

Hon. Max Baucus, Chairman  
United States Senate Committee on Finance  
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-6200

Hon. Chuck Grassley, Ranking Member  
United States Senate Committee on Finance  
135 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-1501

**Re: Nomination of Islam Siddiqui as Chief Agriculture Negotiator for the United States Trade Representative**

Dear Chairman Baucus and Ranking Member Grassley:

The following organizations representing environmental, consumer, anti-hunger, family farm, farmworker, fishing groups, sustainable agriculture and other advocacy groups are writing to express our opposition to the nomination of Islam Siddiqui as Chief Agriculture Negotiator at the office of the United States Trade Representative. We urge the Senate Finance Committee to reject Siddiqui's appointment.

Siddiqui's record at the U.S. Department of Agriculture and his role as a former registered lobbyist for CropLife America (whose members include Monsanto, Syngenta, DuPont and Dow), reveals him to be consistently in favor of agribusinesses' interests over the interests of consumers, the environment and public health. His appointment sends an unfortunate signal to the rest of the world that the United States plans to continue down the failed path of industrial agriculture by promoting toxic pesticides, inappropriate biotechnologies and unfair trade agreements on nations that do not want and can least afford them. As the global food crisis deepens and negotiators prepare to meet at the upcoming World Trade Organization ministerial on November 30, the United States needs a trade negotiator who understands that current trade agreements work neither for farmers nor the world's hungry.

Siddiqui's record and statements in his government positions and at CropLife America show his clear bias in favor of chemical-intensive and unproven biotechnology practices that imperil both our planet and human health while undermining food security and exacerbating climate change. We believe Siddiqui's nomination has severely weakened the Obama Administration's credibility in promoting healthier and more sustainable local food systems here at home. Siddiqui's confirmation would send a message to the world that the United States continues to place the vested interests of our chemical pesticide and biotech industries ahead of concern for public health, the environment, and the well-being of farmworkers and communities around the world.

With farmers here and abroad struggling to respond to water scarcity and increasingly volatile growing conditions, we need a resilient and restorative model of agriculture that adapts to and mitigates these effects of climate change. In the most comprehensive analysis of global agriculture to date, the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) states unequivocally that "business as usual is not an option." We need a new, sustainable model of agriculture that regenerates soil health, sequesters carbon, feeds communities, protects farmworkers and puts profits back in the hands of farmers and rural communities. Siddiqui's clear track record favors none of these solutions.

We call on the Senate Finance Committee to reject Islam Siddiqui's nomination and reorient trade policy to serve the interests of family farmers, farmworkers, consumers and the planet.

Sincerely,

Alaska Community Action on Toxics	Land Stewardship Project
AllergyKids	Maine Fair Trade Campaign
American Raw Milk Producers Pricing Association	Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
Beyond Pesticides	Maryland Pesticide Network
Breast Cancer Action	Mississippi Association of Cooperatives
California Food and Justice Coalition	Missouri Rural Crisis Center
Californians for GE-Free Agriculture	Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative (OK)
Californians for Pesticide Reform	National Family Farm Coalition
California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation	National Farm Worker Ministry
Center for Environmental Health (CA)	National Latino Farmers & Ranchers Trade Association
Center for Food Safety	New York Environmental Law & Justice Project
Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment	Northeast Organic Farming Association
Central Florida Jobs with Justice	Interstate Council (NOFA-IC)
Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach	Northern Plains Resource Council (MT)
Community Farm Alliance (KY)	Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance
Concerned Citizens for Clean Air (OR)	Oakland Institute
Cornucopia Institute	Ohio Conference on Fair Trade
EarthJustice	Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project
Equal Exchange	Oregon Fair Trade Campaign
Family Farm Defenders	Oregon Toxics Alliance
Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance	Organic Consumers Association
Farm Worker Pesticide Project (WA)	Partners for the Land & Agricultural Needs of Traditional Peoples (WV)
Farmworker Association of Florida	Pesticide Action Network North America
Farmworker Justice	Pesticide Free Zone
Farmworker Self-Help (FL)	Pesticide Watch
Food & Water Watch	Public Citizen
Food First/Institute for Food and Development Policy	Rural Advancement Foundation International – USA
Food for Maine's Future	Rural Advancement Fund
Florida Immigrant Coalition	Rural Coalition
Food Democracy Now!	Safe Alternatives for our Forest Environment (CA)
Florida Organic Growers	Science and Environmental Health Network
Fresno Metro Ministry	Sciencecorps
Friends of the Earth	Search for the Cause (CA)
Greenpeace US	Sierra Club
Grassroots International	Small Holders Alliance of Massachusetts
Indiana Toxics Action	Washington Fair Trade Coalition
Innovative Farmers of Ohio	Western Organization of Resource Councils
Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy	World Hunger Year
Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement	
Kids for Saving Earth	
Kentucky Environmental Foundation	

Cc: Members of the Senate Finance Committee

For more information, contact Marcia Ishii-Eiteman, Pesticide Action Network (415) 981-6205 ext 325 [mie@panna.org](mailto:mie@panna.org) and Katherine Ozer, National Family Farm Coalition (202) 543-5675 [kozer@nffc.net](mailto:kozer@nffc.net)