



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Friday, May 18, 2018
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Michigan Sugar Company thanks Congressional leaders for helping defeat anti-sugar amendment

*10 Michigan delegates of U.S. House of Representatives vote
against amendment harmful to family farms*

BAY CITY – Ten Michigan lawmakers in the U.S. House of Representatives on Thursday, May 17, played a critical role in defeating legislation backed by large sugar users that would have benefited foreign sugar suppliers and threatened the livelihood of Michigan family farms.

The amendment, offered by Republican Rep. Virginia Foxx of North Carolina and Democratic Rep. Danny Davis of Illinois, would have eliminated the key elements of the sugar provisions in the House version of the Farm Bill, and flooded the U.S. market with highly subsidized foreign sugar.

“Our Michigan Congressional leaders have recognized the critical need for adequate farm policy that protects local farm families against highly subsidized foreign imports and provides future stability for our sons and daughters to stay in the business,” said Michigan Sugar Company Board Chairman **Richard Gerstenberger**, who also serves as President of the American Sugarbeet Growers Association.

Michigan Sugar Company officials drew particular attention to **Rep. Dan Kildee**, D-5th District; **Rep. Paul Mitchell**, R-10th District; and **Rep. John Moolenaar**, R-4th District, for taking charge and working proactively behind the scenes before the vote, educating other legislators not intimately familiar on how the sugar provisions in the Farm Bill benefit both consumers and large users.

“Their outstanding efforts against the anti-U.S. sugar farmer legislation resulted in the Foxx/Davis amendment being soundly defeated 278-137 – a margin of 141 votes,” said Ray Van Driessche, Director of Government Relations for Michigan Sugar Company. “The nearly 1,000 farm families who own Michigan Sugar Company, as well as the 2,300 employees who work at the cooperative, can’t thank Reps. Kildee, Mitchell and Moolenaar enough for their hard work

and leadership in defeating the amendment,” Van Driessche said. “Recognition and appreciation also goes out to other Michigan legislators who voted to handily defeat the legislation.”

Those lawmakers are **Rep. Jack Bergman**, R-1st District; **Rep. Bill Huizenga**, **Rep. Mike Bishop**, R-8th District; **Rep. Sander Levin**, D-9th District; **Rep. David Trott**, R-11th District; **Rep. Debbie Dingell**, D-12th District; and **Rep. Brenda Lawrence**, D-14th District.

With its corporate office in Bay City, Michigan Sugar Company is a cooperative owned by approximately 1,000 growers who annually plant and harvest about 160,000 acres of sugarbeets. The company processes those beets at factories in Bay City, Caro, Croswell and Sebewaing, producing approximately 1.2 billion pounds of sugar each year that it sells under the Pioneer and Big Chief brands.

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