

June 26, 2013

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
522 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Minority Leader McConnell:

As past leaders of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, we urge your support for S. 744, *The Border Security, Economic Opportunity and Immigration Modernization Act*. The provisions in the bill that address immigration reform for agriculture will help ensure that our farms and ranches remain competitive, and that Americans continue to have access to the safest, most abundant and most affordable food supply in the world.

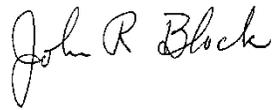
During our tenures as Secretary, each of us has seen firsthand the growing inability of America's farmers, ranchers and growers to find the workers they need to harvest crops, care for animals or maintain healthy orchards. This is a problem that has been growing in severity and intensity for the past three decades. What once might have been seen as a problem for only one segment of producers in a specific region of the country is now a problem for a broad range of farmers and ranchers nationwide.

S. 744 is the best opportunity in decades to fix this problem, and to fix it in a way that ensures that our farmers and ranchers continue to have access to a stable and secure workforce for years to come and that both U.S. and foreign-born workers are treated fairly.

We also find it to be a notable and positive development that groups representing a broad cross section of American agriculture—including those that represent both agricultural employers and farm workers—have joined together in supporting the agricultural provisions in this bill.

Thank you for your attention to this vital issue for American agriculture and we again urge your support for S. 744.

Sincerely,



The Honorable John R. Block  
Secretary of Agriculture  
1981-1986



The Honorable Mike Espy  
Secretary of Agriculture  
1993-1994



The Honorable Clayton Yeutter  
Secretary of Agriculture  
1989-1991



The Honorable Dan Glickman  
Secretary of Agriculture  
1995-2001