congress:

We the undersigned farm and food organizations urge you to preserve the right of local and state governments to create policies that provide market opportunities to protect rural communities by stopping Congressmen King's efforts to pass H.R. 3599.

H.R. 3599 would negate most state and local laws regarding the production or manufacture of agricultural products. In short, this legislation would limit consumer choice, negate the ability of local governments to protect citizens, and sacrifice market opportunities for family farmers, only to benefit a few corporate agribusiness interests.

Food and farm markets continue to be highly consolidated, providing farmers with few choices to find fair returns on their products. However, the opportunity to create product differentiation through local or regional standards provides the prospect of keeping family farmers and ranchers on the land. Our laws have also been heavily on mandated production standards and conditions to ensure products are safe, healthy, and responsibly produced. Many of the laws governing these market opportunities and consumer protections would be void if H.R. 3599 becomes law.

Farming practices and environmental conditions vary widely throughout the United States and largely are governed by those at the local level who best understand their community. H.R. 3599 seeks to mandate a one-size-fits-all approach by establishing a race to the bottom on any standard of production or manufacture of agricultural products. If enacted, this legislation would eliminate laws protecting animal health and welfare, transport and sale of forest products, community health standards related to water and air pollution, and many more. H.R. 3599 seeks to dismiss the long-held U.S. Constitutional principles that states maintain broad power to protect the health, safety, and welfare of their citizens by regulating the sale of goods and services within their borders. This bill would clearly be detrimental to family farms and ranches and only advantage a very small group of mega farms and agribusinesses.

We urge you to side with farmers, small businesses, consumers, and local governments over corporate agribusiness interests by rejecting H.R. 3599's attempt to override the right of citizens to maintain control of food and farming locally.

Sincerely,

The undersigned organizations:

Alabama Poultry Growers Association
Alaska Farm Bureau
Alianza Nacional de Campesinas [The National Farmerwoman Women’s Alliance]
American Agriculture Movement Inc.
American Grassfed Association
California Dairy Campaign
California Farmers Union
Campaign for Contract Agriculture Reform
Carolina Farm Stewardship Association
Community Alliance for Global Justice
Community Farm Alliance
Contract Poultry Growers Association of the Virginias
Dakota Rural Action
Dawson Resource Council
Fair Wage Project
Family Farm Action
Family Farm Defenders
Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance
Food & Water Watch
Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT)
Food For Maine’s Future
Food Policy Council of San Antonio
Friends of Family Farmers
Future Harvest CASA
Iowa Farmers Union
Iowa Organic Association
Iowa Organic Association
Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future
Land Stewardship Project
Midwest Organic Farmers Cooperative
Minnesota Organic Association, Program of The Food Group
Missouri Farmers Union
National Dairy Producers Organization
National Family Farm Coalition
National Farmers Union
National Organic Coalition
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
Nebraska Farmers Union
Northwest Organic Dairy Producers Alliance
Northeast Organic Farming Association of Connecticut
Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Hampshire
Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York
Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont
Northridge Organic Farming Association/Massachusetts Chapter
Northern Plains Resource Council
Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association
Ohio Farmers Union
Organic Farmers’ Agency for Relationship Marketing, Inc. (OFARM)
Organic Farmers Association
Organic Seed Alliance
Organización en California de Líderes Campesinas, Inc.
Organización for Competitive Markets
Pesticide Action Network
Rural Coalition
Rural Vermont