



MEDIA RELEASE

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Contact: Brad Copenhaver, 804.643.3555 (brad@va-agribusiness.org)

VIRGINIA SENATOR FRANK RUFF NAMED DISTINGUISHED FRIEND OF VIRGINIA AGRIBUSINESS

*Senator Honored for His Unwavering Commitment to Agribusiness and
Rural Virginia throughout His Decades of Service*

(Richmond, Va.) Senator Frank M. Ruff, Jr. (R-Mecklenburg) has been named the Distinguished Friend of Virginia Agribusiness for 2014 by the Virginia Agribusiness Council.

The award was presented to Senator Ruff on January 9th at the Agribusiness Council's 43rd Annual Legislative Appreciation Banquet held in the historic Old Dominion Building at the Richmond Raceway Complex in Henrico County.

In presenting the award, Daniel Shreckhise of Shreckhise Nurseries in Grottoes, and chairman of the Virginia Agribusiness Council's board of directors, spoke of Senator Ruff's tremendous commitment to representing the interest of his constituents in rural Southside Virginia, saying that he "especially understands the importance of agriculture and agribusiness to his district and to the entire state. And he is also keenly aware how vital it is for the needs and concerns of Rural Virginia to be heard in the General Assembly which has become increasingly dominated by legislators representing urban and suburban districts."

Chairman Shreckhise noted Senator Ruff's many accomplishments, such as how his role in creating and leading the Center for Rural Virginia and his leadership in the General Assembly's Rural Caucus has allowed him to work across party lines to benefit rural Virginians through legislation related to economic development, transportation, education and workforce training, and investments in natural resources and economic development.

Furthermore, Chairman Shreckhise discussed the Senator's efforts as the vice-chair of the Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission, and his role on the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources, where he introduced legislation to provide income tax deductions for payments to tobacco quota producers and holders and championed budget amendments to support Virginia Cooperative Extension, Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the protection of wildlife.

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“It is truly an honor to recognize Senator Ruff as the 2014 Distinguished Friend of Virginia Agribusiness,” said Katie K. Frazier, President of the Virginia Agribusiness Council. “Senator Ruff is not the flashiest or most vocal of legislators, but as a long-time friend of rural Virginia and the agribusiness industry, he brings with him reason, a clear understanding of the impacts of legislative and regulatory proposals on his constituents and his largely agrarian district, and common sense in approaching problems. His leadership has helped to create valuable partnerships across rural and urban communities, and to economic viability for the Commonwealth’s top industry.”

Since its inception in 1978, the Distinguished Friend of Virginia Agribusiness Award has been presented thirty-two times to a Virginian who is a Member of the United States Congress, a State Legislator, Governor or other influential government official who has shown “exceptional support of Virginia’s agribusiness industry for a period of years.”

Along with Senator Ruff’s award presentation, outgoing Governor Bob McDonnell, who received the same award in 2013, addressed over 850 persons in attendance, highlighting four years of his administration’s efforts to promote the Commonwealth’s largest industry. New Governor Terry McAuliffe spoke to attendees during the “Virginia’s Finest” reception about his plans to build upon Governor McDonnell’s efforts in promotion of agriculture and forestry products.

Also in attendance were members of the Virginia Senate and House of Delegates, members of the Governor’s cabinet, Agribusiness Council members, and representatives of industry and educational institutions at the event. Each year, the Council hosts their annual legislative appreciation banquet as the General Assembly convenes. Attendees dined on a buffet of “Virginia’s Finest” foods and beverages.

About The Virginia Agribusiness Council

The Virginia Agribusiness Council is a non-profit organization committed to representing the interests of the agriculture and forestry industries in the Commonwealth through effective governmental relations efforts and initiatives. Its membership includes farmers, foresters, and other agricultural producers; industry suppliers; marketers and processors; and commodity and industry associations. It is headquartered in Richmond. For more information, please visit www.va-agribusiness.org.

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