



April 6, 2015

The Honorable Scott Tipton
218 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Tipton:

The American Sheep Industry Association (ASI) strongly supports the Water Rights Protection Act (WRPA). ASI is the national trade association for the U.S. sheep industry representing 80,000 sheep producers across America.

The Water Rights Protection Act will address a concern of the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management seeking water rights without just compensation. It would prohibit federal agencies from implementing a permit condition that requires the transfer of privately held water rights to the government in order to receive or renew a permit for the use of the land. More than 40 percent of sheep production in America depends on federal lands grazing for at least a portion of the year therefore management including water is critical to the ranch families raising sheep.

The bill would also prohibit the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture from asserting jurisdiction over groundwater that has been historically controlled by the states. We believe the directive is an intrusion into state authority over groundwater.

Our members face many threats and have much depending on these water rights for their livelihood. We must ensure that producers continue to have access to the water rights they own, maintain and have developed.

We appreciate your leadership Congressman in this key area of federal lands management and look forward to working with you in support of this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Burton Pfliger".

Burton Pfliger
President