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July 29, 2008

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Topics discussed include implementation of the 2008 Farm Bill, labor and the workforce, agricultural research, and transportation and energy.

"Here in Mississippi, agriculture is the number one industry and cotton is an essential part of its economic impact," said Congressman Childers. "I'm extremely encouraged with the relationship I have built with Agriculture Committee Chairman Colin Peterson from Minnesota. On a daily basis, the Chairman and I have discussions about the issues that affect farmers. I look forward to working with him to find long-term solutions to the challenges faced by our agriculture and cotton industries."

The House of Representatives, along with the support of Congressman Childers, was recently successful in overriding the President's veto of the 2008 Farm Bill. Many of the bill's provisions are still up for interpretation and are yet to be implemented.

As a member of the Agriculture Committee, the Congressman plans to work with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the National Cotton Council to ensure that the Farm Bill's loan programs, eligibility requirements, and cotton research programs are implemented in a way that makes sense for the cotton industry.

Transportation and energy are also important concerns raised by the Southern Cotton Ginners Association. The cost of diesel fuel is increasing at an even greater rate than that of regular gas. The Congressman recently introduced his six-point energy plan to provide immediate relief for Americans facing skyrocketing prices at the pump and offer long-term solutions to the country's energy crisis. His plan includes proposed diesel fuel tax credits to give relief to farmers and truckers who are struggling to afford transportation.

Congressman Childers has also been working to simultaneously promote Mississippi's economic and research and development resources along with the cotton industry. Since taking office, the Congressman has submitted several research funding requests for both Mississippi State University (MSU) and the University of Mississippi. The MSU Stoneville Research facility has already made important gains in boll weevil eradication.

Additionally, the Memphis metropolitan area has provided a stable and sufficient distribution center for North Mississippi cotton farmers for several generations, and the Congressman is working to ensure Memphis remains a delivery focal point for the cotton industry.

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