

BARACK OBAMA

October 21, 2008

Dear Friends,

As you know, this election is extremely important for the course of our country. It's for that reason, I wanted to take this opportunity to share my thoughts on issues that are important to you, including agriculture policy, our energy future, and international trade.

With the ups and downs we've recently witnessed in commodity prices, I have heard a lot of anxiety from rural families across the country struggling to pay the bills and save for the future. I understand that when higher commodity prices are followed by higher input costs, you're not any better off.

You need real relief, and that's why I have an aggressive plan to help farmers and working families across our country -- because no number of Wall Street bailouts will fix our economy if we're not looking out for Main Street. My economic recovery proposal starts with a \$1,000 tax cut for middle class families. It will also drive down the cost of health insurance by up to \$2,500 for the average family and we'll improve our nation's competitiveness by funding investments in infrastructure and education.

My home state of Illinois is a farm state, and in more than a decade as a legislator, I've learned that rural communities face many unique challenges. After hundreds of town hall meetings and listening sessions in rural communities across our country, I've developed a comprehensive agenda to rebuild rural America. Your grandchildren will be able to grow up, work and raise their own families where you live today because my proposals will attract medical professionals and teachers and support a robust agriculture sector.

I don't have to tell you that a commitment to rural America starts with a commitment to the Farm Bill. I was proud to support the 2008 Farm Bill. It maintains a strong safety net for family farmers, including sugar growers, and it helps you prepare for the future by supporting conservation, agriculture research and renewable energy. Farming will always be a cyclical business, and keeping you on the land through the rough patches is absolutely critical to our food security. With respect to the sugar program specifically, while it's true I have had concerns about the program, I will commit to listening and working with you in the future to ensure that we have a safety net that works for all of agriculture.

As you probably know, John McCain and I have starkly different views on the issues that matter to you. He has consistently voted against sugar growers and opposed the 2008 Farm Bill. In fact, John McCain said that he would have vetoed the Farm Bill if he were President, just like President Bush.



OBAMA FOR AMERICA PO Box 8210 Chicago, IL 60680
WWW.BARACKOBAMA.COM

PAID FOR BY OBAMA FOR AMERICA

BARACK OBAMA

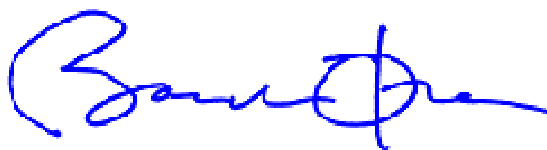
We also strongly disagree about the right energy plan for America. I have a history of support for increases in the use of clean, home grown renewable energy such as wind, solar and biofuels, and was proud to support the establishment of the Renewable Fuel Standard. Under my plan, we will provide immediate relief to families facing pain at the pump, reduce our dependence on foreign oil, establish a goal to have 60 billion gallons of our fuel come from advanced biofuels by 2022, and create up to 5 million new jobs in the process—jobs that pay well and can't be outsourced. Despite campaign rhetoric, Senator McCain's record is clear: he has repeatedly voted against biofuels and renewable fuel mandates and once said ethanol "has absolutely, under no circumstances, any value whatsoever." Like President Bush, he offers no strategy for change in energy policies.

Finally, when it comes to international trade, I will make sure that our agriculture sector can remain competitive and expand our access to markets. I support providing full funding to vital market promotion programs that enhance our access to important international markets. I have fought to break down trade and investment barriers that restrict our access to markets and will continue to do so. It's also important that we ensure that our trade agreements create a level playing field for American businesses and workers, and that our farmers and businesses secure robust market access as a result of these agreements. Trade agreements must contain strong and enforceable labor and environmental standards so that American farmers are able to compete on a level playing field.

I recognize the hard work and contributions you make as America's sugar growers. I believe we should reward your hard work with policies that will keep your industry and your communities strong. I've proposed these policies during this campaign, and with your support, I will enact them as President.

Thank you for taking the time to read this message. I'm asking for your support because together, we can create the change we need in our country.

Sincerely,



Barack Obama



OBAMA FOR AMERICA PO Box 8210 Chicago, IL 60680
WWW.BARACKOBAMA.COM

PAID FOR BY OBAMA FOR AMERICA