

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 28, 2009

Brandon Willis
Deputy Administrator
Farm Programs
Farm Service Agency, USDA
1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 3612-S, Stop 0510
Washington, DC 20250-0510

RE: Federal Register Document, AMS-DA-09-0058, August 28, 2009

Mr. Willis:

Pursuant to Federal Register document *AMS-DA-09-0058*, August 28, 2009, we are writing to express our support for the nomination of Mr. Erick Coolidge to the developing Dairy Advisory Committee within the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Pennsylvania is the fifth largest dairy producing state in the country and ranks second in the number of individual farms. Because agriculture in general - and the dairy industry in particular - is so important to our state's economy and the wellbeing of so many families throughout the Commonwealth, we believe that it is imperative that Pennsylvania has adequate representation on this Committee. We additionally believe that Mr. Erick Coolidge is the best fit candidate for the position.

Mr. Coolidge will bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the Committee. He is a fourth generation dairy farmer with nearly 45 years of experience in the industry both on and off the farm. Currently, he is owner and operator of Le-Ma-Ra Farm, which is located in the rural north-central area of Pennsylvania, just south of the Borough of Wellsboro. His farm is 750-acres and produces from 245 head of cattle. Mr. and Mrs. Coolidge operate their dairy farm with their son, Derick, who intends to be the fifth generation owner and carry on their proud tradition of agriculture and business ownership. In addition to his significant experience as a dairy farm owner and operator, Mr. Coolidge has an exemplary record of membership and contributions to agriculture organizations, state and local governments, and has been active throughout his life in his community. Currently, he serves as a Commissioner of Tioga County and has acted in that capacity since 1996.

Outside of the daily operations of running a dairy farm, Mr. Coolidge currently serves on the County Commissioner's Association of Pennsylvania Environment and Land Use Committee, and is a Chairman for the Nutrient Management Subcommittee within the Pennsylvania State Conservation Board. In 2003, Mr. Coolidge was appointed by Pennsylvania Agriculture Secretary Dennis Wolfe to Commonwealth's Dairy Task Force and later assumed the role of

Vice Chairman. He continues to be a member of the Center for Dairy Excellence Executive Board, since 2006.

Mr. Coolidge also has extensive experience in government affairs and policy. In addition to his position as a Tioga County Commissioner, Mr. Coolidge is a former President of the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania, as well as the National Association of Counties since 2003. At present, he also is a two-time Chairman of the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission and has served on the Area Agency on Aging Board, Laurel Health executive board of directors, the Solid Waste Advisory Board, Tioga County Development Corporation, the Judicial Commission, Court of Common Pleas Security Task Force, and the Wellsboro Electric Company Board.

As demonstrated, Mr. Coolidge has vast expertise in the dairy industry and will be a valuable asset to the Advisory Committee. We look forward to working with Secretary Vilsack and the Department of Agriculture for immediate strategies that address the current dairy crisis, while simultaneously identifying and implementing long term improvements to the pricing system. Please review Mr. Coolidge's attached résumé and contact us directly if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



Glenn 'GT' Thompson (PA-05)
Member of Congress



Joseph Pitts (PA-16)
Member of Congress



Jim Gerlach (PA-06)
Member of Congress



Bill Shuster (PA-09)
Member of Congress



Charles Dent (PA-15)
Member of Congress



Todd Platts (PA-19)
Member of Congress