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September 25, 2017

The Honorable James Comer  
US House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Comer,

We are writing to support your bill, H.R. 3530, the Industrial Hemp Farming Act of 2017. Our policy calls for the removal of industrial hemp (*Cannabis sativa* L.) from Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act. Decades of scientific research and previous experience growing hemp, from pre-industrialization to the advent of World War II, support our position.

For nearly 70 years, industrial hemp has been misaligned with its cannabis cousin, marijuana. It's also unfortunate that a great deal of agricultural heritage in hemp seed genetics, crop research, and technological innovation have been hindered or lost entirely. However, the tide is turning, and once again policy makers in Washington D.C., and statehouses across the country recognize the tremendous potential that industrial hemp can offer farmers as an effective rotational crop with promising economic benefits.

With the passage of the 2014 Farm Bill and under the supervision of research universities or state departments of agriculture, states may "study the growth, cultivation, or marketing of industrial hemp." Since 2014, over 30 states have passed legislation legalizing this type of research, but full-fledged production and commercialization are hindered by hemp's designation as a Schedule 1 controlled substance and by the Drug Enforcement Agency's historically aggressive enforcement against hemp.

The United States is the only major industrialized country that cannot legally grow industrial hemp. Yet, according to the Congressional Research Service, we are the largest importer of its materials with annual sales exceeding \$600 million, most of it coming from Canada. This is a lost economic opportunity, not only for American farmers but also for industrial hemp processing and manufacturing industries. There is a market for ingredients derived from industrial hemp in foods and beverages, cosmetics and personal care products, nutritional supplements, fabrics and textiles, paper, construction and insulation materials, supercapacitor batteries, automotive products, and so much more. We support your efforts to allow the American farmer to grow industrial hemp legally and tap into the current and emerging markets.

We appreciate your introduction of this bill and look forward to working with you to secure enactment.

Sincerely,

Zippy Duvall  
President