



MEDIA RELEASE

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VIRGINIA SENATOR MARK OBENSHAIN NAMED DISTINGUISHED FRIEND OF VIRGINIA AGRIBUSINESS

Senator Honored for Commitment to Agribusiness and Property Rights

(Richmond) Senator Mark D. Obenshain (R-Harrisonburg) has been named the Distinguished Friend of Virginia Agribusiness for 2015 by the Virginia Agribusiness Council.

The award was presented to Senator Obenshain on January 15th at the Agribusiness Council's 44th Annual Legislative Appreciation Banquet held in the historic Old Dominion Building at the Richmond Raceway Complex in Henrico County.

In presenting the award, Larry Seamans of Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative Association, and chairman of the Virginia Agribusiness Council's board of directors, spoke of Senator Obenshain's commitment to serving rural communities in the Shenandoah Valley, in a district that is economically dependent on agriculture and forestry.

Chairman Seamans noted Senator Obenshain's many accomplishments, specifically referencing his leadership in protecting private property rights. In 2008, after the "Kelo" court decision, he joined with the Council and many other organizations to create and patron legislation for a constitutional amendment to narrowly define eminent domain and stop its abuse. He worked tirelessly with a bipartisan group of legislators to advance the legislation, and in 2012, this work paid off as Virginia voters overwhelmingly approved its passage.

Furthermore, Chairman Seamans discussed Senator Obenshain's leadership in the Senate, where he serves as a respected member of the Agriculture, Conservation, and Natural Resources Committee, Commerce and Labor Committee, Rules Committee, Privileges and Elections Committee, and Courts of Justice Committee, where he serves as a co-chair.

Seamans said, "The Senator is a man of strong convictions who is admired and consulted by his colleagues on both sides of the political aisle. He has the unique ability to focus on issues and work with others to find answers and solutions that will have the most positive impact for all Virginians. And he accomplishes this without compromising the personal values which he holds dear."

(more)

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“It is truly an honor to recognize Senator Obenshain as the 2015 Distinguished Friend of Virginia Agribusiness,” said Katie K. Frazier, President of the Virginia Agribusiness Council. “He has been a valuable advocate for our agribusiness industry, specifically providing leadership in patroning private property rights initiatives critically important to Virginia landowners and businesses. His family history in agribusiness and his outstanding representation of Virginia’s top agriculture producing county in the state Senate since 2004 have proven his commitment to protecting and expanding the Commonwealth’s top industries of agriculture and forestry again and again.”

Council Board Member Danny Shreckhise, of Shreckhise Nurseries in Grottoes, said that Senator Obenshain “works tirelessly for his clients and constituents. He is a man with true core values, and he strives for what is best for all Virginians without compromising those values. He is focused on the issues and works to find answers and solutions that will have a positive impact on our Commonwealth. He has an acute understanding of agribusiness and the tremendous impact agribusiness has on the state’s economy.”

Since its inception in 1978, the Distinguished Friend of Virginia Agribusiness Award has been presented thirty-three 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 Obenshain’s award presentation, Governor Terry McAuliffe addressed over 850 persons in attendance, highlighting the first year of his administration’s efforts to promote the Commonwealth’s largest industry. Specifically, he mentioned his efforts to promote Virginia agricultural products overseas and his support of the Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development (AFID) Fund.

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. 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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Photo (attached), left to right: Larry Seamans, of Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative Association, and Virginia Agribusiness Council Chairman, and Senator Mark D. Obenshain