

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 12, 2012

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Suite 200A
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

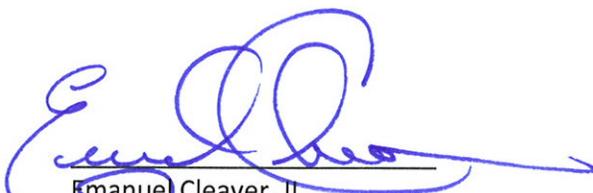
We write to you in support of Missouri Governor Jay Nixon's request for a Secretarial Disaster Declaration for 114 counties in Missouri due to excessive heat and drought. In late June, Gov. Nixon requested that the Missouri Farm Service agency perform damage assessments throughout the State of Missouri to ascertain the scope of the drought conditions. Those reports indicated that 114 Missouri counties are experiencing crop and pasture losses of at least 30%, the applicable threshold for a Disaster Declaration.

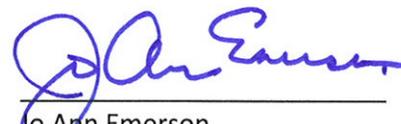
The U.S. Drought Monitor map from late June shows much of the State in a moderate drought, with the northeast and south central areas in a severe drought and southeast counties in an extreme drought. Preliminary precipitation data indicate June 2012 was the 6th driest June on record for Missouri and the driest since 1988. According to the Missouri Agricultural Statistics Service, by the end of June, 97% and 93% of the topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies, respectively, were in short to very short condition. Nearly half of the corn and soybean crop was reported to be in poor to very poor condition, and is the highest percentage for the time of year since 1988. Pasture condition had declined to 76% poor to very poor, and hay and stock water supplies were also declining with more than half in short to very short condition. Relief from these extreme conditions is not expected in the near future, and could persist through August and September.

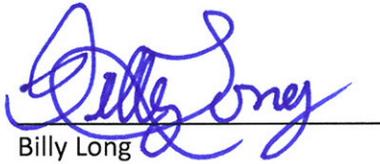
These projections are troubling for crop and forage production across Missouri. A considerable amount of Missouri hay was sold last year to farmers and ranchers in Texas, Kansas, and Oklahoma to assist with the drought recovery in those states, lowering the overall supply of hay across Missouri at the start of this year. Additionally, in many areas of the State, the drought hit just as corn crops began to tassel and pollination began. If pollination is disrupted, corn yields will be down significantly this fall.

We truly believe USDA assistance is needed to help our great State recover from this ongoing natural disaster and respectfully urge you to make available requested Federal resources. Please feel free to contact us directly should you require additional information.

Sincerely,


Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress


Jo Ann Emerson
Member of Congress



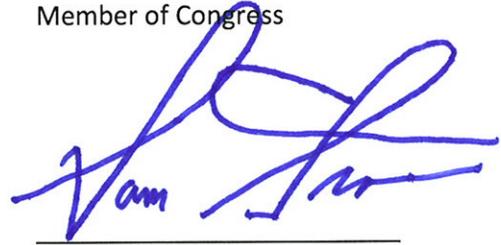
Billy Long
Member of Congress



Russ Carnahan
Member of Congress



Blaine Luetkemeyer
Member of Congress



Sam Graves
Member of Congress



Vicky Hartzler
Member of Congress



Todd Akin
Member of Congress



Wm. Lacy Clay
Member of Congress