



# The Business Case for the Young Farmer Success Act

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# The Young Farmer Success Act: At a Glance

- 30% of young farmers say student loans are delaying or preventing them from pursuing a farming career
- Under the bill, farmers could have the balance of their student loans forgiven after making 10 years of income-based student loans
- Student loan relief would free capital for farmers to acquire land and invest in sustainable technology and equipment



# Why is this bill important?

- Average age of farmers is 58 years old and less than 6% are under 35 years old
- Farming is becoming an increasingly technical and complex profession, requiring more education than ever before
- Farming helps reinvigorate life in rural communities that have been hit hard in the last 50 years



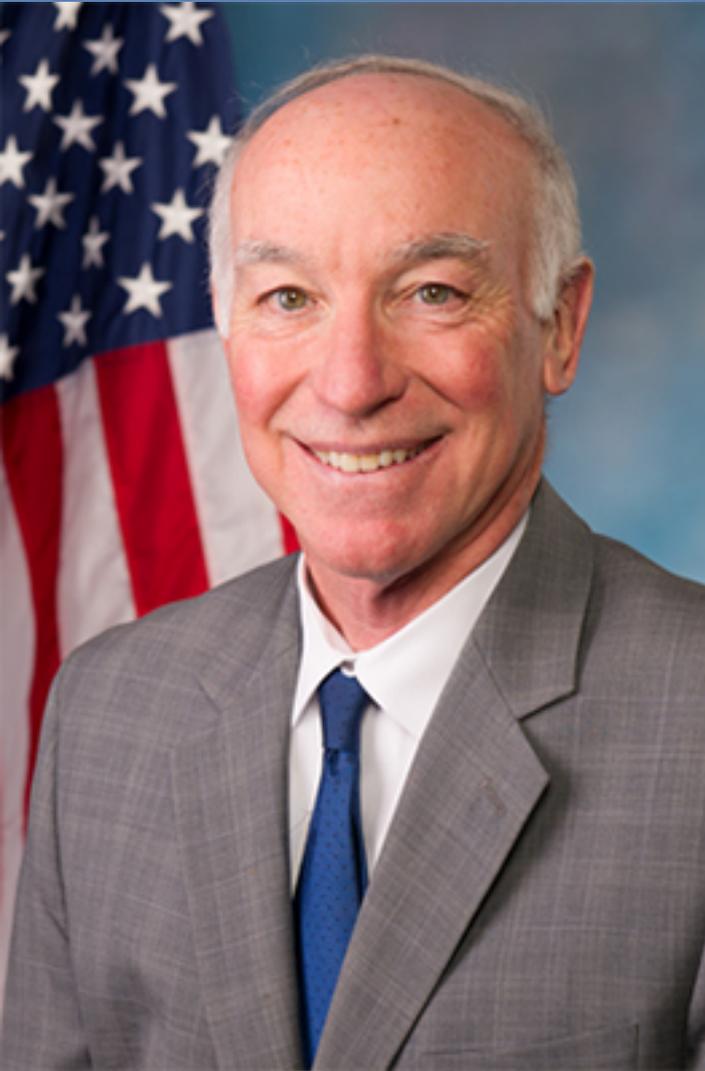
# Representative Chris Gibson (R-NY)



- **Chris Gibson** grew up in a working class family in Columbia County, in the town of Kinderhook. At 17, Chris enlisted in the New York National Guard. Over the course of a 24 year Army career, Chris rose to the rank of Colonel and deployed seven times. After retiring from the Army in 2010, Chris and his family returned home to Kinderhook. In 2010, he was first elected to Congress and was re-elected in 2012 and 2014. In Congress, Chris sits on the House Agriculture Committee. In 2015, Congressman Gibson introduced the Young Farmer Success Act to grow the ranks of farmers and safeguard American agriculture. If enacted, this bill will help farmers manage their student loan debt by adding them to the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program.



# Representative Joe Courtney (D-CT)



- **Congressman Courtney** was elected in 2006 to represent the Second Congressional District of Connecticut in the House of Representatives. He serves on the Armed Services and Education and Workforce Committees. Prior to this term, Congressman Courtney served on the House Agriculture Committee—the first Congressman from Connecticut to do so in over 100 years. As a lead sponsor of the Young Farmer’s Success Act, Courtney has sought to reduce financial barriers for the next generation of American farmers. Before serving in the House of Representatives, he represented the citizens of Vernon in the Connecticut General Assembly from 1987 to 1994. He is a 1975 graduate of Tufts University in Boston, Massachusetts and earned a law degree from the University of Connecticut School of Law in 1978.



# Eric Hansen, Policy Analyst, National Young Farmers Coalition



- **Eric Hansen** leads the National Young Farmer Coalition's federal policy work, where he focuses on improving young farmers' access to credit and affordable farmland. He helps young farmers understand the resources available at USDA and he advocates for NYFC's members to Congress and USDA. In 2015, his advocacy work helped to create NYFC's Farming is Public Service campaign and brought much needed attention to the issue of farmer student loan debt. As the lead author of NYFC's *Farming is Public Service* report, Eric collected stories and data from NYFC's members and applied this information to policy solutions. Eric holds an M.E.M. from Duke University, where he studied agriculture policy and community-based environmental management.

# Working with ASBC

- Provide business leaders to testify at hearings and briefings
- Develop policy recommendations
- Advocate for policies at federal and state levels
- Change how the media reports on “What Business Thinks” (write/place op-eds)
- Craft business cases to support legislation
- Fly-Ins

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