

ROBERT P. CASEY, JR.
PENNSYLVANIA

COMMITTEES:
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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING
JOINT ECONOMIC

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 28, 2011

United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Mr. Dave White, Chief
P.O. Box 2890
Washington, DC 20013

Dear Chief White,

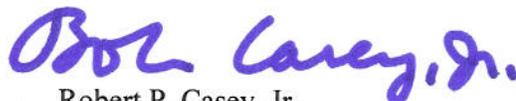
The technical assistance services that Natural Resources Conservation Service provides are critical to the conservation of our natural resources. NRCS field staff in Pennsylvania possess considerable knowledge of the Department of Agriculture's various conservation programs and about how to best implement the conservation practices. I am very appreciative of the work NRCS performs in the Commonwealth and throughout the country.

Due to the abundance of forests in Pennsylvania, a state named after this ecological feature, I believe that there might be some untapped interest in the conservation program among foresters in Pennsylvania. I am interested in working with you toward the goal of achieving higher levels of forestry conservation. Private foresters in Pennsylvania have expressed to me their sincere interest in applying conservation practices to their lands, but some have had a difficult time accessing a trained forester to help them implement these practices. NRCS has provided guidance on forestry conservation and possesses forestry expertise. Nevertheless, I believe that by broadening the pool of resources available to foresters, we can significantly improve participation rates of many conservation programs. For this reason, I ask that NRCS continue to work with the State forestry agency staff and technical service providers (TSP) in order to provide better forester expertise.

Enabling TSPs to directly assist foresters implement conservation practices is a positive approach to maintaining the technical capacity for conservation programs. I understand that NRCS is working on streamlining the process of becoming a certified TSP and on simplifying its business processes. I ask that NRCS continue these efforts and work to implement any improvements as soon as possible.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of my requests. I appreciate your leadership and look forward to working with you in the future, especially throughout the reauthorization of the Farm Bill.

Sincerely,



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator