

## Policy Working Group April 27, 2012

Participating: John/SAF; Jake/NASF; Danielle/NACD; Jen/SUFC; Kevin/ASLA; Christ/TCIA; Gerry/AmF

### Farm Bill:

- The Agricultural Committee held a hearing mark up of the bill yesterday 4/26. Leaders are using the Farm Bill as a model of fiscal restraint, positioning it as a “reform bill”. To that end the following mark-ups impact the SUFC Farm Bill platform:
  - **The authorities for the U&CF Program were maintained. HOWEVER, a \$50 million cap was put in place for the program AND a sunset date was imposed (end of the fiscal year 2017/next Farm Bill close).** U&CF Program was one of 96 program to receive sunset dates and caps – no previously in place on past Farm Bills. In order to maintain the authorities/funding for the U&CF program, the program would have to be re-authorized in the subsequent Farm Bill. This would be a direct advocacy opportunity for SUFC.
  - **Mark up included direction for an inventory (FIA) program which includes URBAN TREES.**
  - **Insects and disease program funding was re-funded** (subset of larger SUFC platform).

### Exploring Caucus Relationship:

- The WG is weighing how (and why) SUFC may want to work with the **Urban Caucus** to advance urban forestry/GI agenda. If worth pursuing and cultivating, SUFC would need to put some forethought into what would interest/hook staffers (urban UF research, an event, Vibrant Cities etc.).

### ACTION ITEMS:

- **Jen** will pull together Farm Bill Ad Hoc Committee to re-group and discuss next steps.
- **Gerry** Gray to relay conversation/language from Paul Ries re: Farm Bill to WG/Ad Hoc Committee after meeting next week
- **Jen** will identify May date to host Policy update webinar/call for larger SUFC community (to include SUFC policy platform, urban research interests +).
- **Kevin O’Hara** will gather more information on the Urban Caucus (status, activity etc.) and connect with Joel Panell/NRPA to report back out to WG 5/11. (Reach out to Rep. Mike Turner’s Office/Ohio and Rep. Fattah/PA – co-chairs)

**NEXT CALL: Friday, May 11<sup>th</sup> 9 AM**