

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

R. BRUCE JOSTEN
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

1615 H STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20062-2000
202/463-5310

October 12, 2011

The Honorable Fred Upton
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Henry A. Waxman
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ed Whitfield
Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Power
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bobby L. Rush
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy and Power
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Upton and Whitfield and Ranking Members Waxman and Rush:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than three million businesses and organizations of every size, sector, and region, supports H.R. 1633, the "Farm Dust Regulation Prevention Act of 2011," which would provide temporary relief to food producers and other agricultural industries from unattainable new federal regulations on airborne farm dust, while still providing a reasonable procedure for states to protect air quality.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is on the verge of issuing new National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for coarse particulate matter, or farm dust. According to reports, the new NAAQS could be twice as stringent as the current standard. These new standards could have a devastating impact on rural America, where arid land used for food production and other agricultural purposes—such as tilling soil, harvesting crops, livestock rearing, and traveling on dirt roads—would suddenly be thrust into nonattainment. The economic consequences of NAAQS nonattainment can be severe and include higher costs to industry, permitting delays, restrictions on expansion, and an inability to attract new business.

H.R. 1633 would provide immediate relief to farmers and rural areas by preventing revision of the current dust standard for one year from date of enactment. It would also allow states, localities, and tribes to regulate "nuisance dust" such as unpaved roads and dust resulting from agricultural activities, and would allow such regulations (which, unlike a NAAQS, can be crafted to balance economic impact with environmental protection) to supersede federal

regulations covering the same dust. H.R. 1633 is a reasonable, well-thought-out approach to the difficult issue of regulating particulate matter while protecting the nation's agricultural industry.

The Chamber supports H.R. 1633 and urges the committee to report this legislation to the full House for consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Bruce Josten". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "R." and last name "Josten" being more prominent than the middle name "Bruce".

R. Bruce Josten

Cc: Members of the Committee on Energy and Commerce