

## Farmers and Foresters Lead in Addressing the Climate Crisis

Agriculture and forestry are already leading the way in addressing the climate crisis. Producers reduce their carbon footprint through conservation practices on their land, and can now take part in carbon markets that benefit the environment and create income at the same time. But the current marketplace can be confusing, and producers need to know where to start, and who they can trust.

### The Growing Climate Solutions Act

The Growing Climate Solutions Act has support from more than 100 agriculture groups, conservation advocates, and private companies. Introduced by Senators Debbie Stabenow and Mike Braun, and co-sponsored by more than half the U.S. Senate, the bill helps producers understand and access voluntary carbon markets by:

- **Setting up a USDA Certification Program** to certify trusted outside experts and third-party verifiers to help producers generate and sell their voluntary carbon credits.
- **Creating an Online “One Stop Shop” at USDA** that will serve as a comprehensive resource for producers looking to reduce emissions on their operations, sequester carbon on their land, and create income by adopting sustainable practices through voluntary carbon markets.
- **Establishing an Advisory Council** to provide input to USDA to ensure the program is based on the latest science, and works for all farmers. Made up of a majority of producers, the Council will also include representation from the research community and private industry, and a diverse range of producers.

## The Rural Forest Markets Act

The bipartisan Rural Forests Markets Act is supported by a wide range of forestry groups, timber and wood product companies, and conservationists. Also introduced by Senators Stabenow and Braun, the bill helps small-scale, family forest owners access new economic opportunities and develop climate solutions.

Small, family-owned woodlands make up 36 percent of U.S. forests, but as companies increasingly engage with foresters to offset their environmental footprint through carbon and other environmental markets, these small-scale and family-owned forests are often left out due to high upfront costs. The bill helps by:

- **Establishing a Rural Forest Market Investment Program** that offers loans to help small and family forest owners create and sell forest credits for storing carbon or providing other environmental benefits.
- **Providing a climate solution** by encouraging forestland owners to adopt voluntary practices to draw carbon out of the air and store it in forests.
- **Creating new revenue streams** for small-scale, family forest owners by helping them generate credits they can sell in established voluntary marketplaces.
- **Spurring investment in rural communities** by reducing the financial risk for private investors who can contribute the upfront financing that makes these projects possible.

## Funding for Climate Smart Agriculture

Senator Stabenow is the leader in pushing for a dramatic increase in investments for climate-smart agriculture programs as part of the American Jobs Plan.

Because we know carbon and other environmental markets may not be for everyone, we need to make sure every producer that wants to engage their operation in the fight to solve the climate crisis can do so.

That means more funding for voluntary conservation programs, as well as the forestry and agricultural research programs that are so successful and widely popular.