

March 8, 2021

The Honorable Lauren Boebert  
United States House of Representatives  
1609 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Boebert:

On behalf of America's farmers and ranchers, I would like to thank you for introducing the Western Water Security Act, which would prevent attempts by federal land management agencies to circumvent long-standing state water law. Farm Bureau has a strong interest in ensuring that the long-standing relationship between federal land management agencies and public land ranchers is maintained.

In the past, the U.S. Forest Service and other federal agencies have attempted to require privately owned businesses to surrender long-held water rights – which they have paid for and developed – as a condition of receiving renewals in their special use permits allowing them to operate on public land. These actions violate federal and state law and would ultimately upset water allocation systems and private property rights on which western economies have been built.

The most valuable resource for every farmer and rancher in America is water. Our farmers and ranchers are the backbone of America, providing food, feed, fuel and fiber for the nation and the world. In addition to input and labor costs and market prices, they rely on the well-established system of private property and water rights when making business decisions.

This legislation represents an important and necessary step in protecting private property rights and upholding long-established water law by prohibiting federal agencies from extorting water rights through the use of permits, leases and other land management arrangements. Further, the legislation recognizes the ability of states to confer water rights and acknowledges that the federal government will respect those lawfully acquired rights, this assures water rights under state law cannot be diminished or jeopardized by assertions of federal agencies that have no basis in federal or state law.

Thank you for introducing this important legislation, and we look forward to securing enactment.

Sincerely,



Zippy Duvall  
President