



**KEEPING THE
COWS IN WISCONSIN™**

March 20, 2009

U.S. Senator Diane Feinstein
Attn: Matt Nelson
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

On behalf of the Wisconsin Dairy Business Association (DBA), I am writing to ask you to continue your past efforts to pass legislation that reforms our nation's immigration policy for American agriculture. I encourage you to continue with those important efforts during the 111th Congress.

Like your state of California, Wisconsin is a very productive agriculture state where an array of agricultural commodities contributes \$51 billion annually to the state's economy. Specifically, its dairy industry contributes more than \$20 billion to our state's economy and in many ways, serves as both the economic and cultural backbone of our state's rural communities.

In recent years, the Wisconsin dairy industry has seen many structural changes where the size of our dairy farms have become larger and with that, we have seen the changing dynamics of maintaining an ever-demanding, reliable labor force to assist with our state's dairy industry become challenging. Moreover, the need for immigration reform has become even more pressing in the dairy industry than our colleagues in the seasonal commodities industry because dairy is a 24/7 perishable product that requires a year-round labor force.

The DBA has worked closely with the National Milk Producers Federation in strongly supporting your recent efforts during last Congress on AgJobs to stabilize the H-2A temporary and seasonal farm worker program, which was supported by agricultural producers and farm worker advocates from across the nation. We were disappointed that this legislation was not passed during the last session of Congress, but we remain hopeful that your efforts this session will be successful due to a new Administration and new leaders in Congress and a new desire to tackle this pressing issue.

As part of your overall efforts to reform immigration policy during this Congress, we urge you to recognize the unique status of dairy because it requires daily not seasonal labor needs. Of course, we are willing to work with you in drafting this important legislation that will have a significant impact on the future of our nation's dairy industry and both of our state's economies.

Again, thank you for your efforts on this important issue. If you, or your staff, have any questions, please contact me at lfischer@widba.com or visit www.widba.com.

Sincerely,



Laurie Fischer
Executive Director

cc: Senator Herb Kohl
Senator Russell D. Feingold
Representative Paul D. Ryan
Representative Tammy Baldwin
Representative Ron J. Kind
Representative Gwen Moore
Representative James F. Sensenbrenner
Representative Thomas E. Petri
Representative David R. Obey
Representative Steve Kagen