



NASULGC National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges

February 13, 2009

The Honorable Richard G. Lugar
United States Senate
306 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert P. Casey
United States Senate
383 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Lugar and Casey:

The National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges strongly endorses S. 384. We thank you very much for your outstanding effort in developing this important legislation.

We believe S. 384 will ensure that U.S. colleges and universities will be an important part of advancing key foreign policy objectives of reducing world hunger by increasing agricultural productivity. Institutions of higher education in the U.S. have historically played a key role in international development, particularly in agriculture. They are essential in building the human and institutional capacity in developing countries necessary for sustained economic growth. Unfortunately, over the past 20 years, the U.S. foreign assistance strategy has under-invested in agriculture and under leveraged the resources of colleges and universities to help address critical global development problems. Your bill is a major step in correcting these practices.

While a number of factors were responsible for the acute global food crisis last year, one of the major causes was a decline in agricultural productivity in developing countries. The Global Food Security Act of 2009 will commit the U.S. to increased investment in agriculture, which accounts for as much as 70% of the GDP in many developing countries, in part by engaging U.S. colleges and universities in collaboration with higher education institutions in developing countries to build the research, training, and outreach capacities. The current financial crisis will only exacerbate global food security issues and that is why your legislation is sorely needed.

Again, thank you very much for your important legislation. We look forward to working with you for its enactment.

Cordially,

Peter McPherson
President