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March 22, 2017

The Honorable Pat Roberts
Chairman,
Senate Agriculture,
Nutrition, & Forestry Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Ranking Member,
Senate Agriculture,
Nutrition, & Forestry Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Roberts and Ranking Member Stabenow:

I am writing on behalf of the nation's nearly 6,000 community bankers represented by the Independent Community Bankers of America (ICBA) to relay our support for Sonny Perdue as Secretary of Agriculture. Since the committee has now scheduled a hearing on the Secretary nominee this week, we urge quick approval by both the Senate Agriculture Committee and the full U.S. Senate.

During his confirmation hearing, we are optimistic the committee can re-emphasize the importance of various farm bill programs as the committee has begun hearings on the next farm bill. Especially important to the thousands of community bankers serving rural America and our nation's farmers and ranchers are the crop insurance program, commodity price support programs, and the USDA guaranteed farm loan and guaranteed business and industry loan programs. In addition, rural development programs are very important to ensuring rural communities have access to the private sector capital they need to maintain and enhance vital services necessary to our rural citizens.

With Governor Purdue's background in the Georgia State Senate for a decade including serving as Senate President Pro Tem of that body, his experience as the governor of Georgia and the Chairman of the Republican Governors Association and his active, ongoing involvement in the agricultural industry, we believe he has the background to make a great 31st Secretary of Agriculture. We urge the committee and full Senate to act expeditiously to confirm Sonny Perdue as Secretary of Agriculture.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. We look forward to working with Secretary Perdue and all members of the committee in writing the next farm bill and addressing issues important to rural America, our nation's farmers and ranchers and our nation's community banks.

Sincerely,

/Signed/

Mark Scanlan
Sr. Vice President Agriculture & Rural Policy

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