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DAVID ROBINSON  
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July 19th, 2011

Senator Mark Leno  
State Capitol, Room 5100  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Fax: 916-445-4722

RE: SB 676 (Leno) California Industrial Hemp Farming Act – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Leno,

I am writing to register my support for SB 676 (Leno), which would create a carefully-crafted pilot program to enable California farmers to grow industrial hemp to serve the growing market for hemp-based consumer products.

The bill allows farmers in Kings County and other select areas in the state to evaluate the opportunities associated with limited hemp production in California, while providing important safe guards for public safety. I strongly support this important step in giving our farmers another crop option and a new economic opportunity, to help create jobs during these difficult economic times. I have discussed the bill at length with my community and beyond. I appreciate the controls in the bill to assist law enforcement by making it clearly distinguishable from marijuana.

Despite the unique physical attributes associated with industrial hemp, which, unlike marijuana, grows in tall, dense thickets, SB 676 includes many safeguards to ensure full transparency and oversight throughout the production process. The bill requires crops to be a minimum of five acres with signage surrounding the field that identifies it as industrial hemp. If there is any question as to the validity of the crop, I or my designee need only request from the farmer the required lab report indicating the crop's THC content. Most importantly, industrial hemp is "NOT" marijuana. Hemp stalk and seeds have thousands of commercial uses and can preserve other valuable limited resources like trees.

Given the large demand for industrial hemp products and the numerous hemp product manufacturers and companies in California, industrial hemp presents a strong economic prospect for our farmers and the community. For these reasons, I support SB 676. I encourage you to continue to work closely with the farmers to make this a successful program for years to come.

Sincerely,

David S. Robinson  
Kings County Sheriff