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Georgia Farm Bureau Federation

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June 10, 2004

Congressman William M. Thomas
Chairman, House Ways & Means Committee
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Thomas:

On behalf of the members of Georgia Farm Bureau, we thank you for including provisions for a tobacco quota buyout in the "American Jobs Creation Act of 2004" (H.R. 4520).

Tobacco farmers have found themselves in an economic vise between steadily diminishing quota and rising costs. Over the last few years, tobacco quota has been cut by more than half, and our farmers find themselves competing against cheaper tobacco from foreign countries. The effect has been to hurt farmers and the rural communities in which they live and work.

We believe a buyout to be an equitable solution. It will compensate quota holders for their asset, and it will allow our tobacco farmers to be more competitive through more efficient marketing. It will also make it possible for some farmers to transition to other crops.

There is strong farmer support for a tobacco quota buyout. Our organization coordinates visits of our farmer members to Washington at least twice a year, and a tobacco buyout has been among our top priorities for many years.

Again, thank you for addressing the issue of a tobacco quota buyout, and we look forward to working to promote the legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Wayne Dollar".

Wayne Dollar, President

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Affiliated with American Farm Bureau Federation