

April 19, 2016

The Honorable Harold Rogers  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Robert B. Aderholt  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Sam Farr  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives,

The Information Technology and Innovation Foundation appreciates and supports the inclusion of \$3 million within the *Fiscal Year 2017 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act* to better inform the public about the application of biotechnology to food and agricultural production.

There is a tremendous amount of misinformation about agricultural biotechnology in the public domain. Federal agencies have been impeded from fulfilling their responsibilities to explain and educate on these topics. Congress was wise to enable them to take up the challenge by providing dedicated resources to ensure key federal agencies responsible for the safety of our nation's food supply – the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) – are able to more easily convey to the public science- and fact-based information about food.

Agricultural innovation is important to all Americans. It enables plant and animal producers to increase production of healthful food using less land, while conserving soil, water, and energy. These benefits are

passed on to consumers who reap the advantage of affordable food prices, greater access to safer and more nutritious food, an improved environment, a strengthened rural economy, and enhanced domestic and international food security.

Embracing modern agriculture is the right thing to do for our country, which has a rich history of bipartisan support for nurturing science, research, and innovation in all areas of the economy, including farming. As President Obama stated in December 2011, “The world is shifting to an innovation economy and nobody does innovation better than America.” This presidential quote is displayed prominently in the *National Bioeconomy Blueprint*, which embraces and promotes the use of biotechnology as a significant driver of American economic growth.

The United States is strong and prosperous because American leaders embrace the responsible use of technology and set forth public policies to move the nation forward in this regard. Science education plays an important role in this forward momentum. That is why we support the inclusion of \$3 million for FDA and USDA to help the public better understand science- and fact-based information about agricultural biotechnology.

We urge you to retain this provision throughout the legislative process and oppose any legislative action to restrict agricultural technology development, to hinder farmers’ access to modern agricultural tools, or to malign advancements in plant and animal agricultural applications that are helping society meet current and future food production challenges.

Sincerely,



Robert D. Atkinson  
President and Founder, The Information Technology and Innovation Foundation