

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

June 19, 2017

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

We write to voice our opposition to the recent proposal included in your Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Request to close the National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research in Peoria, Illinois. The proposed closure of this important research facility would not only negatively impact jobs and the local economy in Peoria, it would have devastating effects on agriculture research efforts and our modern farm economy throughout the country.

For nearly eighty years, the National Center for Agriculture Utilization Research (NCAUR) has served a vital role in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) research efforts to create new industrial and food products from our agriculture commodities and develop new technologies to improve environmental quality. The lab is currently conducting vital research to advance biofuels, reduce or replace chemical pesticides, and develop sustainable industrial and consumer products using agricultural feedstocks. The research efforts at this lab are central to ensuring that the United States remains the leader in the global agricultural marketplace.

NCAUR has a strong history of providing scientific breakthroughs, including the 1941 development of a method to mass produce penicillin, an antibiotic that is considered one of the greatest advances in modern history. The lab also worked to advance innovations that have driven the farm economy, including shifting soybeans from a small forage and rotation crop to one of the most valuable row crops planted by U.S. farmers and developing the technique to create high fructose corn syrup. The research done at this facility has had far reaching impacts on our food supply and has resulted in a number of medical breakthroughs.

NCAUR supports a first-rate workforce of more than eighty scientists and a total of two hundred employees at the Peoria lab. Closing this lab would not only hurt agricultural innovation, it would also cut American jobs that are vital to the local and U.S. economy.

The Administration's proposal to close NCAUR would hurt the nation's capacity to innovate, reduce our competitive edge in the global agricultural marketplace, cut jobs, and hurt farmers and rural America. We strongly urge you to reconsider your recommendation to close NCAUR.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



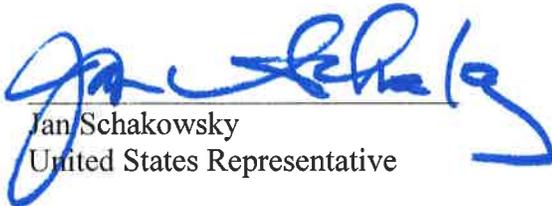
Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Darin LaHood
United States Representative



Cheri Bustos
United States Representative



Jan Schakowsky
United States Representative



Robin Kelly
United States Representative



Adam Kinzinger
United States Representative



Bobby L. Rush
United States Representative



Bradley S. Schneider
United States Representative



Danny K. Davis
United States Representative



Daniel Lipinski
United States Representative



Bill Foster
United States Representative



Peter J. Roskam
United States Representative



Randy Hultgren
United States Representative



Raja Krishnamoorthi
United States Representative

Cc: Honorable Sonny Perdue, Secretary of Agriculture