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WASHINGTON, DC 20510–1501
(202) 224–3744
e-mail: grassley.senate.gov/contact.cfm

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DES MOINES, IA 50309–2140
(515) 288–1145

☐ 150 1ST AVENUE NE
SUITE 325
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United States Senate

CHARLES E. GRASSLEY

WASHINGTON, DC 20510–1501

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☐ 307 FEDERAL BUILDING
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(712) 322–7103

July 12, 2012

Secretary Tom Vilsack
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

Over the past few weeks I have had a number of Iowans contact me regarding concern over the hot dry weather Iowa has been experiencing, and how those conditions have been tough on Iowa livestock. As the former governor of Iowa you certainly understand the importance of livestock production to our state. In addition, I'm sure you share my concern for Iowa livestock producers as they deal with these difficult weather conditions.

The most recent U.S. Drought Monitor indicates that much of Iowa is at D0, Abnormally Dry, or D1, Moderate drought conditions, and drought conditions have only intensified over the last couple weeks. Cattle producers tell me they are having difficulty finding an adequate supply of hay, and many of their pastures are too dry to support their herds at this time.

The particular issue producers have been contacting me about is the ability of the Farm Service Agency (FSA) to open up acres in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) for emergency haying and grazing. CRP is a crucial program to help safeguard some our most environmentally sensitive land. It's also key nesting habitat for a variety of bird species. So it's not without careful consideration of many factors that I request you use your administrative authority to release as many CRP acres as possible for emergency haying and grazing in Iowa.

I appreciate your consideration of my request. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or my staff.

Sincerely,

Chuck Grassley

Charles E. Grassley
United States Senate

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JUDICIARY

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