

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0609

April 15, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden  
President of the United States of America  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

As you know, land ownership is a core right protected by the Constitution. The protection of private property rights is also preeminently important to people in both rural and urban America. In fact, private landowners in Kansas, like in many other states, own a vast majority of the land in the state – over 97%. With this amount of private ownership, landowners of Kansas, including myself, are concerned about how your Executive Order Number 14008 will interact with their rights as landowners.

Of particular concern is your directive to conserve at least 30% of our private lands and waters by 2030 commonly known as 30 by 30. Earlier this year, my colleagues in Congress sent you a letter expressing their concern regarding the lack of information and ambiguous goals especially as it relates to federal lands. This letter is to reiterate that concern but also to highlight the dangers the initiative displays for Kansas landownership, private landownership in general, and feeding the world.

Considering there is just under 900 million acres of agricultural land in the United States, I must assume that agriculture will be a target of your initiative. It's no secret that radical environmentalists have been using "climate change" as a guise to lobby an aggressive change to American agricultural production practices. Groups that are often outspoken against animal agriculture and crop biotechnology. The technology has long made the U.S. a superpower in feeding the world. Consumers across the world want access to our high quality, nutritious, and extremely safe food that was produced with the most advanced agricultural technology in the world.

I feel compelled to remind you that agriculture has and will continue to make strides in efficiency. In the last 50 years, farmers have produced more food and fiber on fewer acres and with fewer inputs. The Farmers for a Sustainable Future coalition, comprised of over 20 agriculture groups representing the major commodities grown in the United States as well as American Farm Bureau and the National Farmers Union published a study that ultimately determined "U.S. agriculture, land use and forestry are a net sink for emissions, removing 172 million metric tons of CO2 equivalent emissions from the atmosphere in 2017 alone." Another recent study indicated that United States cattle producers have already avoided 2.3 gigatons of

carbon emissions since 1975. That's equivalent to 1.9 billion cars driven in one year and very different than you would be led to believe by folks errantly blaming climate change on cow flatulence.

Keep in mind, the United States is also losing productive farmland to urban sprawl at a rate of about two percent per year. Crop production now takes 100 million fewer acres to raise the same corn, cotton, rice, soybeans and wheat than in 1990.

Farmers and ranchers are the original conservationists and generational farming is on the forefront of every producer's mind. That means fathers and mothers want to leave the soil and water better than when they found it for their sons and daughters. This topic isn't new – in Kansas we've been discussing conservation since the dustbowl.

First, I respectfully request to be included in the detailed briefing that was requested by the previous letter. I urge you to provide the mainstream agricultural community and private landowners an equitable and meaningful voice moving forward. I ask that you respect and acknowledge the private property rights of individuals so they may continue to have authority over what occurs on their property and have the freedom to produce an abundance of food, fuel, and fiber for the world. Finally, I urge you to ensure that this doesn't threaten productive land that will be necessary to feed an ever-growing world population that will be over 9 billion by 2050.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roger W. Marshall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Roger Marshall, M.D.  
United States Senator

cc. The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture  
The Honorable Deb Haaland, Secretary of the Interior