



October 14, 2011

The Honorable Robert Hurt
U.S. House of the Representatives
1516 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Hurt:

On behalf of the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), the nation's leading small business advocacy organization, thank you for introducing H.R. 1633, the Farm Dust Regulation Prevention Act of 2011. This legislation will prevent the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from imposing stifling regulations on farm dust and other naturally occurring organic material in rural areas.

Without clear evidence indicating a public health risk at current farm dust levels, the EPA is considering reducing dust standards to an unreasonable measurement. Many rural small businesses are having difficulty complying with the standard currently and, if the standards are lowered, their ability to survive and stay viable would be further threatened. More stringent standards would result in decreased productivity, increased food prices and lost jobs in the rural economy. In these difficult economic times, members of the small business community in rural areas need relief from onerous regulation, not additional costs and mandates.

H.R. 1633 offers a two-pronged approach to effectively prevent the EPA from regulating dust in rural America while still maintaining the protections of the Clean Air Act to the public's health and welfare. First, the legislation would halt revision of the current dust standards for one year after enactment. Second, it would exempt agricultural dust from federal regulation if state and local authorities have already implemented dust control measures. If there are no local regulations in place, the EPA, prior to implementation, would be required to prove that dust causes adverse health effects and that the benefits of applying EPA's standards to that area outweigh the costs to the local and regional communities.

Thank you again for introducing H.R. 1633. I look forward to continuing to work with you on this and other small business issues as the 112th Congress continues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan Eckerly". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Susan Eckerly
Senior Vice President
Public Policy

National Federation of Independent Business

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