

October 3, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-230 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-221 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Pat Roberts
Chairman
Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition, & Forestry
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition, & Forestry
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Chairman Roberts, and Ranking member Stabenow:

On behalf of the undersigned members of the AFRI Coalition, an alliance of scientific societies and science advocacy organizations with diverse research interests that support agricultural research, we wish to express our support for the nomination of Dr. Scott Hutchins to become the next Undersecretary of Research, Education, and Economics (REE) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Dr. Hutchins is a renowned scientist and one of the foremost experts in the field of integrated pest management. With food security quickly rising to the forefront of research investment priorities for the community, Dr. Hutchins' background in crop protection distinctively qualifies him to lead this mission area as it seeks to promote a "safe, sustainable, competitive U.S. food and fiber system."

As an academic, Dr. Hutchins boasts impeccable credentials and experience, holding degrees in entomology from Auburn University (B.S.), Mississippi State University (M.S.) and Iowa State University (Ph.D.) and serving in numerous academic capacities, most recently as an adjunct professor at the University of Nebraska. He is also a Board-Certified Entomologist (B.C.E.), demonstrating his commitment to learning, training, and the profession. In industry, Dr. Hutchins has led a multinational agricultural research and development operation spanning 76 countries. He has also served in many roles in professional scientific societies, including a term as President of the Entomological Society of America.

Dr. Hutchins' experiences in industry, academia, and the professional scientific community demonstrate his ability to lead this mission area and uniquely position him to be aware of and responsive to the concerns of stakeholders. To this end, we echo the sentiment of Secretary Sonny Perdue, who praised Dr. Hutchins as "exceptionally qualified for this post" and urge you to favorably report and confirm this nominee.

Sincerely,

American Society for Nutrition

American Society of Agronomy

American Society of Plant Biologists

Aquatic Plant Management Society

Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges

Crop Science Society of America

Ecological Society of America

Entomological Society of America

Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology

National Association of Plant Breeders

National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research

National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition

Soil Science Society of America

Weed Science Society of America