

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 7, 2007

Speaker Nancy Pelosi
Office of the Speaker
H-232, US Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Rep. John Boehner
Minority Leader
H-204, US Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader Boehner:

We are writing to express our serious concern about the severe drought conditions in the State of North Carolina and to respectfully request your support in securing financial assistance to help deal with this natural disaster.

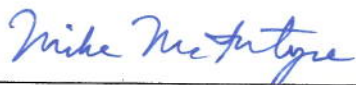
Agriculture is an extremely important industry in the state, bringing in over \$8 billion in 2005. Drought conditions exist in at 85 of the state's 100 counties, and many farmers are in danger of losing a vast majority of their most important crops. North Carolina Governor Mike Easley recently sent a letter to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture requesting a disaster designation for counties hardest hit by the drought.

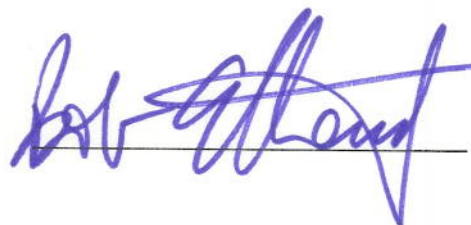
According to USDA Loss Assessment Reports, the 85 counties named in Governor Easley's letter have reported excessive agricultural losses due to drought for at least one significant crop, and major losses have been reported on corn, cotton, tobacco, soybeans, pastures, hay, and peanuts. All of the 85 counties meet the required 30% crop loss threshold for a disaster declaration, and many counties are reporting losses as high as 50% to 70% of some crops.

Triple-digit temperatures combined with below average rainfall have resulted in most North Carolina counties experiencing severe to exceptional drought, with stream flows and groundwater levels approaching the record lows set by the 2002 drought. Estimates indicate the state would need more than 15 inches of rainfall during the next six months to return to adequate levels. However, weather forecasts continue to call for hot, dry weather with no rainfall expected in the near future.

Disaster assistance would help farmers hard hit by the drought remain on their land and continue farming. We thank you for your attention to this important matter, and look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,





Walter B. Jones

Howard Coble

Delvin R. Watt

David Price

Paul Smith

Robin Hayes

Herb Schul

gk Buttford

- CC: Rep. David Obey, Chairman, Appropriations Committee
- Rep. Jerry Lewis, Ranking Member, Appropriations Committee
- Rep. Rosa DeLauro, Chairman, Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee
- Rep. Jack Kingston, Ranking Member, Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee
- Rep. Collin Peterson, Chairman, Agriculture Committee
- Rep. Bob Goodlatte, Ranking Member, Agriculture Committee