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January 15, 2019

Senator Pat Roberts
United States Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Roberts,

On behalf of the Entomological Society of America (ESA) and its more than 7,000 members, I would like to thank you for your leadership in supporting ESA's research priorities in the 2018 Farm Bill reauthorization process. Federal investments in agricultural research programs will support innovation in pollinator health research and conservation activities, pest management, the preservation of biodiversity, and the generation of 21st Century solutions to meet the food, feed, and energy demands of a growing global population.

ESA appreciates the establishment of the Pollinator Health Task Force, which was originally created through Executive Order in the Obama Administration but codified in the 2018 Farm Bill to govern the coordination of federal pollinator and honey bee research activities. This includes the creation of a Honeybee and Pollinator Research Coordinator under the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to assist with the implementation of the Task Force's recommendations. In addition, ESA is encouraged by the support for new agricultural research programs like the Agricultural Advanced Research and Development Authority (AGARDA). New federal mechanisms are critical to advancing the high-risk, high-reward basic and applied agricultural research required to address global grand challenges.

ESA commends the robust re-authorization of the USDA Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), the main extramural competitive research program at the Agency that supports cutting-edge science to meet societal challenges in public health, food production, national security, and global competitiveness. Support for AFRI provides critical education and training of undergraduate, graduate and postdoctoral students for careers in a range of disciplines spanning the agricultural and life sciences, including entomology, necessary to meet growing agricultural workforce demands.

ESA is thankful for the additional federal investment of \$185 million in mandatory funding for the Foundation for Food and Agricultural Research (FFAR). This continued investment, as well as new provisions intended to increase transparency and ensure financial sustainability, will enhance the Foundation's ability to fund cutting-edge research in the agricultural sciences.

Your staff has been extremely helpful, and I would like to acknowledge Janae Brady for her dedication and diligent work on these and related issues. It has been a pleasure working with your office on opportunities to advance basic and applied research in entomology and a host of other disciplines. I look forward to your continued leadership and support of the entomological sciences and would welcome any opportunity to assist you and your staff.

Thank you, once more, for your efforts and your leadership. We look forward to working with you and your staff as we move towards implementing these programs and continue to advocate on behalf of the Society and agricultural research.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. K. Peterson', with a long, sweeping horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert K. D. Peterson, Ph.D.
2019 President, Entomological Society of America
Professor of Entomology, Montana State University