

1999 JAN 29 A 8:15

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN
MEMBER-ELECT

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

January 19, 1999

Mr. J. David Carlin
Asst. Sec. for Congressional
Department of Agriculture
Rm. 213-A
14th and Independence Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20250

VIA FAX

Dear Mr. Carlin:

I was recently contacted by a constituent, June Runyon, of (b) (6), who has requested my assistance in obtaining a copy of the *1998 U.S. Department of Agriculture Fact Book*.

I would appreciate it if you could either provide Mrs. Runyon with a copy of the book she has requested, or provide me with the information she would need to obtain a copy. Please send your response and any materials to my Janesville office and reference my file number **102488-DT**. My Janesville office address is *20 South Main Street, Suite 10, Janesville, Wisconsin, 53545*.

Should you have any questions about this request, my Constituent Services Manager, Danyell Tremmel, can be contacted at (608) 752-4050.

Again, thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress



SA04082025

LEGISLATIVE EXECUTIVE
MAIL

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN
MEMBER-ELECT

1999 JAN 21 A 9:16

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

January 12, 1999

J. David Carlin
Asst. Secretary for Congressional Affairs
Department of Agriculture
Room 213-A
14th and Independence Ave.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. Carlin:

I was recently contacted by a constituent, Sandra Weiss of (b) (6) regarding the difficulties she is experiencing with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Housing Service.

I have enclosed a copy of Mrs. Weiss' signed privacy act release form which details her situation. I would appreciate it if you would look into this matter to determine what can be done -- consistent with all laws and regulations -- to assist Mrs. Weiss in promptly resolving this matter.

Please address your response to my Janesville office and **reference my file number 102490-DT**. Should you have any questions about this request, my Constituent Services Manager, Danyell Tremmel, can be contacted at (608) 752-4050.

Again, thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Enclosure



SAD4084705

RECEIVED DEC 18

CONGRESSMAN MARK NEUMANN'S CASEWORK REQUEST FORM

Name MRS. Sandra Weiss Home Telephone (b) (6)

Address (b) (6)

City Dubuque Zip Code (b) (6) Date of Birth (b) (6)

Social Security Number (b) (6) Veteran's # or Alien/LIN #

Agency Involved: USDA/Rural Housing Service
(b) (6)

The Problem Is (continue on back or other sheet of paper if necessary): The escrow

(b) (6)

*****PRIVACY ACT RELEASE*****

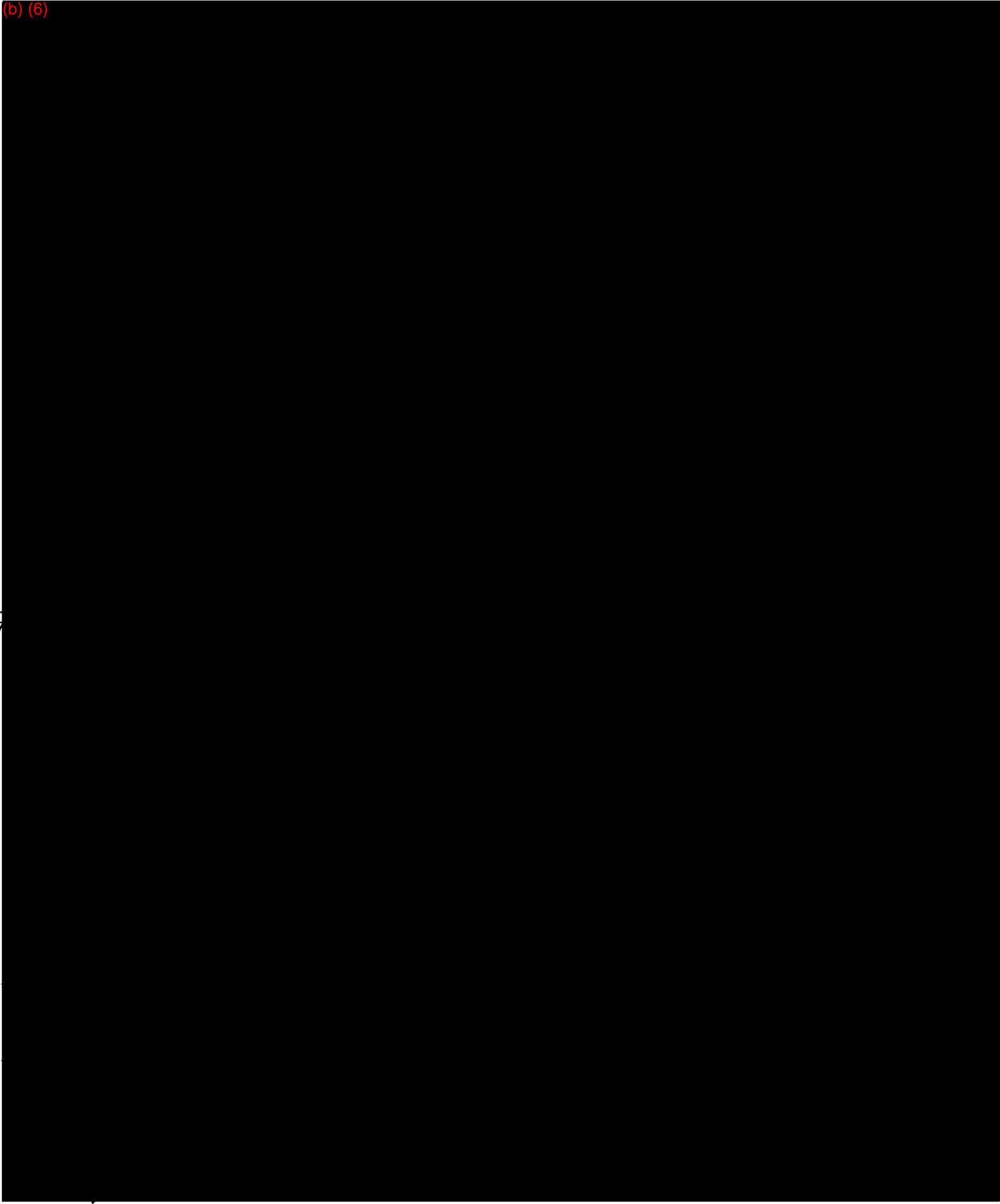
I request and authorize U.S. Congressman Mark W. Neumann (or Congressman Paul Ryan after January 1, 1999) to act on my behalf and to receive information from the proper officials regarding the matter described above. Congressman Neumann (Ryan) is authorized by me to receive on my behalf all correspondence and information about my case.

Signed: (b) (6) Date: Dec. 12, 1998

Please Return This Form To:
Office of Congressman Mark W. Neumann
One Parker Place Room 495
Janesville, WI 54545

Telephone (608) 752-4050
Fax (608) 752-4711

Note: The Privacy Act requires that you authorize access to your private records. Your signature above will enable Congressman Neumann (Ryan) to make the necessary inquiries on your behalf.



Honorable Paul Ryan
Member, U.S. House of Representatives
20 South Main Street, Suite 10
Janesville, Wisconsin 53545

ES

MAY 13 1999

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your most recent correspondence dated February 9, 1999, on behalf of your constituent (b) (6)

(b) (6)

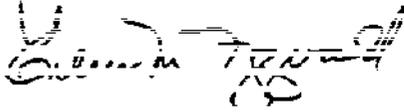
Thank you for your most recent correspondence dated February 9, 1999, on behalf of your constituent (b) (6)

(b) (6)

Honorable Paul Ryan

(b) (6)

Enclosure,



EILEEN M. FITZGERALD
Acting Administrator
Rural Housing Service

cc:
CB - FILE COPY
CB - SCHULZ
CB - Suspense
STEVE W. TERRY
State Director - Wisconsin

NOTE TO FILE: Revised, 5-5-, as per Admin edits. Status originally provided by Martha Altepeter and Marcia Houk (CSC), 3-28, 4-1

DRAFT:CB:ESchulz:tb:4-2-99-720-9928-99-Z00441:FINAL:5-6-99

Control No. 99-Z00411
Location: U/word

Log No. 106415
Recall Name: ryan.doc

Incoming Date. 03/30/99

05-#095931

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN
MEMBER-ELECT

2019 JAN 21 A 8:47
EXECUTIVE
OFFICE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

January 8, 1999

The Honorable Dan Glickman
Office of the Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Room 213-A
14th Street and Independence
Washington, D.C. 20250



Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing on behalf of hog farmers in my Congressional district to inquire about the action the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will take to remedy the grave situation the pork industry faces and what long term solutions are being developed.

As you know, pork producers throughout the country are facing an immediate crisis. I recently had the opportunity to meet with several constituent pork producers and the news that I received from them was not good. They stressed that if action is not taken within the next three months to address the dramatically declining prices for hogs, pork producers in Wisconsin and around the country will face financial ruin. The corollary effect on the agricultural community and our economy as a whole would be devastating.

Thank you, in advance, for your immediate attention to my urgent request. I look forward to working with you on this issue and others to maintain and enhance the agricultural economy of our nation. If you need any additional information concerning the critical situation faced by hog farmers in my district and throughout Wisconsin, please let me know.

Sincerely,



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Larry Combest
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

February 9, 1999

J. David Carlin
Asst. Secretary for Congressional Affairs
Room 213-A
14th and Independence Ave.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. Carlin:

This is in further regard to my letter to you of January 12, 1999, concerning Sandra Weiss. I have enclosed a copy of my previous inquiry for your reference.

It has now been nearly a month and I have not yet received your reply. I want to bring this matter to your immediate attention and ask that you do everything possible to expedite a final response to my inquiry.

Should you have any questions about this, please contact my Constituent Services Representative, Chad Herbert, at (608) 752-4050.

Your prompt attention to this matter would be most appreciated.

Sincerely,



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Enclosure



SA04095931

Congress of the United States

304564

Washington, DC 20515

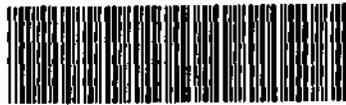
EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT, USDA

1999 JUL -7 A 8 03

COPIES: _____

Monday, May 10, 1999

President William J. Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC, 20500



SA04116423

Dear Mr. President:

As representatives of the largest dairy-producing states in the nation, we are writing to thank you for the final rule announced recently by Secretary Glickman to reform the antiquated federal milk marketing order system.

For the first time since the system's creation more than 60 years ago, this reform seeks to apply solid economic reasoning to the domestic pricing and marketing of milk. While the rule doesn't go as far as we would like in the direction of a more market-oriented and equitable pricing system, it represents a positive step forward. In that regard, we would like to commend you and Secretary Glickman for your actions.

However, we must also alert you to the efforts building in Congress to thwart your Administration's good work on this matter. Congressman Roy Blunt recently introduced legislation with 138 cosponsors to prevent major parts of this reform from being implemented. In addition, Congressman Asa Hutchinson has introduced legislation to authorize regional dairy pricing cartels, which will directly impair the effectiveness of the federal pricing system.

In light of these mounting attempts to undermine Secretary Glickman's effort to create a more rational and effective milk marketing order system we strongly encourage you to assure that the necessary resources are devoted to protect and defend this rule.

We thank you for your assistance on this matter and look forward to working with you toward the implementation of a more rational and equitable milk pricing system.

Respectfully,

Cal Dooley

James L. Cheverton

Jerry Kueyha
Tom Patin

~~Tom Patin~~

Tom Kint

John A. Cocha

Tommy Baldwin

Gil Gutrecht

Paul Ryan ^{classy}

Malcolm?

Tom Barrett

Tim Mince

Tom Schan ^{has am}

Donald R. Mangallo



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

SEP 22 1999

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

Dear Paul:

Thank you for your letter of May 10, 1999, from you and your House colleagues thanking the President for the final decision on the consolidation and reform of Federal milk marketing orders, and encouraging him to defend the decision from Congressional efforts to prevent parts of it from being implemented. President Clinton has asked me to respond on his behalf.

H.R. 1402, as reported by the Committee on Agriculture on July 19, 1999, would replace the Class I differentials contained in the final decision with generally higher differentials known as Option 1A. In addition, the bill would replace the manufacturing allowance contained in the final decision for determining the Class III price with a smaller allowance thereby raising resulting Class III prices, pending implementation of new formulas for determining Class III and Class IV prices. Further, H.R. 1402 would extend the dairy price support program from December 31, 1999, to December 31, 2000, and would require that milk orders be amended to provide for forward contracting between producers and proprietary handlers.

The final decision reflects a painstaking effort by the Department of Agriculture (USDA) to solicit the views of all interested parties and analyze numerous options. Over the 24-month period from the passage of the 1996 Farm Bill through the end of the comment period on the proposed rule, USDA conducted hundreds of informational meetings, requested comments on several reports, and amassed information from a variety of sources, including thousands of public comments from dairy farmers, processors, consumers, the academic community, and other interested parties.

I oppose H.R. 1402 because it would prevent USDA from proceeding with the reforms and modernization it has developed for the Federal milk marketing order system, requiring instead implementation of Option 1A. Enactment of the bill would mean that dairy farmers, as well as processors and consumers, would continue to be saddled with a system that, despite dramatic changes in the market, industry, consumer preferences, and usage patterns, has remained essentially unchanged for almost 15 years.

Notwithstanding my objections to the main provisions of the legislation, I could agree to reassess the manufacturing milk pricing question, providing the process comports with and does not interfere with USDA's implementation of its reforms of the milk marketing order system.

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan
Page 2

I support an extension of the dairy price support program, but I would prefer a 2-year extension. This question is particularly urgent since the 1996 Farm Bill, in a marked departure from how other major commodities are treated, ends the dairy price support program 2 years before the rest of the programs expire.

I would not oppose providing for forward contracting under Federal milk marketing orders. I think, however, that it should be regarded initially as a pilot program. In the unfortunate event that forward contracting proves to be incompatible with the objectives of Federal milk orders, we would need to be able to end the experiment expeditiously.

Again, we appreciate receiving your views on Federal milk order reform. Identical responses are being sent to the other signatories of your letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Glickman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "D".

DAN GLICKMAN
Secretary

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

WASHINGTON OFFICE
1217 LONGWORTH BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031

FAX: (202) 225-3393

TOLL-FREE: 1-888-909-RYAN
INTERNET: WWW.HOUSE.GOV/RYAN

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE ON BANKING
AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

1999 SEP 22 COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-4901

COPIES: COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT REFORM

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

September 8, 1999

Director Of Congressional Relations
Department Of Agriculture
213A Administration Bldg.
Jefferson Drive, S.W.
Washington, DC 20250



Dear Director:

I was recently contacted by three constituents, Mr. David Kizewic, Mr. Rob Wynstra, and Mrs. Julie Wynstra of Racine, Wisconsin, regarding the (b) (6)

As I understand it, Mr. Kizewic and Mr. and Mrs. Wynstra (b) (6)

I would appreciate it if you would look into this matter to determine if anything can be done – consistent with all laws and regulations – to assist Mr. Kizewic, and Mr. and Mrs. Wynstra in resolving this problem and addressing all of their concerns.

Please address your response to my Janesville office and reference my file number 107241. My Janesville office address is 20 South Main Street, Suite 10, Janesville, Wisconsin, 53545. Should you have any questions about this request, my Constituent Services Representative, Chad Herbert, can be contacted at (608) 752-4050.

Again, thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Enclosure

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 S. MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
(608) 752-4050 . FAX: (608) 752-4711

KENOSHA
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
5712 7TH AVENUE
KENOSHA, WI 53140
(414) 854-1901 . FAX: (414) 854-2156

RACINE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
304 6TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(414) 637-0510 . FAX: (414) 637-5689

Julie & Rob Wynstra

(b) (6)

MAY 1 0 48 99

April 25, 1999

Honorable Paul Ryan
Member of Congress
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Ryan:

We are writing to you regarding an issue with the United States Forest Service. Our family has owned a cabin on (b) (6)

(b) (6)

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Julie and Rob Wynstra

Dave & Nancy Kizewic

(b) (6)

MAY 10 1999

April 23, 1999

Honorable Paul Ryan
Member of Congress
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Ryan:

We are writing to you regarding an issue with the United States Forest Service. Our family has owned a cabin on (b) (6)

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Would you please investigate this questionable reappraisal process and let us know if any congressional intervention is possible.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

[Redacted signature]

Dave and Nancy Kizewic

AUG 3 - 1999

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Name: Robert & Julie Wynstra

Address: (b) (6)

City and Zip Code: (b) (6) Date of Birth: (b) (6)

Phone Number (Home) (b) (6) (Work) _____

Social Security Number _____ Veteran's Number _____

Alien Registration or LIN/Receipt Number _____

Agency Involved: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture - Forest Service

The Problem Is: (attach an additional sheet(s) if necessary) (b) (6)

(b) (6)

****Privacy Act Release****

I request and authorize U.S. Representative Paul Ryan to act on my behalf and to receive information from the proper officials regarding the matter described above. Congressman Ryan is authorized by me to receive on my behalf all correspondence and information about my case.

Signed: (b) (6) Date: 7-31-99

Please return this completed form to:

Congressman Paul Ryan
20 South Main St. Suite 10
Janesville, WI 53545
phone: (608) 752-4050
fax: (608) 752-4711

****Please note that the Privacy Act Release requires that you authorize access to your private records. Your signature above will enable Congressman Ryan to make the necessary inquiries on your behalf.

AUG 5 - 1999

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Name: DAVID S. KIZEWIC
Address: (b) (6)
City and Zip Code: RACINE, WIS. 53402 Date of Birth (b) (6)
Phone Number (Home) (b) (6) (Work) _____
Social Security Number (b) (6) Veteran's Number ?
Alien Registration or LIN/Receipt Number _____

Agency Involved: U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE - FOREST SERVICE

The Problem Is: (attach an additional sheet(s) if necessary) ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES.

(b) (6)

****Privacy Act Release****

I request and authorize U.S. Representative Paul Ryan to act on my behalf and to receive information from the proper officials regarding the matter described above. Congressman Ryan is authorized by me to receive on my behalf all correspondence and information about my case.

Signed: (b) (6) Date: 8-2-99

Please return this completed form to:

Congressman Paul Ryan
20 South Main St. Suite 10
Janesville, WI 53545
phone: (608) 752-4050
fax: (608) 752-4711

****Please note that the Privacy Act Release requires that you authorize access to your private records. Your signature above will enable Congressman Ryan to make the necessary inquiries on your behalf.

Dear Congressman Paul Ryan:

We are writing to you regarding an issue with the United States Forest Service. (b) (6)

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

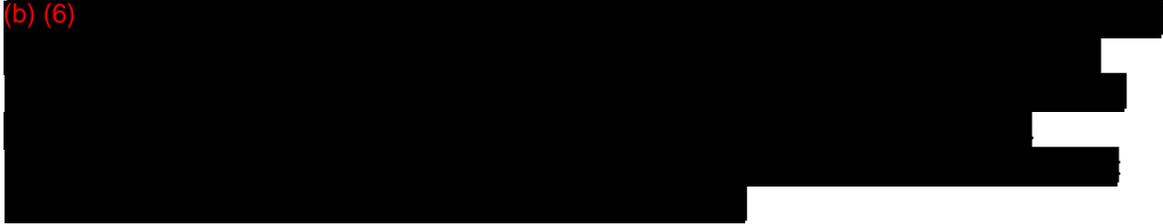
[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Congressman Paul Ryan
Page 3

(b) (6)



Please Congressman, look into these matters. Keep senior citizens and family values in mind. Encourage fairness and negotiations with the Forest Service.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)



Enclosures

EX-107
10/10/00

2000 AUG -8 1 P 12:02

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

August 2, 2000

Daniel R. Glickman
Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20250

**35-4159230
00**

Dear Secretary Glickman,

I write on behalf of United Greenhouse Systems, Inc. of Edgerton, WI (UGS), about a contract dispute relating to a USDA project performed by C. R. Klewin, Inc. of Connecticut (CRK).

According to UGS, CRK was selected in 1997 as general contractor for the USDA Horticultural Research Laboratory in Fort Pierce, FL, contract no. 50-3K15-7-8224. UGS soon entered into a subcontract with CRK to provide and install greenhouses which, according to UGS, were completed in November 1999. However, CRK has not issued a final payment of \$105,985.26 to UGS. UGS asserts that this amount is due from CRK under the terms of the subcontract.

A letter obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request indicates that CRK is withholding payment on the basis of USDA Unilateral Modification No. 36, providing credit to USDA for work that USDA has alleged to be required by the contract but not performed. However, UGS claims that the items in question were not part of the subcontract and that UGS is improperly being held responsible for the work.

Representatives of UGS assert that repeated attempts to discuss the matter directly with CRK and representatives of the USDA have failed

I urge you to give full and fair consideration to UGS's request for an investigation into the denial of payment by C. R. Klewin for subcontracted work under contract no. 50-3K15-7-8224. I have enclosed all relevant materials which UGS has provided us.

Sincerely,

Russell D. Feingold
United States Senator

Herb Kohl
United States Senator

Paul Ryan
United States Congressman



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

DEC 7 2000

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

Dear Paul:

This is in response to your letter dated August 2, 2000, regarding alleged improper withholding of payment to United Greenhouse Systems, Inc. (UGS), under their subcontract to C. R. Klewin, Inc. (CRK), general contractor, on the Government contract to construct the new Department of Agriculture (USDA) Horticultural Research Laboratory in Fort Pierce, Florida, under Contract No. 50-3K15-7-8224.

This dispute is between the prime contractor (CRK) and its subcontractor (UGS). However, USDA has been advised that CRK and UGS have agreed to a resolution of the payment issue, and that CRK is making payments to UGS.

Identical letters are also being sent to Senator Feingold and Senator Kohl. Thank you for bringing this matter to our attention. We are pleased that it is being resolved.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dan Glickman".

DAN GLICKMAN
Secretary

OFFICE OF THE CLERK
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

COMMITTEE ON BANKING
AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT REFORM

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

2000 SEP 11 A 11:32

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

WASHINGTON OFFICE
1217 LONGWORTH BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031
FAX: (202) 225-3393

TOLL-FREE: 1-888-909-RYAN
INTERNET: WWW.HOUSE.GOV/RYAN

August 23, 2000

Mr. Andrew Fish
Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations
U.S. Department of Agriculture
213 A Whitten Building
1400 Independence Ave. S.W.
Washington, D.C. 25250

05-4160719
FSA

Dear Andrew:

I was recently contacted by a constituent, Mr. George Atkinson, President of Green Valley Farms, Inc., of (b) (6)

[Redacted]

(b) (6)
[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Please address your response to my Janesville office and reference my file number 111992. My Janesville office address is 20 South Main Street, Suite 10, Janesville, Wisconsin, 53545. Should you have any questions about this request, my Constituent Services Representative, Chad Herbert, can be contacted at (608) 752-4050.

Again, thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

Paul

Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Enclosure

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 S. MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
(608) 752-4050 . FAX: (608) 752-4711

KENOSHA
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
5712 7TH AVENUE
KENOSHA, WI 53140
(414) 654-1901 . FAX: (414) 654-2158

RACINE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
304 8TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(414) 637-0510 . FAX: (414) 637-5689

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Name: GREEN VALLEY FARMS INC
Address: (b) (6)
City and Zip Code: (b) (6) Date of Birth (b) (6)
Phone Number (Home) (b) (6) (Work) 608-751-6874
Social Security Number (b) (6) Veteran's Number _____
Alien Registration or LIN/Receipt Number _____

Agency Involved: FARM SERVICE AGENCY
The Problem Is: (attach an additional sheet(s) if necessary) _____
SEE ATTACHED

ID# (b) (6)

****Privacy Act Release****

I request and authorize U.S. Representative Paul Ryan to act on my behalf and to receive information from the proper officials regarding the matter described above. Congressman Ryan is authorized by me to receive on my behalf all correspondence and information about my case.

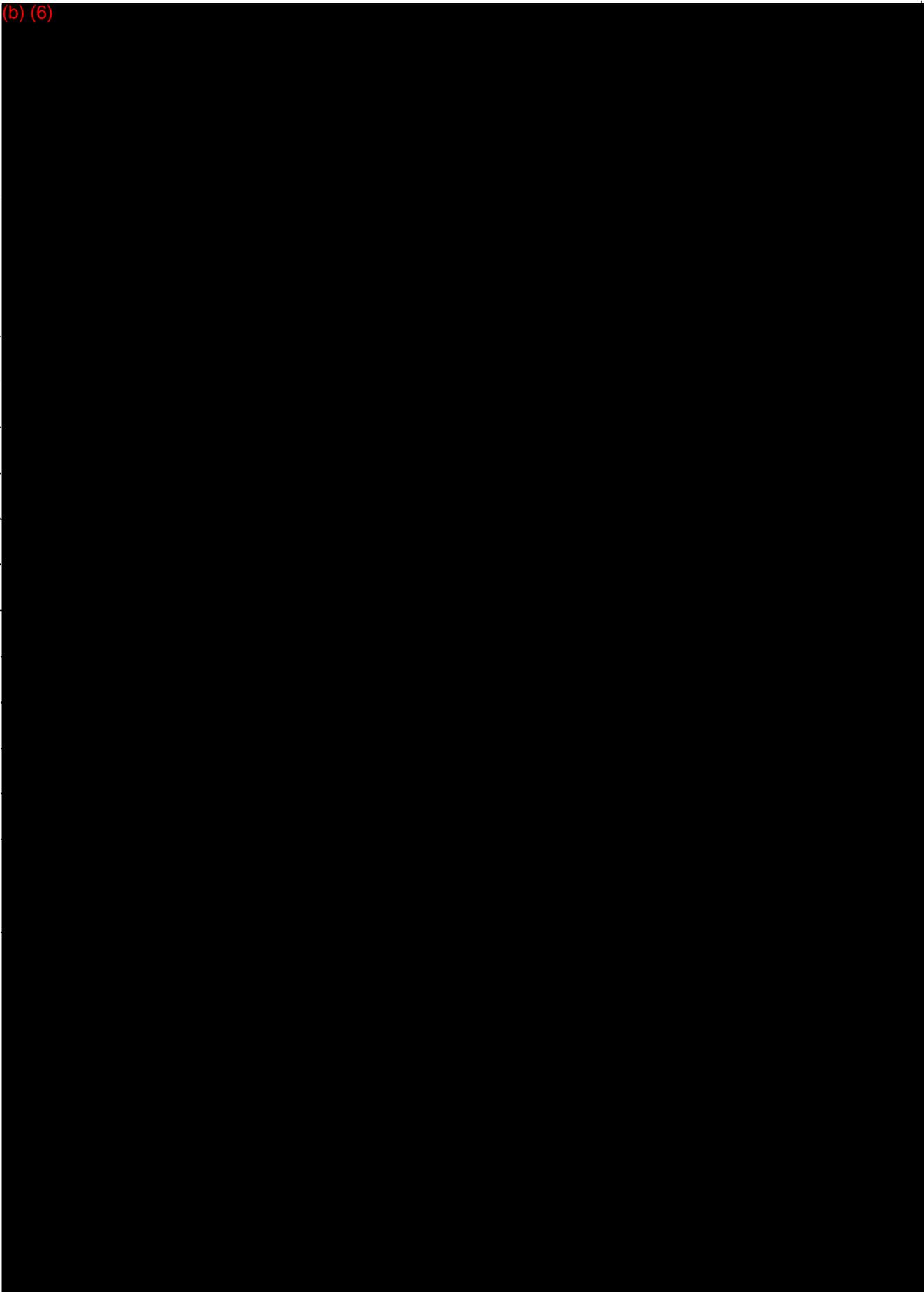
Signed: (b) (6) Date: 8-22-00

Please return this completed form to:
Congressman Paul Ryan
20 South Main St. Suite 10
Janesville, WI 53545
phone: (608) 752-4050
fax: (608) 752-4711

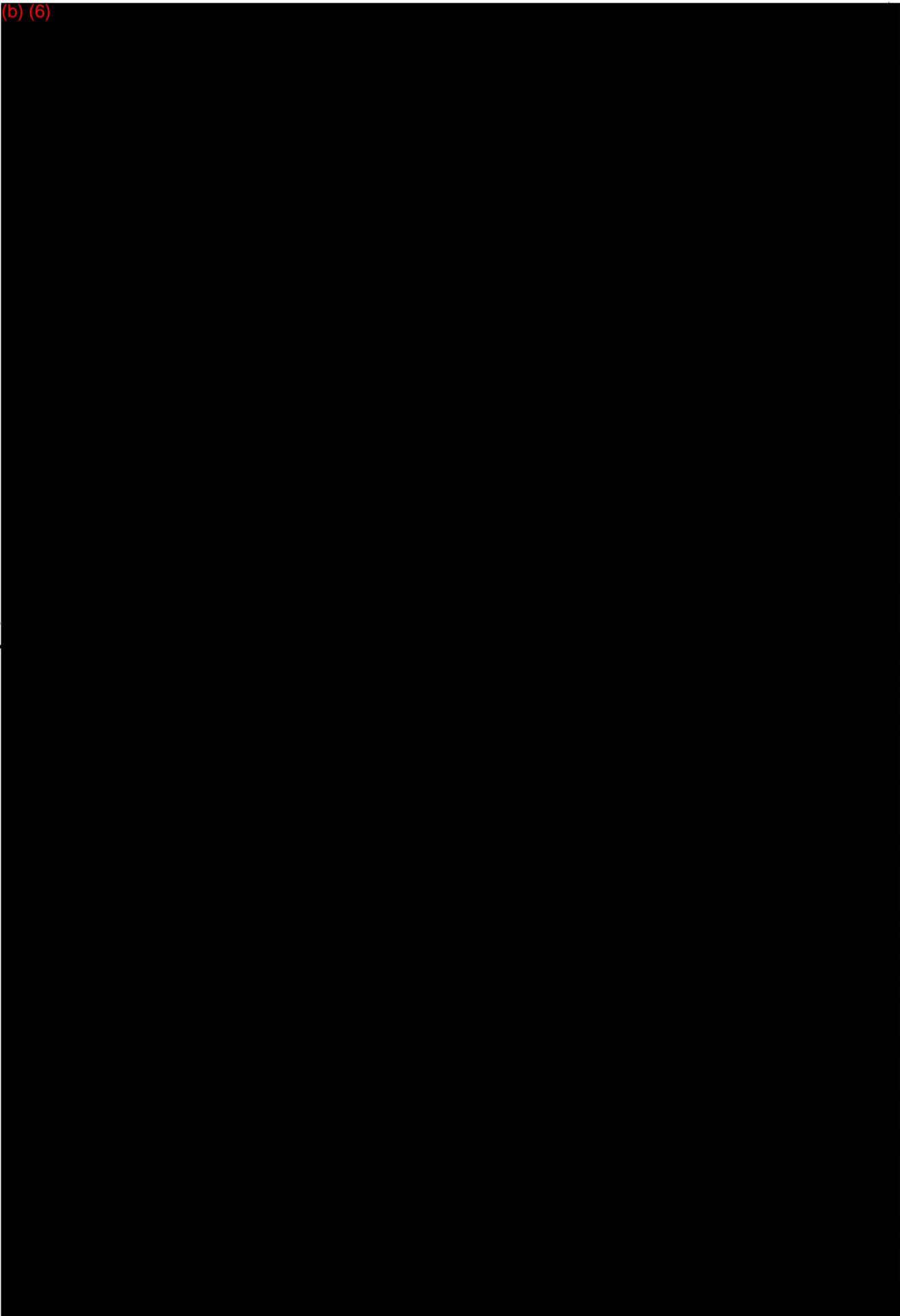
****Please note that the Privacy Act Release requires that you authorize access to your private records. Your signature above will enable Congressman Ryan to make the necessary inquiries on your behalf.

FITOL V

(b) (6)



(b) (6)



34,000-rough



United States
Department of
Agriculture

August 7, 2000

Farm and Foreign
Agricultural
Services

Green Valley Farms, Inc.

(b) (6)

Farm Service
Agency

Rock County
FSA Office
440 N US Hwy 14
Janesville, WI
53546-9700

Dear Green Valley Farms Inc.,

(b) (6)

PH 608-754-6617
FX 608-752-1247

(b) (6)

Sincerely,

Judith M. Schambow
County Executive Director

See reverse for Agency Act and Burden statements.

Form Approved - OMB No. 0580-0004

9/21/06

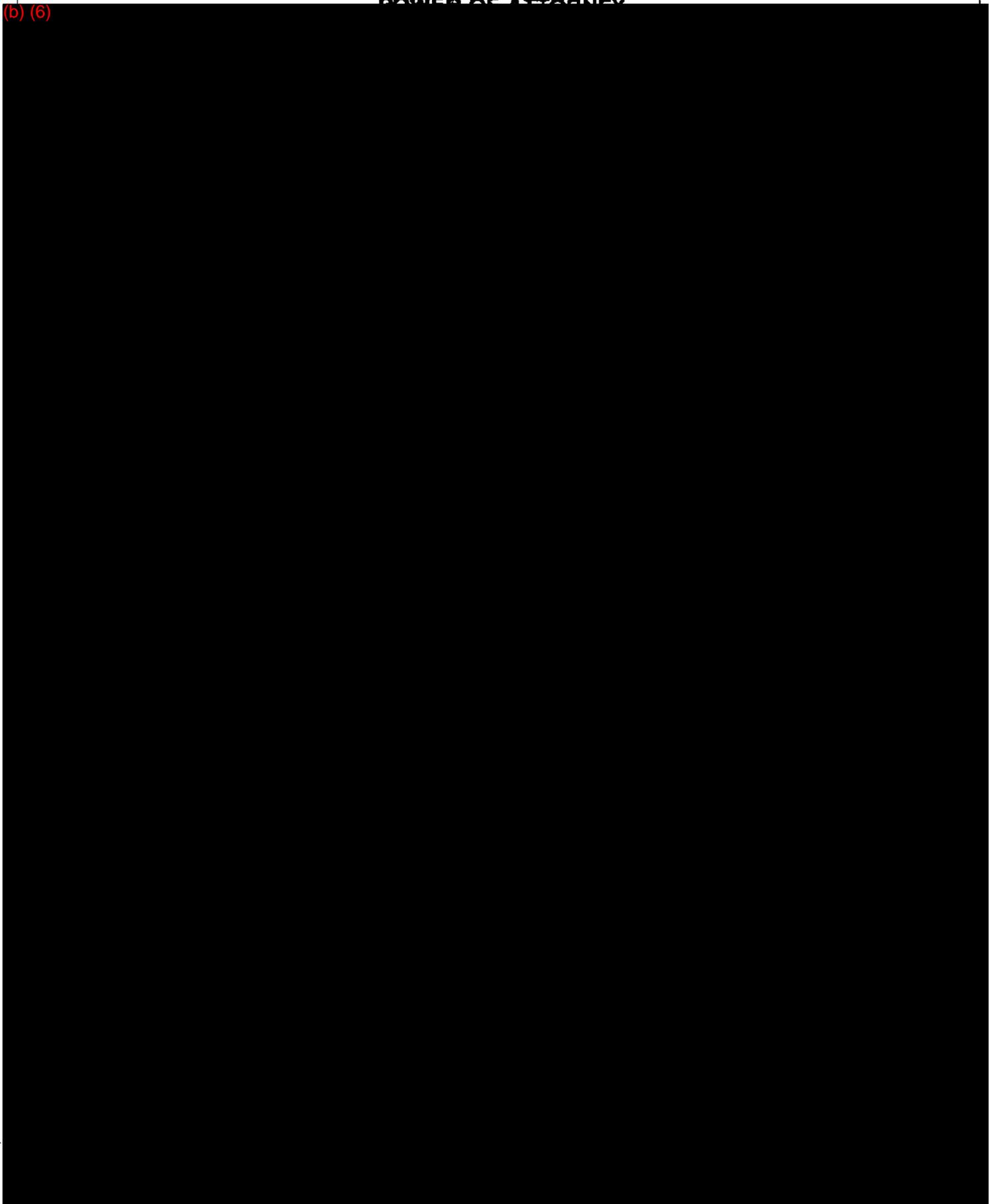
ASCS-211 (C. 31-92)

U.S. Department of Agriculture

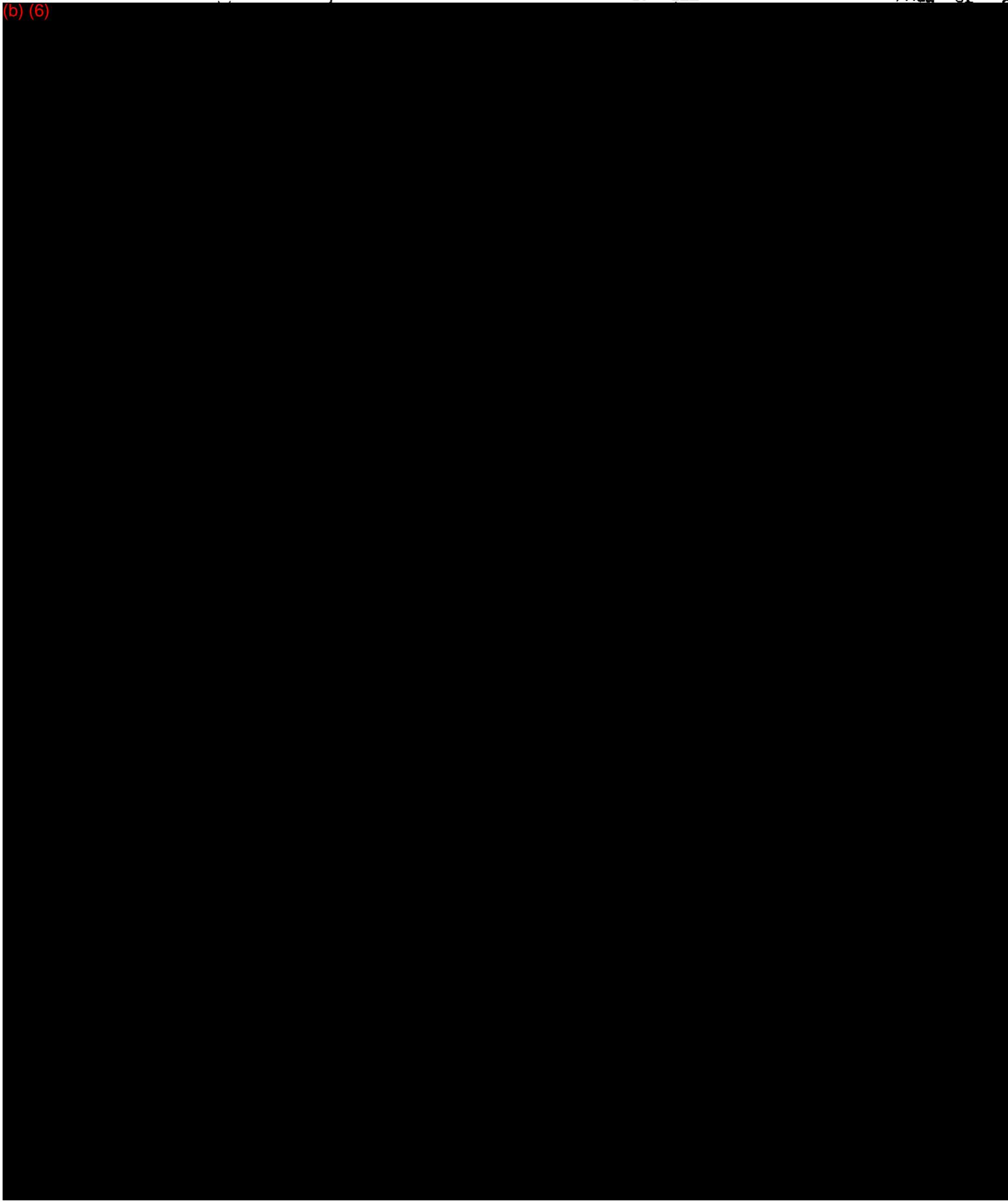
Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service - Commodity Credit Corporation - Federal Crop Insurance Corporation

POWER OF ATTORNEY

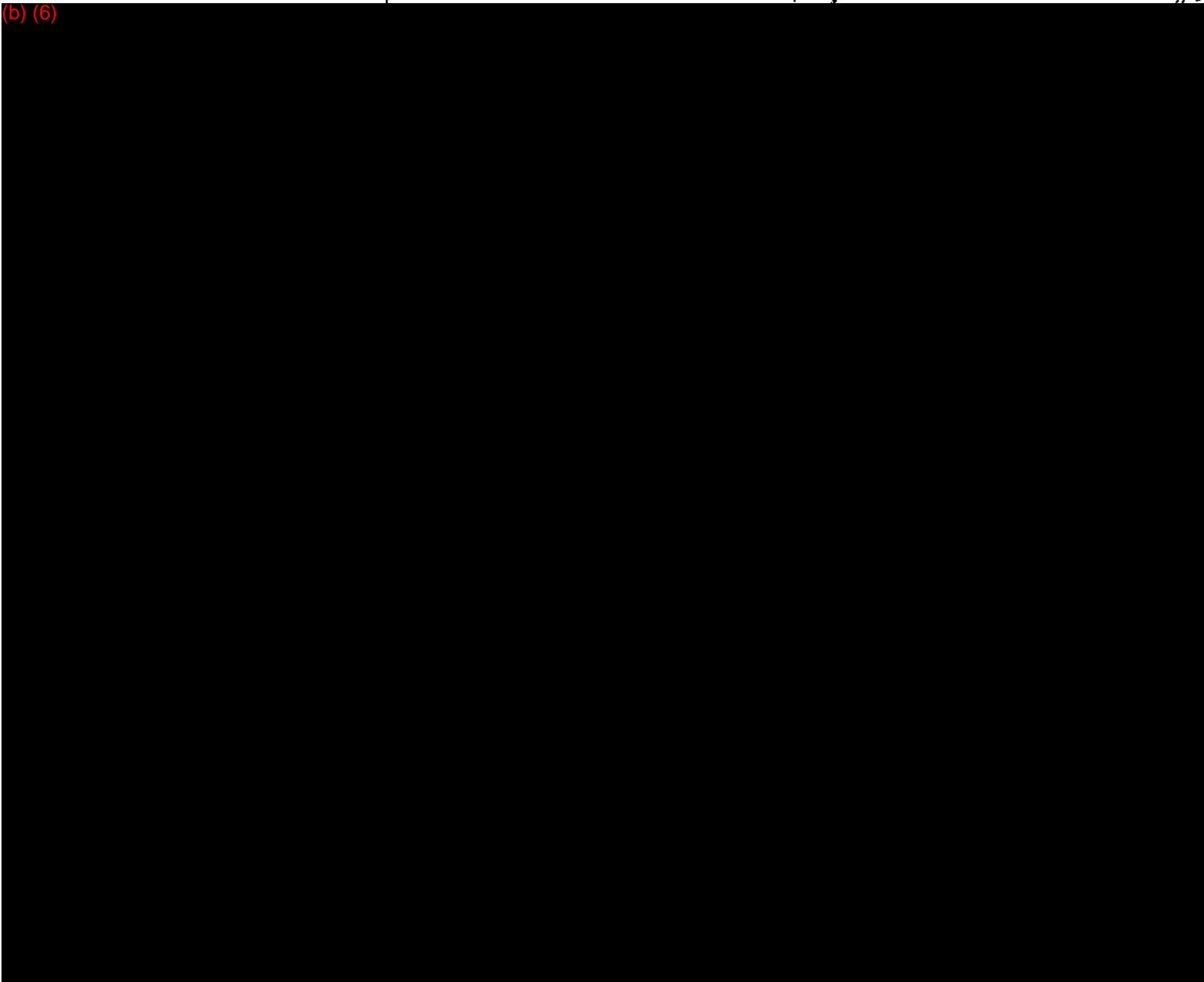
(b) (6)



(b) (6)



(b) (6)



CCC Representative's Signatu (b) (6)

Date: 12-30-97



United States
Department of
Agriculture

OCT 10 2000

Farm and Foreign
Agricultural
Services

Farm Service
Agency

1400 Independence
Avenue, SW
Stop 0501
Washington, DC
20250-0501

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Member, United States House
of Representatives
20 South Main Street, Suite 10
Janesville, Wisconsin 53545

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of August 23, 2000, on behalf of Mr. George Atkinson concerning (b) (6)

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Page 2

Thank you again for your letter. I trust this information will be helpful to you in responding to your constituent.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. W. Mitchell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L" and "M".

L. W. Mitchell
Deputy Administrator for
Farm Programs

Enclosures

cc: The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

05-4163945

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

WASHINGTON OFFICE
1217 LONGWORTH BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031
FAX: (202) 225-3393

TOLL-FREE: 1-888-909-RYAN
INTERNET: WWW.HOUSE.GOV/RYAN

COMMITTEE ON BANKING
AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT REFORM

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

September 26, 2000

Mr. Andrew Fish
Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations
U.S. Department of Agriculture
213 A Whitten Building
1400 Independence Ave. S.W.
Washington, D.C. 25250

Dear Andrew:

This is in further regard to my letter to you dated August 23, 2000, concerning Mr. George Atkinson and the difficulties he is experiencing with the USDA's Farm Service Agency. I have enclosed a copy of my previous inquiry for your reference.

It has now been over a month and I have not yet received your reply. I want to bring this matter to your immediate attention and ask that you do everything possible to expedite a final response to my inquiry.

Should you have any questions about this, please contact my Constituent Services Representative, Chad Herbert, at (608) 752-4050.

Your prompt attention to this matter would be most appreciated.

Sincerely,

Paul
Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Enclosure

05-4163945
FSA

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 S. MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
(608) 752-4050 . FAX: (608) 752-4711

KENOSHA
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
5712 7TH AVENUE
KENOSHA, WI 53140
(414) 654-1901 . FAX: (414) 654-2156

RACINE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
304 8TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(414) 637-0570 . FAX: (414) 637-5689



Natural Resources
Conservation
Service

P.O. Box 2890
Washington, D.C.
20013

NOV 28 2000

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Member, U.S. House of Representatives
Constituent Services Center
20 South Main Street
Suite 10
Janesville, Wisconsin 53545

Dear Congressman Ryan:

This is in response to your letter of October 3, 2000, to Andrew Fish, Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations, concerning your constituent Mr. Tim Weeden, information on exclusion of cost-share payments received under a State conservation program request from federally taxable income. Your file number for this request is 120569. Your letter has been referred to me for response.

The Revenue Act of 1978 provides that, after September 30, 1979, payments made to individuals under State conservation cost-share programs may be excluded from federally taxable income if certain conditions are met. These conditions include a determination by the Secretary of Agriculture that payments made under a State conservation program are made primarily for the purpose of conserving soil and/or water resources, protecting or restoring the environment, improving forests, or providing a habitat for wildlife. Also, the Secretary of Treasury must determine that the payment does not increase substantially the annual income derived from the property associated with the payment.

A program sponsor can apply for a determination by the Secretary of Agriculture by submitting information to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). NRCS and the Department's Office of the General Counsel will review this material to determine if the program meets the requirements of the Revenue Act of 1978. The two agencies then develop a recommendation for the Secretary.

Again, thank you for your interest in this process. I will follow up with Mr. Weeden by sending him information he can use to apply for a determination of tax exemption from the Secretary of Agriculture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Thomas A. Weber". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

THOMAS A. WEBER
Deputy Chief for Programs

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS),
formerly the Soil Conservation Service, is an agency of the
Department of Agriculture

An Equal Opportunity Employer

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Page 2

cc: The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

2000 OCT 23 P 3:10

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

WASHINGTON OFFICE
1217 LONGWORTH BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031
FAX: (202) 225-3393

TOLL-FREE: 1-888-808-RYAN
INTERNET: WWW.HOUSE.GOV/RYAN

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

COMMITTEE ON BANKING
AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT REFORM

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

October 3, 2000

05-4164531
RUS

The Honorable Andrew Fish
Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations
U.S. Department of Agriculture
213 A Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Ave. S.W.
Washington, D.C. 25250

Dear Assistant Secretary Fish:

I was recently contacted by a constituent, Mr. Tim Weeden, (b) (6)

[REDACTED]

(b) (6)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Please address your response to my Janesville office and reference my file number 120569. My Janesville office address is 20 South Main Street, Suite 10, Janesville, Wisconsin, 53545. Should you have any questions about this request, my Constituent Services Representative, Chad Herbert, can be contacted at (608) 752-4050.

Again, thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Enclosure

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 S. MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
(608) 752-4050 . FAX: (608) 752-4711

KENOSHA
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
5712 7TH AVENUE
KENOSHA, WI 53140
(414) 654-1901 . FAX: (414) 654-2166

RACINE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
304 6TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(414) 637-0510 . FAX: (414) 637-6889

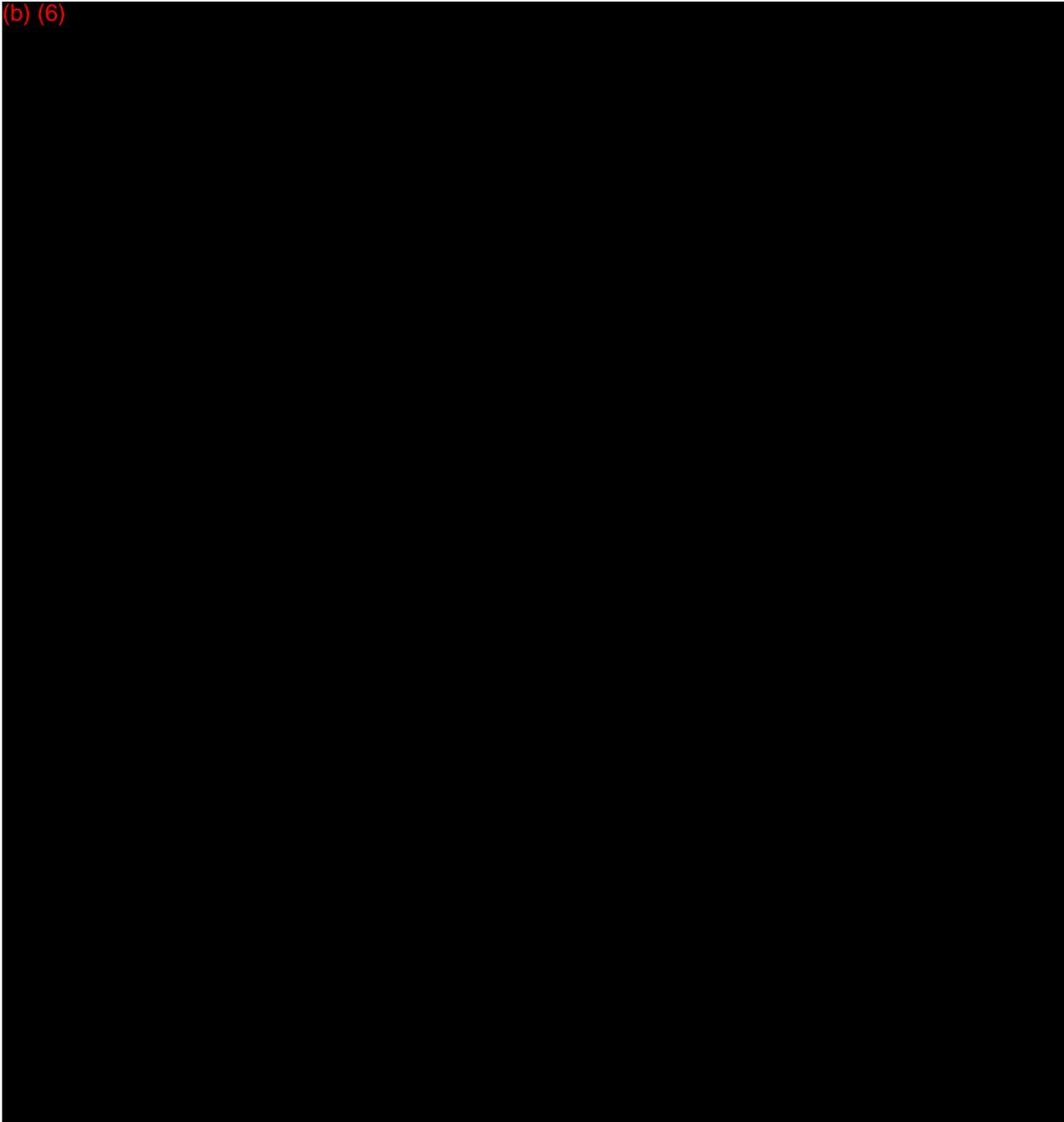
OCT 02 2000

Congressman Paul Ryan
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC. 20515

October 2, 2000

Dear Congressman Ryan:

(b) (6)



Should you have any questions concerning this matter, please feel free to contact me at
(608) 362-7877.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tim Weeden". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the word "Sincerely,".

Tim Weeden,
Director of Government Affairs
Water Tower Industrial Properties, Inc.

cc: Brenda Blanchard, Secretary
Wisconsin Department of Commerce

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

WASHINGTON OFFICE
1217 LONGWORTH BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031
FAX: (202) 225-3393

TOLL-FREE: 1-888-905-RYAN
INTERNET: WWW.HOUSE.GOV/RYAN

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

COMMITTEE ON BANKING
AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT REFORM

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

September 26, 2000

Mr. Andrew Fish
Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations
U.S. Department of Agriculture
213 A Whitten Building
1400 Independence Ave. S.W.
Washington, D.C. 25250

Dear Andrew:

This is in further regard to my letter to you dated August 23, 2000, concerning Mr. George Atkinson and (b) (6). I have enclosed a copy of my previous inquiry for your reference.

It has now been over a month and I have not yet received your reply. I want to bring this matter to your immediate attention and ask that you do everything possible to expedite a final response to my inquiry.

Should you have any questions about this, please contact my Constituent Services Representative, Chad Herbert, at (608) 752-4050.

Your prompt attention to this matter would be most appreciated.

Sincerely,

Paul
Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Enclosure

05-4166473
FSA

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 S. MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
(608) 752-4050 . FAX: (608) 752-4711

KENOSHA
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
5712 7TH AVENUE
KENOSHA, WI 53140
(414) 654-1901 . FAX: (414) 654-2158

RACINE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
304 6TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(414) 637-0510 . FAX: (414) 637-5689

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 19, 2001

Honorable Ann Veneman
Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
Fourteenth Street and Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

35-4180175
FSA

Dear Secretary Veneman:

As Republican Members of Congress, we write to solicit the Administration's support in our efforts to reject dairy compacts. The time has come for this Administration to join the debate.

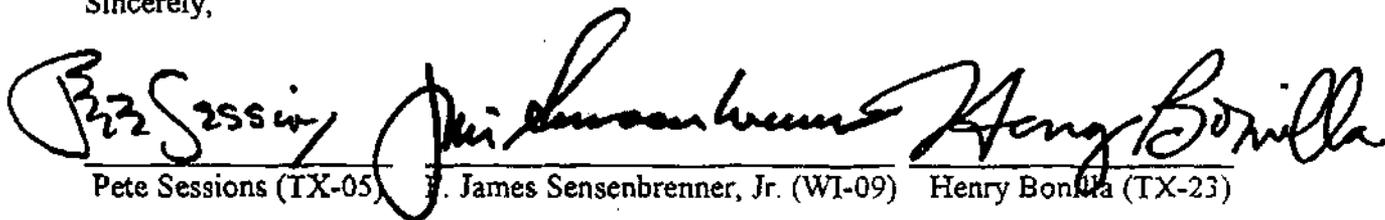
Compacts allow dairy producers within a region to fix fluid milk prices at artificially high levels, and to insulate those prices from competition by erecting trade barriers against milk from other regions. Dairy compacts increase prices for farmers in one region, at the expense of farmers in non-Compact regions. The market distortions that result are antithetical to a fair and equitable national dairy policy. But for congressional consent, dairy compacts would violate the Commerce Clause of the Constitution. In short, compacts legalize classic cartel behavior that raises fluid milk prices for consumers.

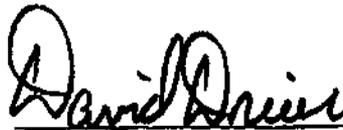
By slipping it into a conference report without a floor vote, compact proponents gained congressional consent for the Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact in 1996 without a full debate. Through various maneuvers, they have managed to extend that consent through September 30, 2001. Today, through H.R. 1827, they seek not only to extend congressional consent for the Northeast Compact beyond September 30, but also to grant consent to a Southern Dairy Compact, a Pacific Northwest Dairy Compact, and an Intermountain Dairy Compact.

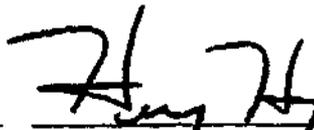
Compact proponents argue the principle of states' rights supports their position. They could not be more wrong. States have rights, but we believe declaring economic warfare on other States is not one of them. Our nation settled that question by abandoning the Articles of Confederation. The Founding Fathers clearly chose to have one, unified national market free from domestic trade barriers. Simple adherence to that principle underpins much of our national prosperity.

Therefore, we ask that the Administration help us protect consumers and preserve the integrity of interstate commerce by opposing H.R. 1827 this session.

Sincerely,


Pete Sessions (TX-05) J. James Sensenbrenner, Jr. (WI-09) Henry Bonilla (TX-23)

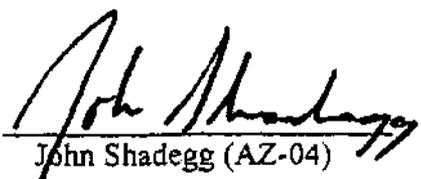

David Dreier (CA-28)


Henry Hyde (IL-09)

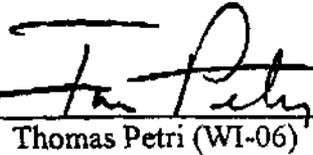

John A. Boehner (OH-08)


Jim Kolbe (AZ-05)

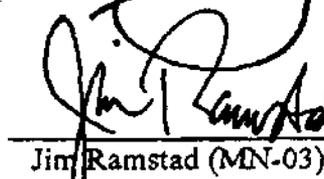

Gil Gutnecht (MN-01)


John Shadegg (AZ-04)

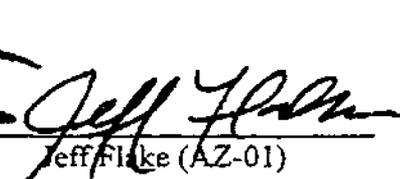

Mark Green (WI-08)

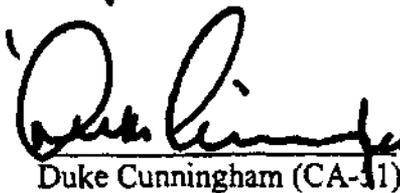

Thomas Petri (WI-06)

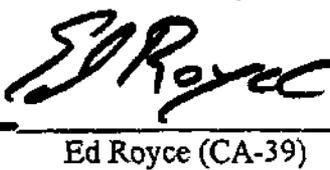

Paul D. Ryan (WI-01)


Jim Ramstad (MN-03)

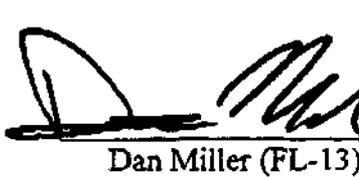

J.D. Hayworth (AZ-06)


Jeff Flake (AZ-01)

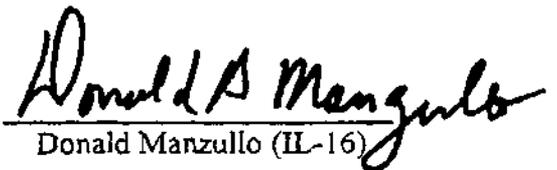

Duke Cunningham (CA-41)

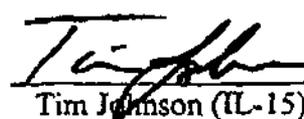

Ed Royce (CA-39)


Tom Tancredo (CO-06)

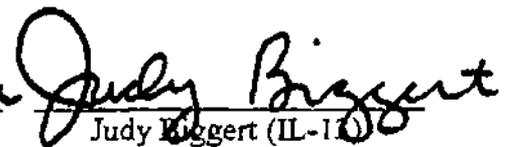

Dan Miller (FL-13)

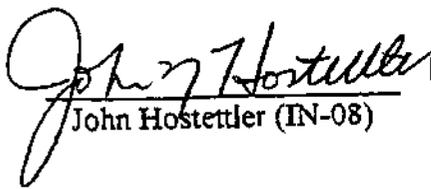

Jim Nussle (IA-02)

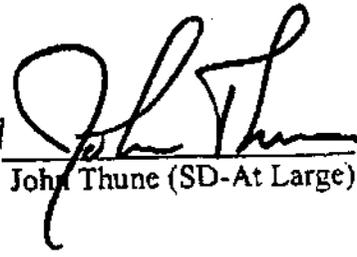

Donald Manzullo (IL-16)

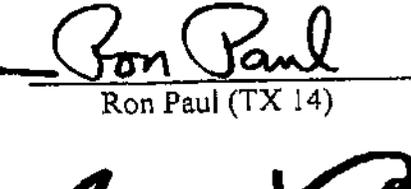

Tim Johnson (IL-15)

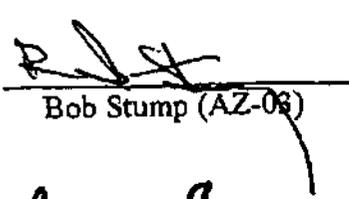

Mark Kirk (IL-10)

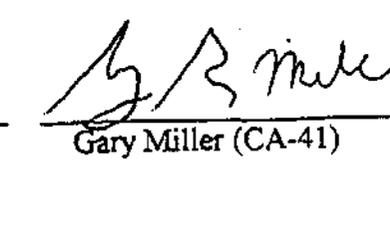

Judy Biggert (IL-11)

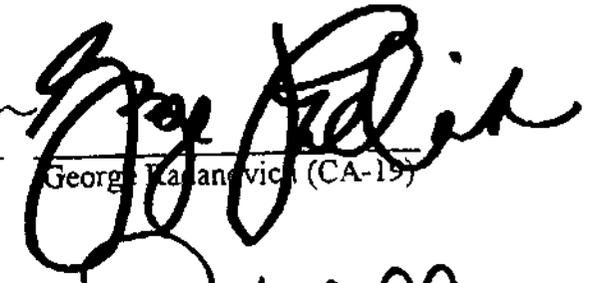

John Hostettler (IN-08)


John Thune (SD-At Large)


Ron Paul (TX 14)

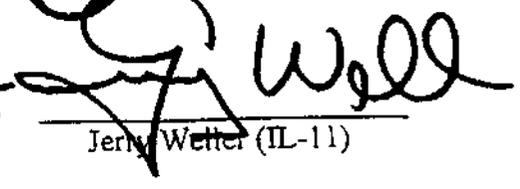

Bob Stump (AZ-08)

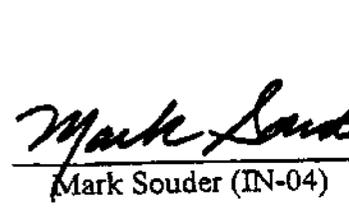

Gary Miller (CA-41)

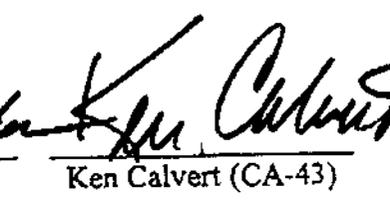

George Kanjovich (CA-19)

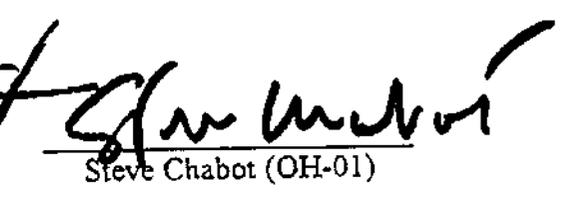

Mike Simpson (ID-02)


C.L. "Butch" Otter (ID-01)

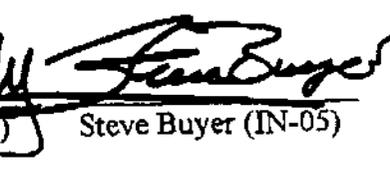

Jerry Well (IL-11)

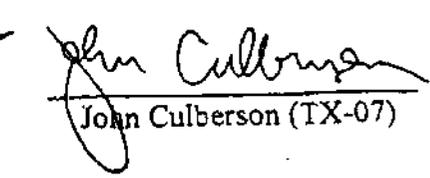

Mark Souder (IN-04)

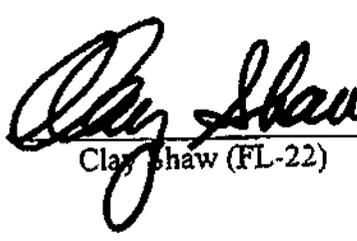

Ken Calvert (CA-43)

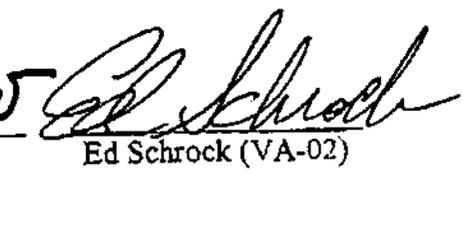

Steve Chabot (OH-01)


Mark Kennedy (IN-02)


Steve Buyer (IN-05)


John Culberson (TX-07)


Clay Shaw (FL-22)


Ed Schrock (VA-02)

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1217 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031
FAX: (202) 225-3393

TOLL-FREE: 1-800-909-RYAN
INTERNET: WWW.HOUSE.GOV/RYAN

**COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS**

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

**Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901**

February 20, 2002

The Honorable Ann M. Veneman
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

**45-4193425
NAD**

VIA FAX

Dear Secretary Veneman:

I am writing you concerning a dilemma faced by one of my constituents, Mr. Frank Taylor of (b) (6). Mr. Taylor recently contacted my office concerning the (b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 S. MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
(608) 752-4090 . FAX: (608) 782-4711

KENOSHA
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
5712 7TH AVENUE
KENOSHA, WI 53140
(262) 654-1901 . FAX: (262) 654-2158

RACINE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
304 6TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(262) 637-0510 . FAX: (262) 637-5689

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

(b) (6)

Please address your response to my Janesville office My Janesville office, located at 20 South Main Street, Suite 10, Janesville, Wisconsin, 53545, or fax it (608) 752-4711.

Again, thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Enclosures



Congressman
PAUL RYAN



Serving Wisconsin's First Congressional District

JANESVILLE CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER

20 South Main Street, Suite 10

Janesville, WI 53545

Phone: (608) 752-4050

Fax: (608)752-4711

FAX TRANSMITTAL

DATE: 2-21-02

PLEASE DELIVER TO:

NAME: The Honorable Ann Veneman

COMPANY/OFFICE: USDA Secretary

FAX #: (202) 720-6314

TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES: 29 (INCLUDING THIS COVER SHEET)

If you do not receive all pages, or receive this fax in error, please call (608) 752-4050.

SENDER: Paul Ryan

COMMENTS: I would appreciate any assistance you can provide by requesting the National Appeals Division's Director to reconsider her decision to deny Mr. Taylor meritorious relief. Thank you.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
NATIONAL APPEALS DIVISION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D C 20250

February 4, 2002

Honorable Paul Ryan
Member, U.S. House of Representative
20 South Main Street, Suite 10
Janesville, Wisconsin 53545

Dear Congressman Ryan:

This responds to your letter of February 20, 2002, to Secretary Ann Veneman regarding Mr. Frank Taylor's (b) (6)

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

I trust this information is helpful to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy L. Smith".

Nancy L. Smith
Acting Director

cc: Honorable Paul Ryan
U. S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-4901

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

WASHINGTON OFFICE
1217 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4801
(202) 225-3031
FAX: (202) 225-3393

TOLL-FREE: 1-888-000-RYAN
INTERNET: WWW.HOUSE.GOV/RYAN

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

March 8, 2002

The Honorable Ann M. Veneman
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

45-4194437
FSIS

VIA FAX

Dear Secretary Veneman:

Mr. Robert Ramsay, President of Romance Foods Corporation, recently contacted me regarding (b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
29 S. MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
(609) 752-4050 . FAX: (609) 752-4711

KENOSHA
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
5712 7TH AVENUE
KENOSHA, WI 53140
(262) 654-1901 . FAX: (262) 654-2195

RACINE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
30 S. 6TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(262) 437-0510 . FAX: (262) 697-

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

(b) (6)

Please address your response to my Janesville office and reference my file number 143305. My Janesville office address is 20 South Main Street, Suite 10, Janesville, Wisconsin, 53545, and its fax number is (608) 752-4711. Should you have any questions about this request, my Constituent Services Representative, Chad Herbert, can be contacted at (608) 752-4050.

Again, thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Elsa A. Murano, Under Secretary for Food Safety
The Honorable May Waters, Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations

Mar 07 02 04:11p

Judi Pannozo

1-262-654-7034

P.2

PAUL RYAN
145 DEMING, WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Name: Robert B. RAMSAY
Address: (b) (6)
City and Zip Code: (b) (6) Date of Birth: (b) (6)
Phone Number (Home) (b) (6) (Work) 262 697-2000
Social Security Number (b) (6) Veteran's Number _____
Alien Registration or LI _____

Agency Involved: _____

The Problem Is: (attach an additional sheet(s) if necessary) _____

****Privacy Act Release****

I request and authorize U.S. Representative Paul Ryan to act on my behalf and to receive information from the proper officials regarding the matter described above. Congressman Ryan is authorized by me to receive on my behalf all correspondence and information about my case.

Signed: (b) (6) Date: 3-7-02

Please return this completed form to:

Congressman Paul Ryan
20 South Main St. Suite 10
Janesville, WI 53545
phone: (608) 752-4050
fax: (608) 752-4711

***Please note that the Privacy Act Release requires that you authorize access to your private records. Your signature above will enable Congressman Ryan to make the necessary inquiries on your behalf.



ROMANCE FOODS CORPORATION

3814 77th Street • Kenosha, WI 53142 • Phone (262) 697-2000 • Fax (262) 697-2004

March 6, 2002

Honorable Paul Ryan
United States Congressman
First District, Wisconsin
1217 Longworth HOB
Washington, D. C. 20515

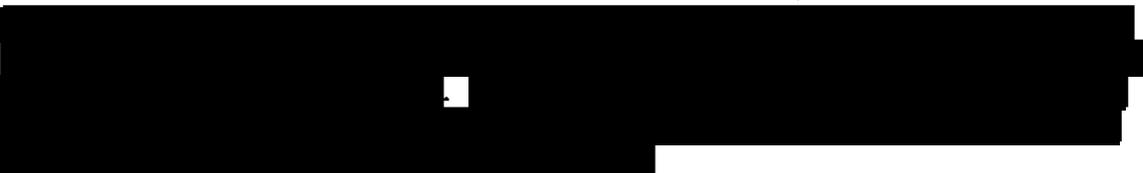
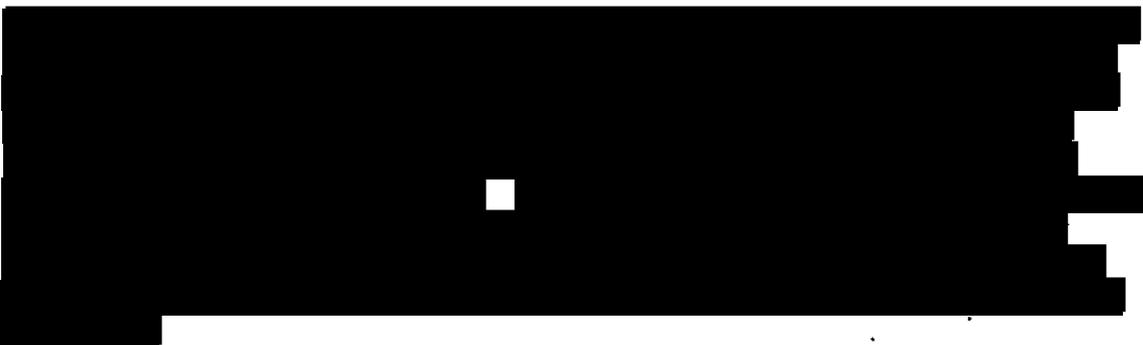
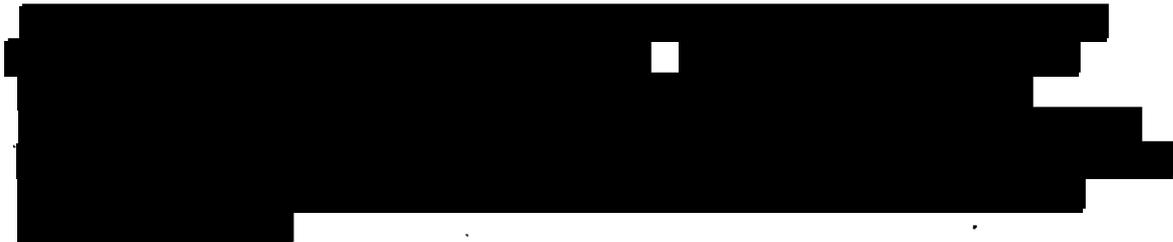
Dear Congressman Ryan:

(b) (6)

The body of the letter is almost entirely redacted with large black rectangular blocks. The only visible text is the redaction code "(b) (6)" at the top left of the first block. There are three distinct redacted sections, each consisting of multiple lines of text that have been completely obscured.

Robert B. Ramsay
President
Romance Foods Corporation
March 6, 2002
Page 2 of 4

(b) (6)



Robert B. Ramsay
President
Romance Foods Corporation
March 6, 2002
Page 3 of 4

(b) (6) [Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Robert B. Ramsay
President
Romance Foods Corporation
March 6, 2002
Page 4 of 4

(b) (6)

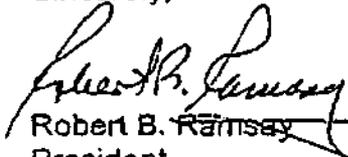
May I suggest that your letter be directed to:

Dr. Elsa Murano
Under Secretary For Food Safety
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Jefferson Drive SW Room 227E
Washington, DC 20250

Through Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman

Thank you for your immediate assistance.

Sincerely,


Robert B. Ramsay
President

Attachments:

(b) (6)

[Redacted content]



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food Safety
and Inspection
Service

Washington, D.C.
20250

MAY 24 2002

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Member, U.S. House of Representatives
20 South Main Street, Suite 10
Janesville, Wisconsin 53545

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of March 8, 2002, on behalf of Mr. Robert Ramsay, (b) (6)

[Redacted]

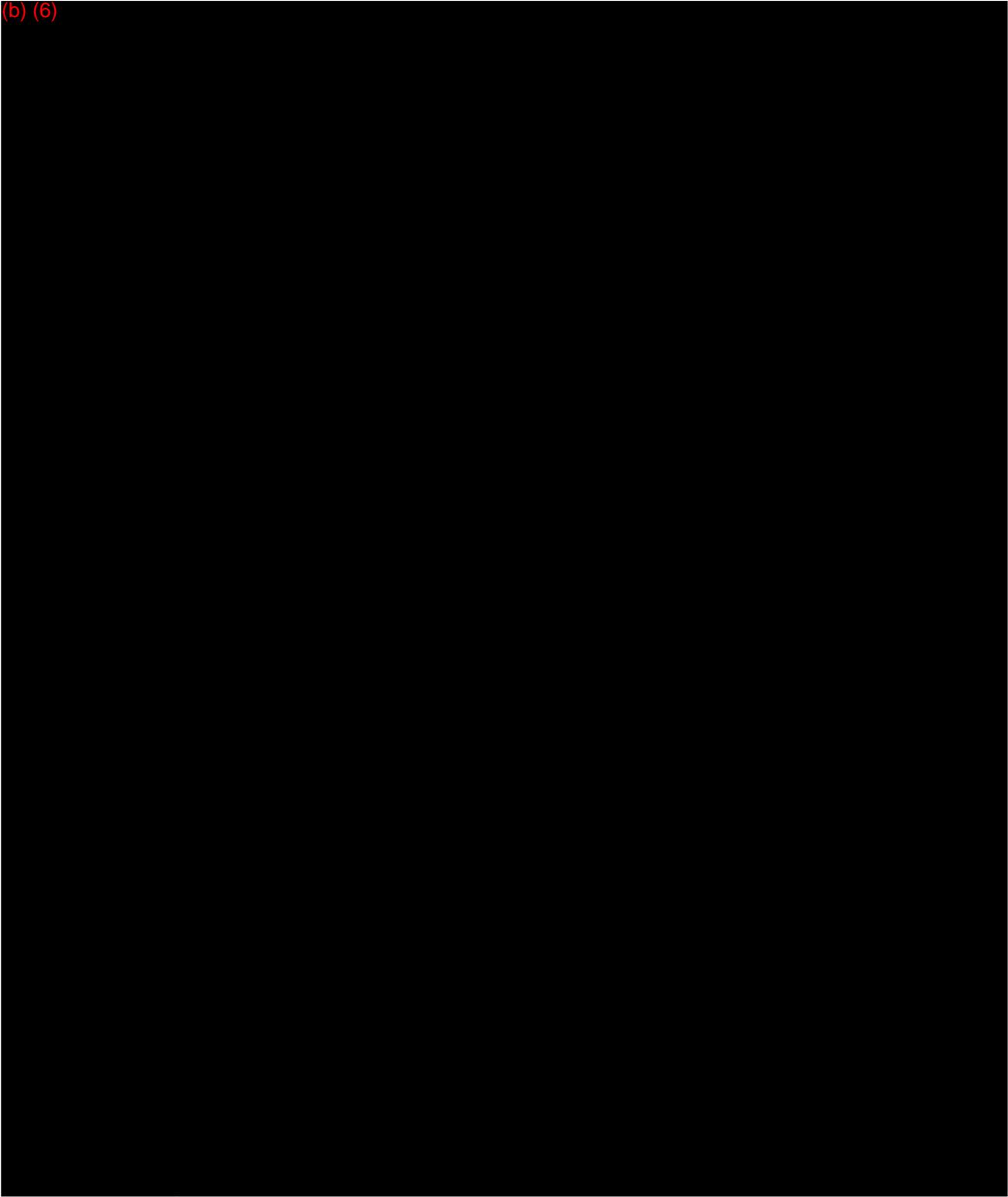
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[Redacted]

(b) (6)



The Honorable Paul Ryan

Page 3

We hope you find this information helpful. If you have any additional questions, feel free to contact the FSIS Congressional and Public Affairs Office at (202) 720-3897.

Sincerely,

Barbara J. Masters for

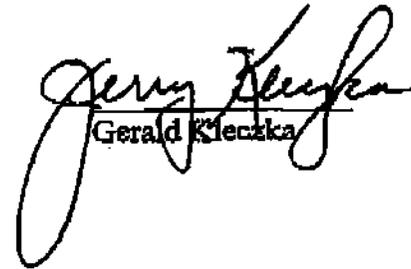
William C. Smith
Deputy Administrator
Office of Field Operations

cc: The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515


Tom Petri


Mark Green


Tammy Baldwin


Gerald Kleczka


James Sensenbrenner

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 20, 2002

The Honorable Ann Veneman
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

35-4195237
FS

Dear Secretary Veneman:

We are writing to request your prompt assistance in releasing \$4 million in fiscal year 2002 emergency Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) funds to assist the state of Wisconsin in responding swiftly and effectively to the outbreak of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) among the white-tailed deer population. It is my understanding that the Governor of Wisconsin has recently submitted a request to you for such assistance.

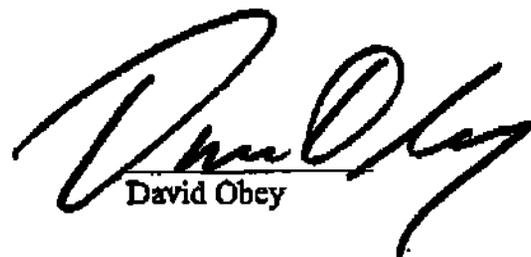
The State of Wisconsin has taken a proactive and multi-agency approach to monitoring and controlling deer infected with CWD. We understand that USDA funds are already assisting in this effort. However, it is imperative that the state receive additional emergency funding as soon as possible so that the monitoring efforts can continue and the disease be brought under control.

Thank you for your attention to our request. Please do not hesitate to contact either Brad Pfaff of Representative Kind's staff (225-5506) or Paul Carver of Representative Obey's staff (225-3365) if you have any further questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Ron Kind



David Obey



Tom Barrett



Paul Ryan



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

MAY 23 2002

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of March 20, 2002, to Secretary Veneman concerning funding assistance for Wisconsin's response to the detection of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in deer within the State.

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) shares your concern about the recent identification of CWD in Wisconsin, and we are pleased to be providing Wisconsin with field and laboratory assistance. We plan to continue with such efforts, and we are exploring options for providing other assistance. However, we must clarify that we believe the primary responsibility in the current situation lies with the State of Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has taken the lead role in addressing the occurrence of CWD in the State, and we are directing our efforts to support the State's disease management and eradication activities.

In this regard, we can offer continuing assistance to Wisconsin's diagnostic and surveillance efforts. Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) funds released in September 2001 and February 2002 provided funding for the indemnification and disposal of some captive cervid herds infected with CWD. A portion of the CCC funds were also directed to USDA's ongoing CWD testing and surveillance activities, which included the testing of deer killed during Wisconsin's hunting season last fall. This testing was performed by USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's (APHIS) National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL). In total, NVSL tested 467 deer in Wisconsin during the 2000-2001 season and 428 deer during the 2001-2002 season. APHIS officials remain available to provide State officials with additional diagnostic support as needed. On a related note, you may be interested to know that the President's fiscal year 2003 budget proposal includes an increase of \$7.2 million for nationwide CWD eradication and surveillance activities, primarily for captive cervids.

In addition to diagnostic laboratory work, APHIS is providing assistance to State officials in the field. APHIS' Wildlife Services personnel are assisting Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources officials with the issuance of deer collection permits to landowners. Wisconsin officials have also asked the State Director for APHIS' Wildlife Services program to participate in the State's CWD oversight committee. Additionally, Wildlife Services personnel are playing a key role in the field operations necessary to collect approximately 500 wild deer for testing.

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Page 2

We recognize that the recent detections have caused concern for agricultural producers in Wisconsin. With regard to the health of Wisconsin's cattle, however, it is important to note that CWD is not known to affect non-cervid species. CWD has not been shown to naturally infect or transmit to any species other than deer or elk. Accordingly, we do not believe that there is any immediate risk posed to cattle in Wisconsin. Finally, we assure you that in the event of a CWD detection in any of Wisconsin's captive cervid herds, APHIS is prepared to provide assistance as it has in other affected States.

Thank you again for writing. We are sending an identical letter to the other Members of Congress who signed your letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill Hawks".

Bill Hawks
Under Secretary
Marketing and Regulatory Programs

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

March 22, 2002

35-4195800
FNS

The Honorable Ann Veneman
Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture
14th & Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Veneman:

A delivery error is about to cost Wisconsin senior citizens the opportunity to improve their diets with fresh produce. It is also about to cost Wisconsin farmers more business.

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection (WDATCP) missed the deadline for its \$612,500 grant application to USDA's Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition program. The zip code on the overnight delivery package to USDA was off by the last digit, preventing its on-time arrival. The courier failed to call telephone numbers of either the sender or receiver listed on the package to ensure delivery.

In 2001, Wisconsin received \$330,000 from USDA to put its program in place. The program gave vouchers to 4,200 low-income seniors in 21 counties to use at local farmers' markets and roadside stands. Each participant could initially receive up to \$100 in vouchers.

For 2002, Wisconsin proposed to build on its highly successful program by expanding it to 30 counties and double the number of seniors who would receive vouchers (approximately 9,500 participants). The state also proposed to expand the pool of 300 farmers who provided naturally grown produce for the markets last year.

At least one other federal grant program makes an exception for late applications if they have been provided to an overnight delivery service the day before the application deadline. For example, application guidelines for the Technology Opportunities Program through the Department of Commerce state:

"Applications that have been provided to a delivery service on or before March 20, 2002, with a guarantee that delivery will be made before 8:00 P.M. on March 21, 2002, will be accepted for review. To ensure that we accept your application, you should document that your application is provided to a delivery service that guarantees delivery prior to the closing date and time."

We ask that you exercise similar discretion in considering the WDATCP application. Further, if all funding under this program has already been allocated, we ask that you locate other funding sources within USDA to sustain Wisconsin's Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition program until the next grant cycle. Ninety-five hundred Wisconsin senior citizens - and the farmers who would serve them - are depending on this program.

Thank you for your prompt consideration of this request.

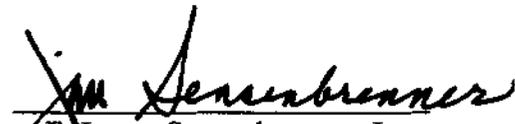
Sincerely,



Mark Green



David Obey



F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.



Tom Barrett



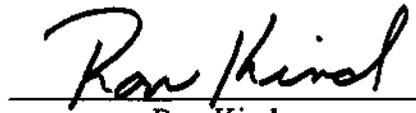
Tom Petri



Jerry Kleczka



Paul Ryan



Ron Kind



Tammy Baldwin



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

JUN 20 2002

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of March 22, 2002, seeking fiscal year (FY) 2002 funding for the Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP). As you know, the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-171) provides an additional \$5 million out of Commodity Credit Corporation funds for the SFMNP for FY 2002. We have made these funds available to current SFMNP grantees and FY 2001 grantees, including Wisconsin.

Again, thank you for your letter. We appreciate your interest in the SFMNP. A similar letter is being sent to your colleagues.

Sincerely,


Eric M. Bost
Under Secretary
Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

Washington, DC
20250

MAY 21 2002

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of April 17, 2002, on behalf of Mr. Paul Reavis concerning our Agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's draft action plan (Docket No. 01-034-1) for the noxious weeds program.

We believe that the concerns expressed by your constituent are based on a misinterpretation of the draft action plan. Accordingly, we appreciate the opportunity to clarify the facts of this matter. A Federal permit is already required for the importation and interstate movement of Federal noxious weeds. The draft action plan does not propose any new permit requirements or any new restrictions on the movement of plant and/or seed material that is currently unregulated. Likewise, the action plan does not propose the adoption of a concept sometimes called the "clean list" or "white list." Under this concept, import regulations specify what articles are permitted entry, rather than listing those that are regulated. Plants currently on our Agency's regulated lists were placed there either because they are Federal noxious weeds or because they are associated with certain plant diseases or other plant pests.

The draft action plan, which is available on the Federal Noxious Weed Program Web site at www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/weeds, was created following the passage of the Plant Protection Act (PPA) of 2000 by Congress. The PPA granted our Agency new authorities to protect U.S. plant resources and address noxious weed problems. While the authority provided under the PPA is broad, the actual changes we are recommending in the action plan are quite limited. Only three regulatory changes are considered. These changes all deal with Federal noxious weeds, species shown through risk assessment to pose a threat to U.S. agriculture and/or the environment. If we decide to formally propose these three regulatory changes, we will publish in the *Federal Register* a proposed rule to amend the current noxious weed regulations (found in title 7 of the *Code of Federal Regulations*, part 360). The proposed rule would solicit public comments, which we would carefully consider before proceeding. If we then determined that it was appropriate to go forward with rulemaking, we would publish a final rule amending the noxious weed regulations.

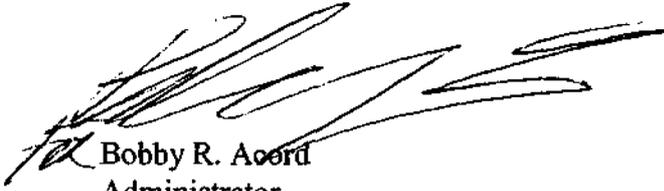


The Honorable Paul Ryan
Page 2

With regard to the phytosanitary certificate requirement for flower seeds, we understand your concerns and those raised by other persons. We are considering alternatives to requiring phytosanitary certificates for small, non-commercial shipments of seed.

I hope this clarifies what our Agency is recommending in the draft action plan for the noxious weeds program. We are not recommending broad new regulations, but relatively minor changes to the existing noxious weed regulations. Nevertheless, we urge your constituent to consider registering as a concerned stakeholder in this matter through our Web site. By doing so, your constituent will receive notices and other information about our activities addressing noxious weeds and efforts to improve the noxious weeds program. To register, click on "Join the PPQ Stakeholder Registry" in the middle column of the Web page at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/>.

Sincerely,



Bobby R. Acord
Administrator

07/02/02 TUE 17:04 FAX

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 2, 2002

The Honorable Ann Veneman
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
14th Street & Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

35-4201519
APHIS

Dear Secretary Veneman:

We write to you today concerned about your recent decision not to allow private labs to conduct testing for chronic wasting disease (CWD) this fall. We certainly hope you will reconsider this decision.

This fall, Wisconsin hunters will most likely bag close to 400,000 deer. Given the awareness and concerns that have arisen over the discovery of CWD, it is understandable that many deer hunters in Wisconsin will want to have their deer tested this fall. We were pleased to learn last week that the United States Department of Agriculture intends to increase the number of certified federal, state and university CWD testing facilities from six to eleven labs by this fall, with a goal of fifteen labs by January 2003. We believe that, in taking this action, the Department should not overlook private laboratories that may now be able to conduct CWD tests or be upgraded to do so.

We respectfully urge you to make increasing testing capacity for this fall's hunt a top priority for your department. While we recognize that there are limited government resources available for this fall, we request that you make a protocol for the conduct of a certified test available to private entities. Further, we urge USDA to expand its ability to validate tests by existing state, university and other labs in the field known to be experienced, accurate and respectable. In addition, USDA should also enhance its ability to evaluate efforts by other existing or new labs to bring additional testing capacity on line.

We anticipate that constituent demand for testing will be considerable, both within and outside of the CWD endemic area. Hunters deserve to know that their test results come from certified scientific testing.

Finally, we understand the importance of assuring the accuracy of test results. We believe that there must be reasonable ways to go about expanding testing capacity while maintaining both testing quality and accuracy.

Again, we are hoping that you will reconsider this decision and work with us to expand testing capacity. We look forward to hearing back from you shortly.

07/02/02 TUE 17:04 FAX

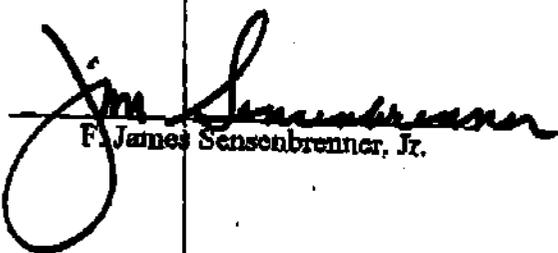
Best Regards

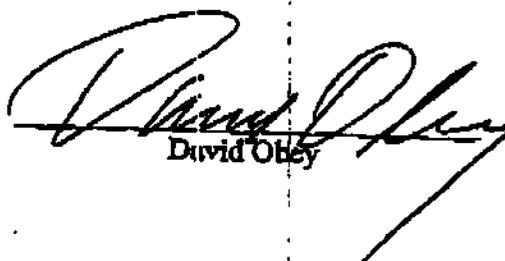

Mark Green


Russ Feingold


Herb Kohl


Paul Ryan

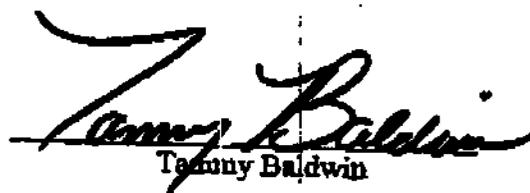

F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.


David Obey


Tom Petri


Tom Barrett


Jerry Kleczka


Tammy Baldwin


Ron Kind



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

October 18, 2002

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of July 2, 2002, to Secretary Veneman concerning laboratory testing for chronic wasting disease (CWD).

Like you, the Department of Agriculture (USDA) recognizes the seriousness of the situation in Wisconsin. Ensuring adequate capacity for CWD surveillance testing nationwide is a USDA priority. As called for in the CWD management plan developed by USDA and the Department of the Interior, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is increasing the number of laboratories validated to perform the immunohistochemistry (IHC) assay. The IHC assay, as performed by our National Veterinary Services Laboratories and its contract laboratories, is the official test for CWD surveillance. APHIS has 10 State laboratories under contract to perform the IHC assay and plans to have 15 laboratories under contract by January 2003. With these additional State laboratories under contract, we are confident that testing capacity will be sufficient to meet CWD surveillance needs.

It is important to clarify that APHIS' testing objectives and procedures are focused upon herd surveillance for epidemiological purposes. Specifically, our objective is to reach statistical certainty concerning the location and prevalence of CWD in captive and free-ranging cervids in the United States. The IHC test is validated only for surveillance; neither the IHC assay nor any of the tests in development are designed to test for food safety. At this time, there is no test that can conclusively determine that an animal is free of CWD and the meat safe for consumption. It is important to note, however, that research has not shown CWD to infect or transmit naturally to non-cervid species. Additionally, while our testing is not for food safety purposes, it will be helpful to the hunting industry because the resulting data will help to identify the disease's geographical distribution.

In addition to the fact that we have already identified enough laboratories to meet our CWD surveillance testing needs, there are several other reasons for our policy of limiting approval to Federal and State/Federal cooperative laboratories. Limiting approval to Federal and State/Federal laboratories is consistent with our policy and practice for eradication and control

The Honorable Paul Ryan

Page 2

program diseases. It is also consistent with our current policy in developing the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN), a network of diagnostic laboratories strategically located throughout the Nation to permit rapid and accurate diagnosis of diseases such as CWD and foreign animal diseases. Our diagnostic testing system and approval process is designed to ensure the accuracy and objectivity of testing processes and results and to preserve domestic and international market confidence in U.S. agricultural commodities. Validating only State/Federal laboratories allows us to maintain strong oversight over testing and reporting processes. While there are some fine private laboratories, the quality of private laboratories varies widely. Finally, because CWD is an eradication program disease, proper reporting of data is of utmost importance; Federal and State/Federal laboratories provide their results to the requisite authorities for official disease diagnosis and appropriate resulting regulatory action, thus assuring us that results will be entered into NAHLN's database.

We appreciate your support for our efforts to combat CWD. We are providing the same information to the other Members of the Wisconsin Congressional delegation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Hawks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bill Hawks
Under Secretary
Marketing and Regulatory Programs

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 2, 2002

The Honorable Ann Veneman
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
14th Street & Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

35-4201979
APHIS

Dear Secretary Veneman:

We write to you today concerned about your recent decision not to allow private labs to conduct testing for chronic wasting disease (CWD) this fall. We certainly hope you will reconsider this decision.

This fall, Wisconsin hunters will most likely bag close to 400,000 deer. Given the awareness and concerns that have arisen over the discovery of CWD, it is understandable that many deer hunters in Wisconsin will want to have their deer tested this fall. We were pleased to learn last week that the United States Department of Agriculture intends to increase the number of certified federal, state and university CWD testing facilities from six to eleven labs by this fall, with a goal of fifteen labs by January 2003. We believe that, in taking this action, the Department should not overlook private laboratories that may now be able to conduct CWD tests or be upgraded to do so.

We respectfully urge you to make increasing testing capacity for this fall's hunt a top priority for your department. While we recognize that there are limited government resources available for this fall, we request that you make a protocol for the conduct of a certified test available to private entities. Further, we urge USDA to expand its ability to validate tests by existing state, university and other labs in the field known to be experienced, accurate and respectable. In addition, USDA should also enhance its ability to evaluate efforts by other existing or new labs to bring additional testing capacity on line.

We anticipate that constituent demand for testing will be considerable, both within and outside of the CWD endemic area. Hunters deserve to know that their test results come from certified scientific testing.

Finally, we understand the importance of assuring the accuracy of test results. We believe that there must be reasonable ways to go about expanding testing capacity while maintaining both testing quality and accuracy.

Again, we are hoping that you will reconsider this decision and work with us to extend testing capacity. We look forward to hearing back from you shortly.

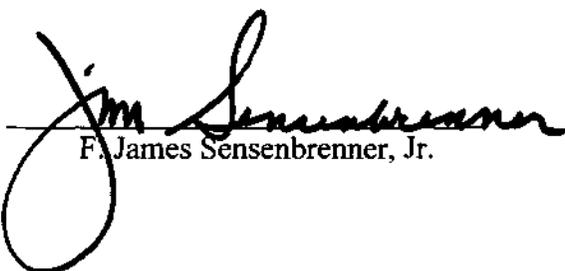
Best Regards

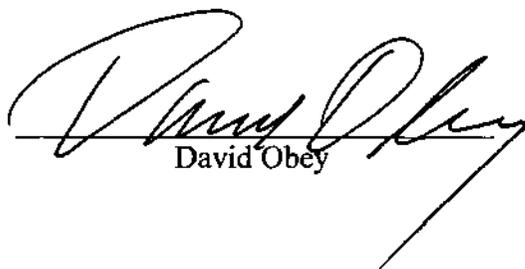

Mark Green


Russ Feingold


Herb Kohl

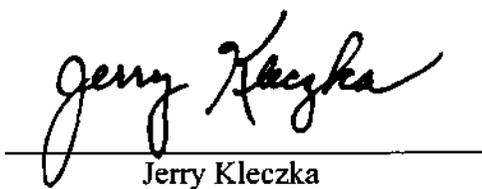

Paul Ryan

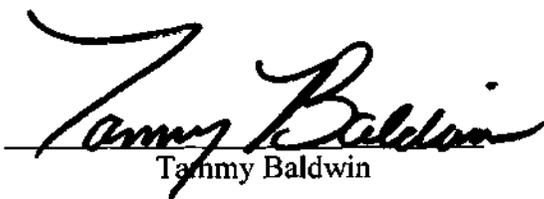

F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.


David Obey


Tom Petri


Tom Barrett


Jerry Kleczka


Tammy Baldwin


Ron Kind

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1217 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031
FAX: (202) 225-3393

TOLL-FREE: 1-888-909-RYAN
INTERNET: WWW.HOUSE.GOV/RYAN

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-4901

July 22, 2002

Secretary Ann Veneman
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C., 20250

35-4203376
FNS

Dear Secretary Veneman:

I am writing to express my support for the Kenosha Achievement Center's (KAC) grant proposal for the Food Stamps Access Research Program, which was submitted to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. I am pleased to inform you that their project will identify and document the factors that make access to the food stamps process difficult, and use a research model to implement practical means to overcome these obstacles. The Kenosha County Food Stamps Access Research Program will allow KAC and its partners to research methods that use technology to assist people with a pre-screening process for food stamps eligibility, while promoting nutritional support as the theme of Food Stamps.

I have reviewed the grant proposal that KAC has submitted, and I am confident that they would make effective use of the funds that they would receive from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Their proposed program will insure that all eligible persons in the county are made aware of the nutritional benefits of the food stamps program. Currently, KAC estimates that there are potentially up to 28,000 Kenosha County residents who may be eligible for food stamps, but less than half of the eligible residents actually apply for the program, due to the program's current application complexities.

I admire their efforts to correct the current eligibility requirements by working closely with reputable community organizations that serve disadvantaged populations, including the unemployed, working poor, minorities, elderly and disabled persons. The requested funds will allow KAC to provide research and pre-screening support staff and equipment for research. Their proposed program will also increase the enrollment of eligibility individuals in the Food Stamps Program by providing laptop computers with touch screens to community organizations for pre-screening of applicants for food stamp eligibility.

I support KAC's application for this Food Stamps Access Research Grant and would appreciate it if you and appropriate USDA officials would carefully review the grant proposal submitted by KAC and give it your full consideration. Again, thank you for your careful consideration of this request. Please do not hesitate to let me know if you have any questions or concerns. I look forward to receiving your response to this grant application.

Sincerely,



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 S. MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
(608) 752-4050 . FAX: (608) 752-4711

KENOSHA
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
5712 7TH AVENUE
KENOSHA, WI 53140
(262) 654-1901 . FAX: (262) 654-2156

RACINE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
304 6TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(262) 637-0510 . FAX: (262) 637-5689



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

SEP 11 2002

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20515-4901

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your July 22, 2002, letter of endorsement for The Kenosha Achievement Center proposal that was submitted for the "Food Stamp Program Research Grants To Improve Access Through The Use Of New Technology And Partnerships." As we understand the proposal, if selected for an award, The Kenosha Achievement Center would educate nonparticipating individuals and families about the nutritional benefits of the Food Stamp Program. The Kenosha Achievement Center plans to use lap top computers to pre-screen individuals for the Food Stamp Program. As part of their community project, at least two elementary schools in Kenosha County will be used to target low-income families.

On July 8, 2002, our technical review panel members started the competitive process to award as much as \$5 million in grants to approximately 20 recipients. In accordance with the terms of the grant proposal, each grantee can receive up to \$350,000 for its project. We anticipate that the grants will be awarded in mid-September.

Again, thank you for your letter of endorsement. We will notify you as to which organizations received grant awards when the review process is completed.

Sincerely,


Eric M. Bost
Under Secretary
Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

WASHINGTON OFFICE
1217 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031
FAX: (202) 225-3393

TOLL-FREE: 1-888-909-RYAN
INTERNET: WWW.HOUSE.GOV/RYAN

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

August 9, 2002

The Honorable Ann Veneman
Secretary, United States Department of Agriculture
The Whitten Building
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Suite 200A
Washington, D.C. 20250

45-4204183
RBS

Dear Secretary Veneman:

I write in strong support of the application of the Meadowbrook Farms Cooperative to secure a United States Department of Agriculture Business and Industry Loan Guarantee for the purpose of developing its pork packing and processing plant. It is my understanding that Meadowbrook Farms has submitted a preliminary application within the past two weeks and is awaiting a response.

The Meadowbrook Farms Cooperative is a group of approximately 200 family farms from Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, and Wisconsin, I represent several participating farmers in Wisconsin's First Congressional District. These families pooled over \$12.6 million of their own money for the purpose of building a farmer-owned pork packing and processing plant. \$800,000 was used to develop a business plan to help these family farmers compete in the increasingly corporate agribusiness industry. Once the plant is built, it will immediately provide approximately 210 jobs for the region's residents. I believe that this endeavor is an entrepreneurial way to counter the growing trend towards large corporate farms and production facilities.

According to the prepared business plan, the planned facility will be among one of the most modern in the United States. It is my understanding that this plant will be capable of boning and boxing specialty trimmed portion-controlled packages for restaurants and hotels, making fresh sausage in both links and chubs, making marinated pork products, and packaging case-ready meat. The design includes a state-of-the-art water usage and treatment system that will drastically reduces water consumption and pollution by the plant.

Currently, this project is in its final stages of pre-construction planning. Three banks have already approved a loan totaling \$19.7 million contingent on a 60 percent USDA loan guarantee for the Meadowbrook Farms Cooperative. It is my hope that the USDA will reach a favorable decision regarding the application of the Meadowbrook Farms Cooperative for a loan guarantee.

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 S. MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
(608) 752-4050 . FAX: (608) 752-4711

KENOSHA
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
5712 7TH AVENUE
KENOSHA, WI 53140
(262) 654-1901 . FAX: (262) 654-2156

RACINE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
304 6TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(262) 637-0510 . FAX: (262) 637-5689

Thank you, in advance, for your consideration of the loan guarantee. It is important to the regional economy and the farmers in Wisconsin's First Congressional District. I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Ryan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paul" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Ryan".

Paul Ryan
Member of Congress



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

Rural Business-
Cooperative Service

Washington, DC
20250

September 3, 2002

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

Dear Congressman Ryan:

On behalf of Secretary Veneman, thank you for your letter dated August 9, 2002, regarding the Meadowbrook Farms Cooperative's (Meadowbrook) application for Business and Industry (B&I) Guaranteed Loan Program assistance. The B&I program is administered by the Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS), an Agency within the Department of Agriculture Rural Development mission area.

Meadowbrook's application has been received in our National Office and is currently under review. You may be assured it is being given every possible consideration allowed by RBS regulations and authorities. We understand the importance of this project to the residents of Illinois.

We hope this information is helpful in responding to your constituents and appreciate your interest in the B&I program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Rosso".

JOHN ROSSO
Administrator
Rural Business-Cooperative Service





United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

November 29, 2002

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of September 24, 2002, to Secretary Veneman concerning efforts to make chronic wasting disease (CWD) testing available to Wisconsin hunters.

We recognize your concern about CWD's impact on Wisconsin and its hunters. Our officials have been working closely with Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources and Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection since the detection of CWD in the State in February 2001, and I met recently with Governor McCallum to discuss our combined CWD efforts and Wisconsin's interest in making testing available to interested hunters. Officials of our Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) have since taken the necessary steps to enable such testing to take place.

As you may know, APHIS has contracted with 10 State laboratories to conduct immunohistochemistry (IHC) testing for the CWD surveillance program and will have 15 under contract by January 2003. Of these laboratories, seven have agreed to conduct additional CWD testing on a fee-for-service basis for interested hunters. APHIS has identified five other State laboratories that are also willing to conduct CWD testing on a fee-for-service basis and is providing the training and equipment necessary for the testing.

The laboratories will be using uniform equipment and techniques and reporting procedures developed by APHIS' National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL). NVSL will also conduct any necessary confirmatory testing for the laboratories. We are moving forward with the training program for the laboratories as quickly as possible. In fact, some are already able to begin accepting samples from Wisconsin hunters. APHIS is providing the list of laboratories that accept these samples to its counterparts at the Department of Natural Resources and Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection.

We believe the additional laboratory capacity recently identified will meet the testing needs of Wisconsin hunters and the State/Federal surveillance program. While we will not be approving private laboratories to conduct CWD testing, we have identified a role for these laboratories in the program. In this regard, we are allowing APHIS' contract laboratories to

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Page 2

partner with a private laboratory to prepare samples for IHC testing. Such partnerships could help the laboratories avoid potential backlogs at an early stage of the testing process.

We are also continuing to evaluate alternatives to IHC testing that could be used for screening purposes. We would like to emphasize that all test kits used in the United States must be licensed by APHIS' Center for Veterinary Biologics (CVB). CVB's licensing process ensures that veterinary biologics available in the United States are proven effective and are of high quality. You may be pleased to learn that CVB has recently approved a test kit for use in testing mule deer for CWD, that, at first, will be available to the laboratories under contract to conduct surveillance testing for the CWD program. In the meantime, we will continue to move forward with preparing the recently identified State laboratories to conduct IHC testing for interested hunters.

Thank you again for writing. We appreciate the opportunity to respond to your concerns about this issue and assure you that we will continue to work closely with the affected States to address CWD. We are providing this information to the other Members of Congress who signed your letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Hawks". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Bill Hawks
Under Secretary
Marketing and Regulatory Programs

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 19, 2002

The Honorable George W. Bush
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

06-4206547
FAS

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to express our concern over two recent actions taken by your Administration affecting sugar policies and markets. We believe that these actions are harmful to retail and industrial consumers of sugar, threatening further food industry job losses and causing increased market instability. We believe that these two sugar policies are inconsistent with the Administration's overall goal of reducing barriers to trade and expanding markets within the Western Hemisphere. Furthermore, each issue is time sensitive and should be dealt with urgently.

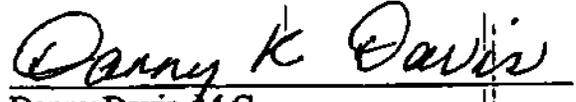
On August 27th the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced sugar marketing allotments, the equivalent of sugar production quotas, at a level so unrealistically low that prices rose sharply and industrial buyers of sugar are now finding it extremely difficult to obtain supplies. We understand that marketing allotments are required by the recently enacted Farm Bill. However, the USDA has discretion over the amount of the allotment. Unfortunately, the USDA has set such a tight allotment that it has begun to short the sugar market. Sugar futures immediately started to rise following the announcement as a result of expectations of reduced future supplies and increased prices. Without increased allotments by the USDA, the U.S. will experience long-term erosion in the demand for sugar, which is already on the decline, and further movement of manufacturing offshore in search of cheaper sugar.

Our second concern is a dispute over complex sweetener trade with Mexico, *which must be resolved by the October 1st deadline*. We believe that the U.S. should push to ensure that Mexico gives fair access to U.S. agricultural products. Unfortunately, the United States Trade Representative (USTR) has proposed a change in sugar policy that would violate the clear and undisputed terms of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). USTR is calling for Mexico to agree to no longer ship any sugar to the U.S. above Mexico's import quota. Imported sugar above this amount is labeled "Tier 2" sugar and is subject to an import duty under current law. Both import quotas and the tariffs on "Tier 2" sugar are to end after 2008, when NAFTA requires an open North American sweetener market. USTR's proposal not only violates the spirit of this provision of NAFTA, but also could easily turn into a permanent rather than a temporary change once it is included in the treaty. The result could be that an open market for sugar, as outlined in NAFTA, might never occur.

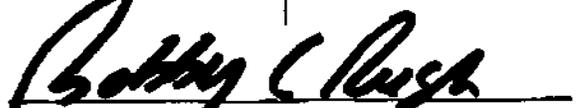
We urge you to direct USDA Secretary Veneman to immediately and substantially increase the USDA's sugar marketing allotment. In addition, we urge you to direct USTR Ambassador Zoellick to insist that any interim agreement with Mexico on sugar trade be of a short and strictly limited duration, without restriction of Tier 2 sugar imports. Thank you for your timely attention to each of these important matters.

Sincerely,


Paul Ryan, M.C.


Danny Davis, M.C.

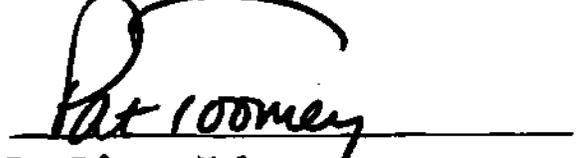

Dan Miller, M.C.

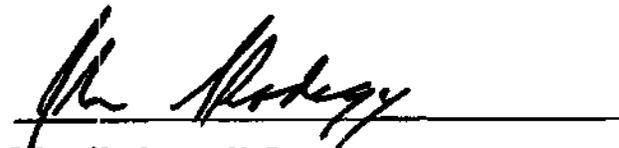

Bobby Rush, M.C.

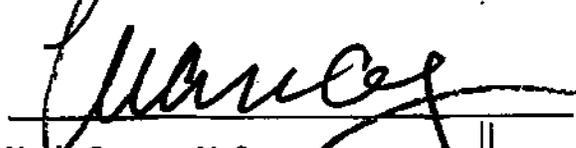

Mark Kirk, M.C.

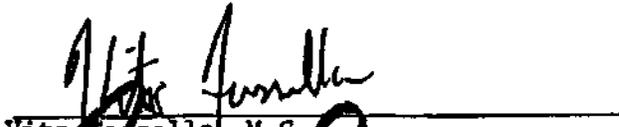

Bob Schaffer, M.C.


Sam Johnson, M.C.

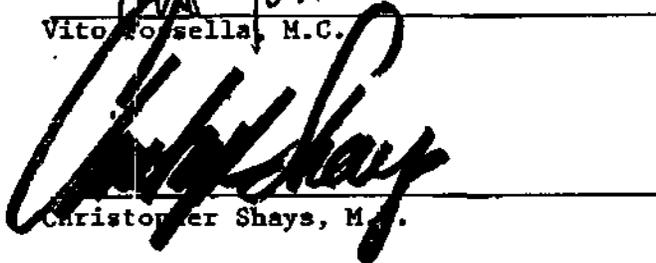

Pat Toomey, M.C.


John Shadegg, M.C.

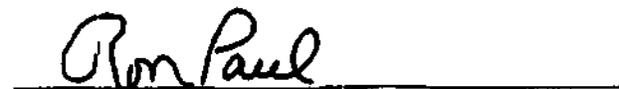

Mark Green, M.C.

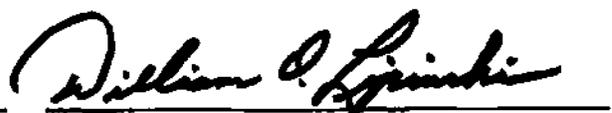

Vito Marcolla, M.C.


Phil English, M.C.

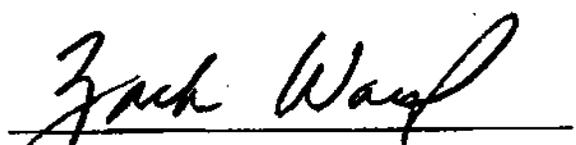

Christopher Shays, M.C.


Chris Smith, M.C.


Ron Paul, M.C.


William Lipinski, M.C.


Charlie Bass, M.C.


Zach Wamp, M.C.

Judy Biggert
Judy Biggert, M.C.

Jeff Flake
Jeff Flake, M.C.

Gregory Meeks
Gregory Meeks, M.C.

Jim Kolbe
Jim Kolbe, M.C.

Rod Blagojevich
Rod Blagojevich, M.

Rosa L. DeLauro
Rosa DeLauro, M.C.

534670

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 9, 2002

The Honorable George W. Bush
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500

06-4208246
FSA

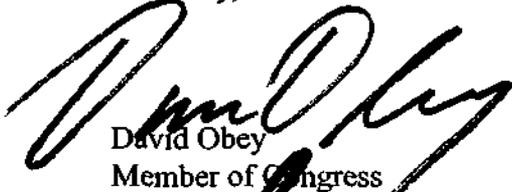
Dear Mr. President:

Last week, Wisconsin Governor Scott McCallum formally requested that you act to declare four counties in the State of Wisconsin the site of a major disaster as a result of tornado and storm damage. This damage was the result of a series of storms that hit northwest and north central Wisconsin on September 2. As members of the Wisconsin delegation, and representatives of the affected areas, we fully support the Governor's request and urge that all necessary actions are taken by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to expedite assistance to our state. We support the Governor's specific request and ask that additional counties be permitted to be added if new damages which warrant federal assistance are discovered.

Initial estimates of public losses, as drawn up by a joint assessment by FEMA and Wisconsin Emergency Management, exceed \$12 million. State and local governments are continuing to work with FEMA in the field to compile additional damage estimates and have indicated, as explained in Governor McCallum's request, a willingness to assume appropriate non-federal shares of public assistance and hazard mitigation costs.

We urge you to act quickly on behalf of our constituents, who face a long and difficult clean up.

Sincerely,



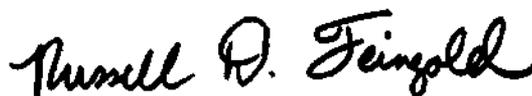
David Obey
Member of Congress



Herb Kohl
U.S. Senate



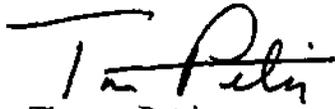
James Sensenbrenner
Member of Congress



Russell D. Feingold
U.S. Senate

1113739

Bush, pg. 2



Thomas Petri
Member of Congress



Jerry Kleczka
Member of Congress



Tom Barrett
Member of Congress



Ron Kind
Member of Congress



Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress



Mark Green
Member of Congress



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

April 25, 2003

The Honorable
Bobby Acord
Administrator
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. Acord:

As you know, last week the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) announced that fiscal year 2003 (FY 2003) chronic wasting disease (CWD) funds will be distributed to states. We are pleased that APHIS is taking this action. We further understand that states will need to submit applications in order to receive a portion of the \$4 million in surveillance and management funds released on April 15, 2003. We write to request that any unallocated FY 2003 funds be redistributed to risk level 1 states, like Wisconsin.

We understand that APHIS is proposing to distribute funds to the states based on the level of risk that CWD poses to the cervids in their state. APHIS has defined three risk levels, including risk level 1, those states in which CWD is present in free-ranging cervids. To apply for funding, each state must submit management and surveillance plans to APHIS detailing how these funds will be spent.

If all 50 states submit an application, we understand that Wisconsin will receive \$218 thousand from the surveillance and monitoring program, and an additional \$667 thousand in compensation for testing costs, a total of \$885 thousand in FY 2003. States in risk level 3, those without CWD, may choose not to apply for the surveillance and monitoring funds. If funds in the FY 2003 surveillance and monitoring program remain unclaimed, we strongly urge that APHIS distribute remaining funds to the states in risk level 1. Our state is in dire need of additional funds to control CWD. Wisconsin has spent more than \$3 million to date on the disease. Our state faces more CWD-related expenditures this fall, and our Department of Natural Resources is experiencing budget difficulties due to the reductions in hunting license sale revenue that resulted from the CWD outbreak.

06-4219413
APHIS

Acord, pg. 2
April 25, 2003

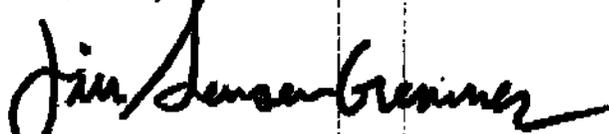
We appreciate your leadership on this issue and your personal attention to this matter.

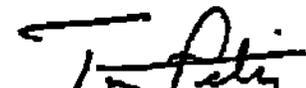
Sincerely,


Russell D. Feingold, U.S.S.


Herb Kohl, U.S.S.


David Obey, M.C.


F. James Sensenbrenner, M.C.


Tom Petri, M.C.


Jeff Kline, M.C.


Ron Kind, M.C.


Mark Green, M.C.


Paul Ryan, M.C.


Tammy Baldwin, M.C.

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1217 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031
FAX: (202) 225-3393

TOLL-FREE: 1-888-909-RYAN
INTERNET: WWW.HOUSE.GOV/RYAN

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

June 11, 2003

Director of Congressional Relations
Department of Agriculture
213A Administration Bldg.
Jefferson Drive, S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

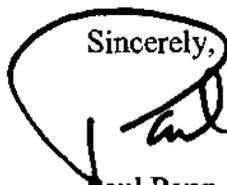
05-4222581
APHIS

Dear Sir or Madam:

I was recently contacted by Carol Kolde of Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, regarding the concerns she has about the treatment of Lota, an elephant that was formerly owned by the Milwaukee County Zoo and that is now owned by the Hawthorne Corporation.

Carol does not reside in my district, but I share her concerns about this matter. I am forwarding Carol's request for assistance to you as the appropriate official in the Department of Agriculture. I am sure that Carol will appreciate any assistance you will be able to offer in ensuring that this animal is provided the resources needed to move him to an elephant sanctuary, where he can get the care and treatment he needs. (It is my understanding that the USDA determined that the animal is being mistreated by its current owner.) I have also forwarded Carol's request to U.S. Congressman James Sensenbrenner, and to Milwaukee County Executive, Scott Walker.

Please respond to Carol directly. Her contact information is enclosed. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,


Paul Ryan
Serving Wisconsin's 1st District

Enclosure

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 S. MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
(608) 752-4050 . FAX: (608) 752-4711

KENOSHA
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
5712 7TH AVENUE
KENOSHA, WI 53140
(262) 654-1901 . FAX: (262) 654-2156

RACINE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
304 6TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(262) 637-0510 . FAX: (262) 637-5689

JUN 7 0 2003 6-9-03

Dear Representative Ryan,

The Department of Agriculture has made 27 accusations against Hawthorne Corporation for abuse of the elephant Lota. The company is run by John Cunes, who denies the charges.

The abuse continues. Carol Buckley, director of an elephant sanctuary in Tennessee would accept her for the rest of her life. I ask that Lota be immediately sent to the sanctuary. I would gladly pay Hawthorne the \$1.00 they paid for Lota. I believe public contributions could pay for her transportation from Illinois to Tennessee.

Please give this aging elephant some peace and security for her final years.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
CAROL KOLDF

(b) (6)



Enclosure 1 sheet

Time to let elephant forget her grim past

When Lota the elephant looks back on her life and ponders her biggest regret, I'm guessing it would be that she didn't run faster the first time she encountered human beings in the wilds of India.

If you're an elephant, spending your life in captivity would be like a New York socialite being forcibly moved to the middle of the jungle where they don't even take credit cards.

I'd be more likely to eat a meaty gyro on a pita than side with PETA on most of its causes, but the story of Lota puts me in touch with my inner animal rights activist.

JIM STINGL

Now in her golden years, Lota is still being abused at the Illinois circus training farm where she was sent by the Milwaukee County Zoo in 1990, according to a federal complaint recently filed against the facility.

The saga dates all the way back to 1964 when Lota and another elephant were delivered to our zoo, then at Washington Park. The animals were 4 years old, still considered babies in pachyderm circles.

A heartwarming story in the newspaper from that time tells how hunters in India hid near a salt lick that attracted a herd of elephants. "With torches and shouts" they drove the herd into a stockade they had built nearby, and 18 elephants were captured.

Please see STINGL, 3B

Time to let this elephant forget her grim past

STINGL, From 1B

Pennies and nickels tossed in a jar by Milwaukee children helped pay for the elephants. The two elephants led a parade up Vliet St. to their new home and 0.0000002% of the square feet they were used to back home in India. A girl from West Allis won a contest by suggesting the name Lota, the word for a vessel used in India to hold water. Moat was the word Lota became more familiar with.

Young Lota was described by zookeepers as "full of tricks, always looking for trouble." Well, she found trouble, and it led to a career change of performing circus tricks.

That part of the story is well known. In 1990, the zoo decided that Lota was becoming too aggressive, probably from 36

years of dodging coins and looking out at people swinging one arm in front of their faces and doing their best elephant call impression. With great strife, she was loaded on a truck and for \$1 handed over to Hawthorn Corp. of Richmond, Ill., with the understanding that she would be well treated.

But Lota learned that humans don't always tell the truth. She has spent the last 13 years traveling around the country as a circus performer. Let's just say the job doesn't come with much of a health plan. The Department of Agriculture found evidence that Lota has been plagued by tuberculosis and weight loss so severe that her spine and hip bones are protruding.

John Cuneo, who runs Hawthorn, has denied the charges and says his elephants are fat



JOURNAL SENTINEL FILES

Lota falls while being loaded onto a truck at the Milwaukee County Zoo in November 1990. A recently filed federal complaint accuses the Illinois circus training farm that bought Lota from the zoo of abusing the elephant.

and happy. But animal lovers persist in their efforts to get Lota out of his clutches and into an elephant sanctuary in Tennessee.

Carol Buckley, director of that sanctuary, thinks Milwaukee County ought to get busy rescuing Lota. Even on a good day, the circus life is cruel for elephants, she said.

"If they wanted to do the right thing for this elephant, they would do it," she said.

The zoo got rid of all of its Asian elephants and has given the space to the black rhinos, so they don't want Lota back. County Executive Scott Walker said there's nothing the county can do for Lota.

Not a whole Lota love there.

Lota has kept her side of the bargain, even though she never agreed to the deal. She has educated and entertained three generations of children and adults alike.

She's old. She's tired. Give this poor animal a rest.

Call Jim Stingl at (414) 224-2017 or e-mail at jstingl@journal-sentinel.com.



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

**Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs**

**Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service**

**Washington, DC
20250**

JUL 02 2003

Ms. Carol J. Kolde
4755 N. 105th Street
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin 53225

Dear Ms. Kolde:

Congressman Ryan asked us to respond directly to your letter of June 9, 2003, to him concerning Lota, an elephant owned and exhibited by the Hawthorn Corporation.

We recognize your deep concern for Lota's welfare. Over the years, our Agency has documented a history of problems with regard to the Hawthorn Corporation's compliance with the Animal Welfare Act (AWA). Within the strict confines of the AWA and consistent with guaranteed rights to due process, our Agency has taken appropriate enforcement action against the Hawthorn Corporation. We have also made numerous efforts to work with the Hawthorn Corporation's owner, Mr. John Cuneo, to improve the conditions and quality of care provided to the Corporation's animals.

In regard to Lota, she is currently at the Hawthorn Corporation's facility in Illinois and, according to our most recent inspection in January 2003, is doing well. She is receiving appropriate veterinary care from a veterinarian retained by the Hawthorn Corporation, as well as regular veterinary check-ups by an outside consulting veterinarian. While we recognize that you would like us to remove Lota from her owner, we must point out that our Agency's authority to confiscate animals under the AWA is limited to those situations in which an animal is in imminent danger or in a state of sustained suffering. In addition, our Agency's AWA authority does not allow us to require that animals be retired from exhibition.

Despite our efforts to ensure that the animals maintained by the Hawthorn Corporation receive the level of care required under the AWA, we remain concerned about ongoing problems. Accordingly, you will be pleased to know that our Agency issued a complaint against the Hawthorn Corporation on April 11, 2003, charging the facility



Ms. Carol J. Kolde
Page 2

with serious AWA compliance problems over a period of several years. Due to the pending enforcement action, it would be inappropriate for us to comment further on the matter at this time. However, we assure you that we will pursue appropriate penalties in this case.

We appreciate your concern for the welfare of animals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bobby R. Acord". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "B" and "A".

Bobby R. Acord
Administrator

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

July 14, 2003

The Honorable Ann Veneman
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Room 228A
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

35-4224085
AMS

Dear Madam Secretary:

We are writing to express our strong objection to the country of origin labeling guidelines that the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) has developed in regard to peanuts. We are particularly concerned that the guidelines as applied to any peanut products other than in-shell peanuts sold at retail will become the basis for the mandatory country of origin labeling regimen that is to take effect on October 1, 2004.

We believe that the AMS voluntary guidelines are incorrectly applied to shelled, roasted and salted or flavored peanuts. The statute that establishes country of origin labeling requirements for various covered commodities, including peanuts, specifically excludes from the labeling requirements such covered commodity "if the item is an ingredient in a processed food item" (7 U.S.C. 1638). Any common sense interpretation of the term "processed food item" would encompass a shelled, roasted and salted or flavored peanut that is packaged for retail sale. Further, the established definition of "processing" which AMS has used historically and consistently across a wide range of programs clearly includes these products. Even under the very narrow definition of a "processed food item" that AMS has adopted for purposes of its country of origin labeling guidelines, shelled, roasted and salted or flavored peanuts should be excluded from coverage because they meet the tests established in the definition in that the raw peanut in such products has been materially changed and is one of a combination of ingredients that result in a product with an identity that is different from an in-shell peanut.

AMS made a wholesale departure from the clear meaning of the statutory exemption for processed foods and its own consistent regulatory approach to what constitutes "processing" for the mere reason that the agency believes Congress intended for shelled, roasted and salted peanuts to be covered by the law because the "vast majority of peanuts sold at retail" are just that, shelled, roasted and salted.

However, there is no legislative history to support the AMS interpretation of Congressional intent as far as peanuts are concerned. The House-approved 2002 Farm Bill did not include peanuts among the commodities covered by their country of origin labeling provisions. The Senate Agriculture Committee added peanuts to the list of covered commodities, but did not include any reference to "peanut products" in the statutory language or in the Committee Report accompanying the legislation. The House and Senate Conference Committee agreed to a broad exemption for "covered commodities," including peanuts, if they are "an ingredient in a processed food item." The Conference Report references the processed food item exemption but contains nothing that would indicate that the labeling requirements were to be extended to anything but in-shell peanuts sold in bulk at retail.

It is well established in case law that the explicit statutory language controls the construction of any implementing regulation. That is especially so in the absence of clearly articulated legislative history to the contrary. The general rule of construction is that the intent of the lawmaker is to be found in the plain meaning of the language of the statute. Accordingly, deference must be given to the clear purpose of the processed food exemption contained in the statute. Applying such rules of construction can only lead to the conclusion that a peanut that has been shelled, roasted, combined with other ingredients and packaged for sale at retail is indeed a processed food item that is exempt from the coverage of the country of origin provisions.

It also is important to note that the legislative history of the Farm Bill indicates that the country of origin provisions contained therein were intended to extend to those commodities not currently required to bear such labeling under Section 304 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1304). Under this statute and its implementing regulations, all peanuts sold in their "immediate containers" are subject to the country of origin labeling requirements of the Tariff Act. Only those products sold in bulk or loosely from a bin at the supermarket—such as in-shell peanuts—currently are not required to bear country of origin labeling. Consequently, only in-shell peanuts sold in bulk should be subject to the new country of origin labeling provisions of the Farm Bill. All other peanut products are adequately regulated by the U.S. Customs Service.

AMS cannot ignore the rules of statutory construction or the extant legislative history in order to sustain its strained reasoning that shelled, roasted and salted peanuts are not processed food items and therefore are subject to the country of origin labeling requirements.

We also are concerned that AMS's rationale for applying country of origin labeling requirements to other than in-shell peanuts opens the door to extending the coverage to any product that contains peanuts, something which was clearly not intended by either Congress or the agency. In fact, various peanut growers organizations have called for peanut butter and peanut candy to be covered by the country of origin labeling provisions. If AMS is to prevent the application of the labeling requirements from spinning out of control, the agency must draw the line now at in-shell peanuts.

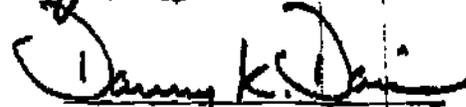
We respectfully request that you intercede before AMS publishes proposed regulations to implement the mandatory country of origin labeling regime that is to take effect on October 1, 2004. Specifically, we ask you to make sure that only in-shell peanuts are covered by country of origin labeling provisions.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter.

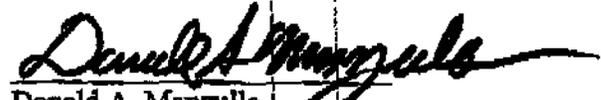
Sincerely,

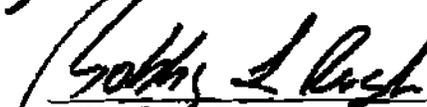

John A. Boehner

Phillip M. Crane

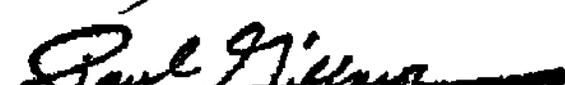

Judy Biggert

Danny Davis

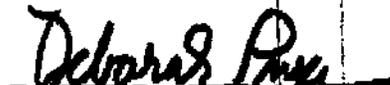

Mark Steven Kirk


Donald A. Manzullo

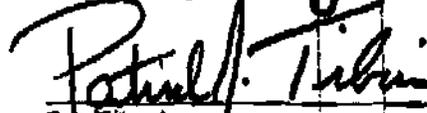

Bobby L. Rush


Steve Chabot

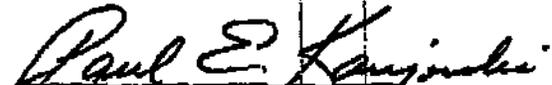

Paul Gillmor


Deborah Pryce

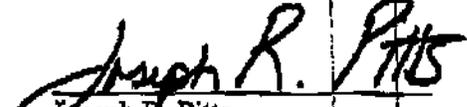

Ralph Regula

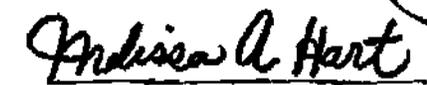

Pat Tiberi


Jim Gerlach


Paul Kanjorski


Tim Murphy


Joseph R. Pitts


Melissa A. Hart


Todd Platts

Bill Shuster

Bill Shuster

Carl Dooley

Carl Dooley

Laurence

Mark Green

Pat Toomey

Pat Toomey

John Boozman

John Boozman

Paul Ryan

Paul Ryan



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

AUG 28 2003

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for the letter of July 14, 2003, expressing your objection to the Country of Origin Labeling Guidelines that the Department of Agriculture (USDA) developed regarding peanuts. Your concern relates to peanuts, specifically those other than in-shell peanuts sold at retail, that will be covered under the mandatory Country of Origin Labeling regulations.

As you are aware, the 2002 Farm Bill includes provisions that will require peanuts and certain other commodities to be labeled with the country of origin when offered for sale in retail stores. That law requires that USDA first issue voluntary guidelines. This was done in the Fall of 2002. We are now developing the mandatory regulations and, in accordance with the law, these will be published by September 30, 2004. Before the regulations are published in their final form, they will be published as a draft, and the public will be invited to comment on them. USDA will take those comments into account prior to issuing the final rules.

At this time, no final determination has been made on what peanut products will be considered a covered commodity under this law. We appreciate your thoughts on this matter. Clearly, there are important issues to be considered, and we will take your views into consideration as the regulations are developed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Hawks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bill Hawks
Under Secretary
Marketing and Regulatory Programs

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 17, 2003

35-4229534
FSA

Ms. Ann M. Veneman
Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
US Dept. of Agric., Rm. 116A, Whitten Bldg.
14th and Independence, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Ms. Veneman,

We urge you to expedite the review of Wisconsin's request for federal disaster declarations for 34 counties that sustained significant losses due to alfalfa winterkill from last winter. Further, we request your assistance in quickly considering any future requests for disaster designations presented by the State of Wisconsin.

Mother Nature has not been kind to Wisconsin farmers during this past year. During the winter months, weather conditions were such that many farmers' alfalfa and forage stands were severely damaged or even killed. Livestock producers had hoped to recover with this year's crops when promising weather forecasts were made during the early summer months. However, the rains have not fallen as needed during August and September, and drought conditions now pervade Wisconsin. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, areas in Wisconsin are now seeing year-to-date deficits of 8-12 inches and vast areas of Wisconsin were classified as suffering severe drought by the U.S. Drought Monitor.

During the month of August, we saw the conditions in Wisconsin first-hand and spoke with many constituents regarding the drought situation. As we each traveled across the state, the damage that Mother Nature had inflicted on the corn and soybean fields as well as the hay crop was clearly visible. As August progressed, the quality of the crops steadily deteriorated as they were deprived of much needed rains. Constituents expressed their struggles to continue farming though the disastrous weather of the past year. They worried that poor forages and higher feed prices would force many farmers to make the choice to leave their livelihoods behind.

We are very concerned about the loss of Wisconsin farms that has occurred and ask your assistance to help keep Wisconsin farms in business. In response to these severe weather conditions, the governor requested federal disaster declarations on July 21, 2003 for 34 Wisconsin counties: Barron, Brown, Buffalo, Burnett, Chippewa, Clark, Dunn, Eau Claire, Forest, Florence, Jackson, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Marinette, Marquette, Menominee, Oconto, Oneida, Outagamie, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Portage, Price, Rusk, St. Croix, Sawyer,

September 17, 2003
Page 2

Shawano, Taylor, Vilas, Washburn, Waupaca, and Wood. We urge you to expedite the review and consideration of this request in order to provide much needed federal assistance to farmers in need.

Further, it is likely that additional requests for disaster declarations will be made once the extent of the losses from this summer's drought is known. Already over two-thirds of the state's counties are considering requests for disaster declarations and more may do so if conditions worsen. We hope that you will commit to expedite any future disaster requests as the governor has requested.

On behalf of farmers in Wisconsin who have suffered from disastrous weather conditions during this past year, we thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Russell D. Feingold
Russell D. Feingold

David R. Obey
David R. Obey

Thomas E. Petri
Thomas E. Petri

Ron Kind
Ron Kind

Paul Ryan
Paul D. Ryan

Herb Kohl
Herbert KOHL

James Sensenbrenner
James Sensenbrenner

Gerry Kleczka
Gerry Kleczka

Waverly

Tammy Baldwin
Tammy Baldwin

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1217 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031
FAX: (202) 225-3393

TOLL-FREE: 1-888-909-RYAN
INTERNET: WWW.HOUSE.GOV/RYAN

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

October 28, 2003

Director of Congressional Relations
Department of Agriculture
213A Administration Bldg.
Jefferson Drive, S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

05-4233229
FSIS

Dear Sir or Madam:

I was recently contacted by a constituent, Garrett Harris of (b) (6),
regarding question he has about the (b) (6)

[Redacted]

I would appreciate it if you would look into this matter to determine if anything
can be done – consistent with all laws and regulations – to assist Garrett in obtaining
answers to his questions.

Please address your response to my Janesville office and reference my file
number 185648. My Janesville office address is 20 South Main Street, Suite 10,
Janesville, Wisconsin, 53545. Should you have any questions about this request, my
Constituent Services Assistant, Tricia Stoneking, can be contacted at (608) 752-4050.

Again, thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your timely
response.

Sincerely,


Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 S. MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
(608) 752-4050 . FAX: (608) 752-4711

KENOSHA
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
5712 7TH AVENUE
KENOSHA, WI 53140
(262) 654-1901 . FAX: (262) 654-2156

RACINE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
304 6TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(262) 637-0510 . FAX: (262) 637-5689



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food Safety
and Inspection
Service

Washington, D.C.
20250

MAR 9 2004

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Member, U.S. House of Representatives
Constituent Services Center
20 South Main Street, Suite 10
Janesville, Wisconsin 53545

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your October 28, 2003, letter, on behalf of Mr. Garrett Harris of Franksville, Wisconsin, about the approval process for food products. We apologize for the delay in a response.

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) of the Department of Agriculture is the public health regulatory agency responsible for ensuring that meat, poultry, and processed egg products are safe, wholesome, and accurately labeled. FSIS enforces the Federal Meat Inspection Act, the Poultry Products Inspection Act, and the Egg Products Inspection Act, which require Federal inspection and regulation of meat, poultry, and processed egg products prepared for distribution in commerce for use as human food. Mr. Harris may want to visit our web site at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov> for more information on FSIS activities. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has primary jurisdiction over foods other than meat, poultry, and processed egg products.

FSIS sets standards for food safety and inspects meat, poultry, and egg products produced domestically and those that are imported to protect the public health. There are more than 7,600 Federal inspectors who inspect these products daily to ensure that food safety regulations are enforced. On July 25, 1996, FSIS issued a landmark regulation on Pathogen Reduction and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) systems. The rule addresses the serious problem of foodborne illness in the United States associated with meat and poultry products by focusing attention on the prevention and reduction of microbial pathogens on products that cause illness. For example, every establishment is required to develop a HACCP plan, a written hazard analysis that determines the food safety hazards that are likely to occur in the production process and identifies the preventive measures the establishment can apply to control those hazards. FSIS inspection personnel are responsible for evaluating the implementation and maintenance of the HACCP plan developed by the establishment. The HACCP system is a major achievement because it represents a significant modernization in the way meat, poultry, and eggs are processed, with emphasis on prevention and control of foodborne hazards.

The Honorable Paul Ryan

Page 2

The United States has the safest food supply in the world, and FSIS is committed to protecting the public health by using its authority to ensure that plants that produce meat, poultry, or egg products adhere to food safety regulations. If a livestock or poultry slaughter or processing plant violates the regulations, FSIS can take enforcement actions that could include withholding FSIS inspection. This effectively shuts down an establishment's operations until the establishment takes action to correct the problem.

Because FDA has jurisdiction over foods other than meat, poultry, and processed egg products, we are forwarding a copy of your letter to that agency for a response. If Mr. Harris would like to contact them directly, the address is: FDA, HHS, Office of Consumer Affairs, HFE-88, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, Maryland 20857. The FDA web site is located at: <http://www.fda.gov>.

The responsibility for ensuring safe food at the retail level is under the jurisdiction of State and local authorities. Mr. Harris also may want to contact the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, Division of Food Safety, at 2811 Agriculture Drive, Post Office Box 8911, Madison, Wisconsin 53708, telephone 608-224-4701.

I hope this information is useful. If you or Mr. Harris would like to have additional information, please contact our Congressional and Public Affairs Office at 202-720-3897.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,



William C. Smith
Assistant Administrator
Office of Field Operations

cc: The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 10, 2003

The Honorable Ann Veneman
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
14th Street & Independence Southwest Ave
Washington, D.C. 20250

35-4235043
RBS

Dear Secretary Veneman:

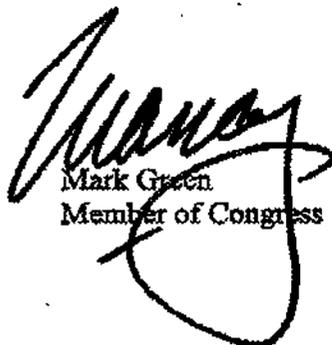
We are writing in strong support of the application submitted by United Wisconsin Grain Producers (UWGP) for a Value-Added Agricultural Product Market Development grant. UWGP's grant is vital to Wisconsin's economy and its economic growth in the future.

As our nation continues to develop new sources of renewable fuels, the construction of ethanol plants such as this will ease the transition from our country's dependency on foreign fuels. Companies such as UWGP, who demonstrate a strong vision for the future, will be our country's greatest asset in order to meet the increased demand for domestic energy. UWGP will construct a state of the art facility, incorporating the latest process control systems and biotechnology for production yields and quality. In addition to providing ethanol fuel, the plant will also provide by-products such as distillers' grains, which can be used to feed cattle and be used in pet food.

The development of the UWGP plant is widely supported throughout this community and the state, and there are numerous benefits associated with its construction. The positive economic impact the plant will have on the rural community of Friesland and the state of Wisconsin is tremendous. In addition to an expanded tax base, revenue generated from the plant will allow for improvements throughout the community, as well as the creating high paying jobs. Most importantly, this plant will also greatly benefit farmers throughout the state by providing them with a value-added market for their commodities.

Once again, we offer our strong support of the application submitted by United Wisconsin Grain Producers. If we can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact either of us.

Best Regards



Mark Green
Member of Congress



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

12/23/03

The Honorable Mark Green
U.S. House of Representatives
1314 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Green:

On behalf of Secretary Veneman, thank you for your letter dated December 10, 2003, on behalf of the United Wisconsin Grain Producers' application for a Value-Added Development Grant (VADG). The VADG program is administered by the Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS), a Rural Development Agency.

Funding for the VADG program is on a national competitive basis, and selections are based on established criteria. A total of 781 proposals were submitted requesting over \$158 million. There was approximately \$28.6 million available for this year's program. We are pleased to inform you that the United Wisconsin Grain Producers' proposal was awarded \$450,000 on December 11, 2003.

Again, thank you for your interest and continued support of this program. An identical letter was sent to Congressman Paul Ryan.

Sincerely,



JOHN ROSSO
Administrator
Rural Business-Cooperative Service

cc:

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

cc:

CB - FILE COPY
CB - Suspense
CB - M. Bowers
RBS/CMD - M. Warman
RBS - Rosso
LAPAS - B. Morton
State Director - Iowa

NOTE TO FILE: Referred to the VADG Announcement dated 12/11/03.
12/19/03 LAPAS & Mr. Peter Thomas provided pre-approved language. Award confirmed against USDA News Announcement dated 12/11/03 (attached).

DRAFTED:CB:M.Bowers:mb:12/17/03:720-9723:10a

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 12, 2004

35-4239940
FSA

Ms. Ann M. Veneman
Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
US Dept. of Agric., Rm. 116A, Whitten Bldg.
14th and Independence, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Ms. Veneman,

We write to ask that you expedite the review of Wisconsin's request for federal disaster declarations for 59 counties that sustained significant crop losses in 2003 due to drought conditions.

2003 was a challenging year for Wisconsin's farmers. We appreciate your secretarial disaster designation in September 2003 for 49 Wisconsin counties where crops suffered from winter kill and deep frost early in 2003. Farmers in Wisconsin are grateful for the assistance that USDA has since provided. During the winter months, weather conditions were such that many farmers' alfalfa and forage stands were severely damaged or even killed. Livestock producers had hoped to recover with this year's crops when promising weather forecasts were made during the early summer months. However, the rains did not fall as needed, and drought conditions pervaded the state.

During the summer and fall of 2003, we saw the conditions in Wisconsin first-hand and spoke with many constituents regarding the drought situation. As we each traveled across the state, the damage that had been inflicted on the corn and soybean fields as well as the hay crop was clearly visible. Other crops negatively affected included oats, hay, pasture, barley, wheat, green peas, snap beans, sweet corn, and tobacco. As the season progressed, the quality of these crops steadily deteriorated as they were deprived of much-needed rains. Constituents told us about their struggles to continue farming though the disastrous weather of the past year, and they worried that poor crops might force them to leave their livelihoods behind.

We are very concerned about the loss of Wisconsin farms that has occurred and ask your assistance to help keep Wisconsin farms in business. In response to these severe weather conditions, the governor requested federal disaster declarations on January 15, 2004, for 59 Wisconsin counties: Adams, Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Buffalo, Burnett, Calumet, Chippewa, Clark, Columbia, Crawford, Dane, Dodge, Douglas, Dunn, Eau Claire, Florence, Fond du Lac, Forest, Grant, Green, Green Lake, Iowa, Iron, Jackson, Jefferson, Juneau, Kenosha, La Crosse, Lafayette, Langlade, Lincoln, Marquette, Milwaukee, Monroe, Oneida, Ozaukee, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Portage, Racine, Richland, Rock, Rusk, St. Croix, Sauk, Sawyer, Trempleau, Vernon, Vilas, Walworth, Washburn, Washington, Waukesha, Waupaca, Waushara, Winnebago, and Wood. We urge you to expedite the

February 12, 2004

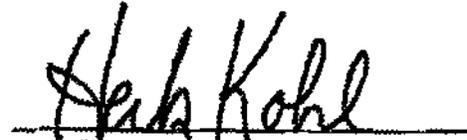
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review and consideration of this request in order to provide much-needed federal assistance to farmers in need.

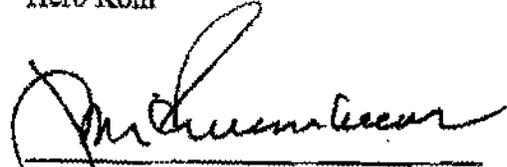
On behalf of farmers in Wisconsin who have suffered from drought conditions during 2003, we thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,


Russell D. Feingold


Herb Kohl


David Obey


Jim Sensenbrenner

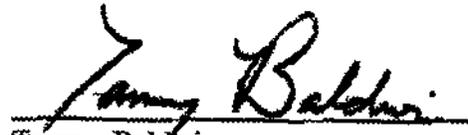

Tom Petri


Jerry Kloczka


Ron Kind


Mark Green


Paul Ryan


Tammy Baldwin



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

MAR 02 2004

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

Dear Congressman Ryan:

On behalf of Secretary Veneman, thank you for your letter of February 12, 2004, cosigned by your colleagues, concerning a Secretarial disaster designation for 59 counties in Wisconsin due to drought conditions.

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) is aware that Wisconsin farmers and ranchers are experiencing abnormally dry to severe drought conditions, as are other parts of the country. Be assured that USDA is committed to using all existing authorities to provide immediate relief to farmers and ranchers affected by drought.

USDA received Governor Jim Doyle's request dated January 15, 2004, for a Secretarial disaster designation for 59 Wisconsin counties due to drought. Currently, USDA is reviewing the request in order to make a determination as to whether these counties suffered a 30-percent or greater loss to one or more crops. After USDA has reviewed the request and made a determination, you will be promptly notified.

Farmers in counties declared a disaster area and contiguous counties have 8 months from the date of the declaration to apply for emergency loans to help cover part of their losses. The Farm Service Agency will consider each loan application based on its own merits, taking into account eligibility, the extent of losses, security available, repayment ability, and other regulatory criteria.

Again, thank you for your letter. A similar letter is being sent to your colleagues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "J.B. Penn".

J.B. Penn
Under Secretary
Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 26, 2004

Ms. Ann M. Veneman
Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
14th and Independence, SW
Washington, DC 20250

45-4244301
APHIS

Dear Secretary Veneman:

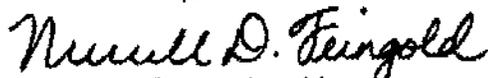
We write to you on behalf of our constituents that have contacted us regarding the European Union's trade ban on a variety of live birds and fresh meat products due to concerns about avian influenza. Wisconsin has a number of producers of these products that are struggling with the loss of export markets and the uncertainty that has arisen.

On February 24, 2004, the EU imposed a ban on a wide variety of export products due to concerns over the discovery of avian influenza in a limited number of states in the U.S. These products include: Live poultry, ratites, farmed and wild feathered game birds and hatching eggs of those species, live birds other than poultry (such as pet birds) including those accompanied by their owner, fresh meat of poultry, ratites, wild and farmed feathered game, meat preparations and meat products consisting of, or containing meat of those species and eggs for human consumption. The ban was recently extended by the EU through April 23, 2004.

This ban is having a tremendous negative impact upon Wisconsin businesses involved in exporting birds and/or avian products covered under the EU's trade ban. Export sales are being lost and the uncertainty over the length of the ban makes planning the production of an agricultural commodity incredibly difficult. It is our understanding that there are ongoing negotiations with the EU to distinguish between various U.S. regions regarding this ban and that staff from the Foreign Agricultural Service as well as the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service have been involved. We urge the department to continue its efforts to pursue a scientific resolution to this trade ban. In particular, special attention should be paid to lifting the ban on live animals and hatching eggs.

Thank you for your time and attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Russell D. Feingold
U.S. Senator



Paul Ryan
U.S. Representative

CC: A. Ellen Terpstra, Administrator, Foreign Agricultural Services
Bobby Acord, Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Dr. John Clifford, Assistant Deputy Administrator, APHIS-VS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

April 29, 2004

The Honorable Ann Veneman
Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
14th and Independence
Room 213-A
Washington, D.C. 20250

35-4246802
APHIS

Dear Secretary Veneman:

Recently, USDA initiated an effort with the governments of Canada and Mexico to harmonize regulations regarding bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) prevention and control in North America. We are writing to convey our strong support for a North American harmonization effort for BSE, Avian Influenza, and other foreign animal diseases and urge you to fully restore cattle and beef trade in North America.

The North American beef, poultry, and pork industries are best served by eliminating technical barriers to trade. Each country has a sovereign right to establish regulations to ensure food safety and protect animal health, but too often those regulations are inconsistent with the International Organization of Epizootics (OIE) standards and scientific rationale. We agree with rules that are based on scientifically sound control and intervention measures that protect public and animal health, rather than arbitrary and precautionary rules that inhibit trade and impose unnecessary costs on a country's citizens and its industries. It is imperative to establish a uniform set of North American rules, consistent with the OIE standards, to restore interrupted trade in cattle, beef and poultry products – both in North America and around the world.

The International Review Team, which you requested through the Foreign Animal Disease Advisory Committee, acknowledged the importance of taking this action when it said in its report, that the "U.S. should demonstrate leadership in trade matters by adopting import/export policies in accordance with international standards, and thus encourage the discontinuation of irrational trade barriers..."

We hope USDA can expedite actions to re-establish full cattle and beef trade across North America regardless of age. Resuming full trade between the U.S. and Canada demonstrates leadership and signals to the International community a renewed commitment to scientifically established OIE guidelines and standards. Furthermore, resumption of North

The Honorable Ann Veneman
April 29, 2004
Page 2

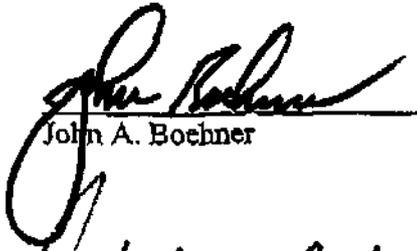
American cattle and beef trade will restore full economic activity to production lines across the country which will protect American jobs and alleviate recent economic concerns.

Similarly, the poultry industry is experiencing significant economic damage as a result of non-scientific barriers to trade that have been propagated since the discovery of avian influenza. The OIE scientific guidelines are very clear for countries that have both high path and low path avian influenza. The OIE guidelines provide that trade should not be interrupted because of low path avian influenza. Yet, many significant international markets arbitrarily banned U.S. poultry and did not recognize the foreign animal disease controls and intervention measures maintained by USDA. Likewise with high path avian influenza, under the OIE guidelines countries that maintain a regionalization control program can continue to trade. Regardless, many international markets have failed to allow unfettered trade by failing to recognize these scientifically proven containment programs.

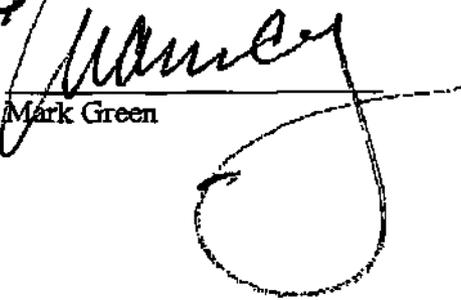
Given the low level of BSE risk and the existing intervention and surveillance measures for avian influenza in North America, we respectfully request these technical barriers to trade be eliminated, the North American cattle trade be fully restored, and for USDA to push for harmonization of animal health regulations.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



John A. Boehner



Mark Green



Mark Kennedy



Paul Ryan



United States Department of Agriculture

**Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250**

June 28, 2004

**The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901**

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of April 29, 2004, to Secretary Veneman regarding harmonization of regulations governing bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) and other foreign animal diseases.

We appreciate your support for our efforts to date. As you know, the Department of Agriculture (USDA) has been working with Canada and Mexico to address the need for a coordinated, North American approach to BSE regulatory and trade issues. Like you, we believe that working in a coordinated fashion with Canada and Mexico will improve our ability to protect our highly integrated food supply, maintain consumer confidence, and bring about greater consistency in trade. Furthermore, we agree that our efforts to harmonize animal health regulations must go beyond just BSE, but also include avian influenza, exotic Newcastle disease, and other foreign animal diseases of concern to both livestock and poultry producers.

Since Canada's detection of BSE in May 2003, USDA officials have been promoting discussions to develop an international agreement on practical, uniform steps countries may take to resume trade in ruminant products with countries that have reported few or no cases of BSE and that have implemented appropriate measures to mitigate the dissemination of the disease. In September 2003, USDA and its Canadian and Mexican counterparts urged the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) to consider a more practical, risk-based approach to trade where BSE risk is concerned. Efforts are now underway at the OIE to update and modify the BSE standards. USDA is working with like-minded countries to steer the OIE BSE chapter in a practical direction to establish a harmonized, risk-based framework for managing BSE. The framework would allow trade of low-risk animals and products from countries where BSE may have been reported but where effective controls and risk management measures are in place.

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Page 2

USDA will continue working with like-minded countries and the OIE to promote a harmonized, risk-based framework for managing harmful foreign animal diseases. We remain committed to fair international sanitary trade standards and the elimination of all sanitary trade barriers on livestock, poultry, and related products that are not based on sound science.

Thank you again for writing and for your support on this important issue. We are providing this same information to the other Members of Congress who signed the letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Hawks", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Bill Hawks
Under Secretary
Marketing and Regulatory Programs

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

WASHINGTON OFFICE
1217 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031
FAX: (202) 225-3393

TOLL-FREE: 1-888-909-RYAN
INTERNET: WWW.HOUSE.GOV/RYAN

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

May 6, 2004

Ms. Mary Waters
Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations
U.S. Department of Agriculture
213 A Whitten Building
1400 Independence Ave. S.W.
Washington, D.C. 25250-0003

05-4248439
FNS

Dear Ms. Waters:

I was recently contacted by a constituent, Thomas Berger, Executive Director of the Racine County Food Bank in Racine, Wisconsin, regarding the difficulties they and other food pantry organizations are experiencing with the interpretation of USDA guidelines relating to the storage temperature of certain food items.

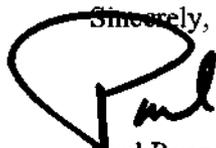
Enclosed please find a copy of Director Berger's letter to me, along with his signed privacy act release form. They are asking for clarification as to whether local authorities are correctly interpreting this USDA guideline. Further, if this guideline is being properly interpreted, they are also seeking information regarding any waivers that may exist.

I would appreciate it if you would look into this matter to determine if anything can be done – consistent with all laws and regulations – to assist Thomas Berger and the Racine County Food Bank in resolving this problem by addressing their questions and concerns.

Please address your response to my Janesville office and reference my file number 203628. My Racine Office address is 304 6th Street, Racine, Wisconsin, 53403. Should you have any questions about this request, my Office Administrator, Scott Rausch, can be reached by calling 262-637-0510.

Again, thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Enclosure

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 S. MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
(608) 752-4050 . FAX: (608) 752-4711

KENOSHA
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
5712 7TH AVENUE
KENOSHA, WI 53140
(262) 654-1901 . FAX: (262) 654-2156

RACINE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
304 6TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(262) 637-0510 . FAX: (262) 637-5689



Racine County Food Bank
2000 DeKoven Ave., Racine, WI 53403-2481
Voice 262-632-2307 Fax 262-632-2643
Email info@racinecountyfoodbank.org



April 30, 2004

MAY 11 5 2004

Congressman Paul Ryan
20 South Main St., Ste.10
Janesville, WI 53545

COPY

Dear Congressman Ryan,

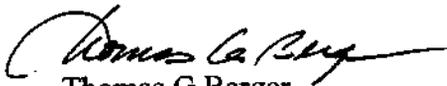
In response to your letter dated April 8 regarding USDA food, originally my question to your Racine staff person Scott Rausch was ONLY to learn if in fact the USDA had a requirement that dry TEFAP food be stored between 40° and 70° Fahrenheit. So yes I would like your help (as they won't speak directly to me) in learning if this is actually a USDA requirement.

If this is in fact a USDA requirement and not just a misinterpretation by the State of Wisconsin DHFS it has impact nationwide! Several pantries in Racine County have stopped taking TEFAP food because they cannot comply with the alleged rule. And frankly no pantry, shelter or meal program can comply with this requirement! I wonder if this rule is enforced in the southern states where the cost to air-condition an area down to 70° or less would be even more expensive than here in Wisconsin in July!

Please help us learn if this is a federal requirement to be followed (IF SO WE MUST WORK TO CHANGE IT!) or if this is nothing more than a misunderstanding by Wisconsin's DHFS of the application of a guideline. I note that in an issue of Insight...Out a newsletter from USDA the new Midwest Regional Administrator is Mr. Ollice C. Holden and I have copied the story of his appointment and the USDA contact information and enclosed it here.

Thank you in advance for your efforts on behalf of the people struggling here in Racine County. A swift answer to this question is imperative. Please give us a call if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Racine County Food Bank


Thomas G Berger
Executive Director

PS: Please note the correct address as we moved years ago and the April 8 letter never arrived here by mail.

C: Scott Rausch, Racine office

JUN -9 2004

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Member, U. S. House of Representatives
304 6th Street
Racine, Wisconsin 53403

Dear Congressman Ryan:

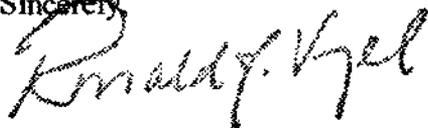
File Number: 53403

This is in response to your inquiry on behalf of Thomas Berger, Executive Director of the Racine County Food Bank, regarding interpretation of the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) guidelines for storage temperatures of food utilized in the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP).

There is no USDA requirement for storage temperatures of dry foods utilized in TEFAP. In August 1998, USDA disseminated guidance related to storage temperatures and approximate shelf life data for various food items when stored at three different temperatures: 40°F, 70°F, and 90°F. High storage temperatures can significantly shorten the shelf-life of a food product and negatively impact the quality of the food. This information was intended to provide guidance to TEFAP sites to assist them in determining how long a product would retain best flavor and quality at various storage temperatures. It was issued as guidance only, not Federal regulation or requirement.

Thank you for your interest in USDA's commodity nutrition assistance programs, and we hope this information will assist you with responding to your constituent.

Sincerely,



Pete S. Murano
Deputy Administrator
Special Nutrition Programs

cc: The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

OES ✓
OGA

FINAL:FNS:SNP:FDD:PamBeward:fjh:06-04-04:703-305-1126:05-4248439
DOCUMENT NAME: The Honorable Paul Ryan (J: DRIVE)

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1217 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031
FAX: (202) 225-3393

TOLL-FREE: 1-888-909-RYAN
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COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

August 19, 2004

Ms. Mary Waters
Asistant Secretary for Congressional Relations
U.S. Department of Agriculture
213 A Whitten Building
1400 Independence Ave. S.W.
Washington, DC 20250-0001

05-4258882
FSA

Dear Ms. Waters:

I was recently contacted by a constituent, Dale Noble of Burlington, Wisconsin, regarding the (b) (6)

[REDACTED]

I would appreciate it if you would look into this matter to determine if anything can be done – consistent with all laws and regulations – to assist Mr. Noble and his family in resolving this problem.

Please address your response to my Janesville office and reference my file number 217651. My Janesville office address is 20 South Main Street, Suite 10, Janesville, Wisconsin, 53545. Should you have any questions about this request, my District Director, Ms. Tremmel, can be contacted at (608) 752-4050.

Again, thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,


Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Enclosure

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 SOUTH MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
(608) 752-4050 . FAX: (608) 752-4711

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5712 7TH AVENUE
KENOSHA, WI 53140
(262) 654-1901 . FAX: (262) 654-2156

RACINE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
304 6TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(262) 637-0510 . FAX: (262) 637-5689

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1217 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031
FAX: (202) 225-3393

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

AUG 18 2004
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES
JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

Privacy Act Release/Casework Request Form

8-16-04

NOBLE GRAIN FARMS PTRSHIP
DALE NOBLE PTR
DAN NOBLE PTR
Name: DALE NOBLE E-Mail: _____

Lynn Noble Address: (b) (6)

(DALE'S WIFE) City and Zip Code: (b) (6)

Phone Number (Home): (b) (6)

Social Security Number: (b) (6) Veteran's Number: _____

Agency Involved: FARM SERVICE AGENCY U.S. DEPT AGRICULTURE

The Problem Is: (attach an additional sheet(s) if necessary) (b) (6)

(b) (6)

5/17/04 **Privacy Act Release**

I request and authorize U.S. Representative Paul Ryan to act on my behalf and to receive information from proper officials regarding the matter described above. Congressman Ryan is authorized by me to receive on my behalf all correspondence and information about my case.

Signed: (b) (6)

Date: 8-16-04

Please return this completed form to:
Congressman Paul Ryan
20 South Main Street, Suite 10
Janesville, WI 53545
Phone: (608) 752-4050
toll-free in Wisconsin - 1-888-909-RYAN (7926)
Fax: (608) 752-4711

*** Please note that the Privacy Act Release requires that you authorize access to your private records. Your signature above will enable Congressman Ryan to make the necessary inquiries on your behalf.

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 S. MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
(608) 752-4050 . FAX: (608) 752-4711

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RACINE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
304 6TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(262) 637-0510 . FAX: (262) 637-5689



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

Farm and Foreign
Agricultural
Services

Farm Service
Agency

1400 Independence
Ave, SW
Stop 0501
Washington, DC
20250-0501

NOV - 8 2004

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Member, United States House
of Representatives
20 South Main Street, Suite 10
Janesville, Wisconsin 53545

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of August 19, 2004, on behalf of your constituent,
Mr. Dale Noble of Burlington, Wisconsin, concerning (b) (6)

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

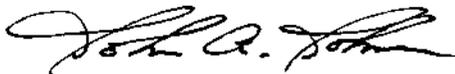
[Redacted]

The Honorable Paul Ryan

Page 2

Again, thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John A. Johnson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "A".

John A. Johnson
Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs

cc: The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1217 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031
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COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

August 28, 2004

Ms. Mary Waters
Asistant Secretary for Congressional Relations
U.S. Department of Agriculture
213 A Whitten Building
1400 Independence Ave. S.W.
Washington, DC 20250-0001

05-4258883
FSA

Dear Ms. Waters:

I was recently contacted by a constituent, Charles Paul of Whitewater, Wisconsin, regarding (b) (6)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I would appreciate it if you would look into this matter to determine if anything can be done – consistent with all laws and regulations – to assist Charles and his family in resolving this problem by ensuring that this matter receives your full, fair and prompt consideration.

Please address your response to my Janesville office and reference my file number 216971. My Janesville office address is 20 South Main Street, Suite 10, Janesville, Wisconsin, 53545. Should you have any questions about this request, my District Director, Ms. Tremmel, can be contacted at (608) 752-4050.

Again, thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely


Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Enclosure

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 SOUTH MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
(608) 752-4050 . FAX: (608) 752-4711

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(262) 654-1901 . FAX: (262) 654-2156

RACINE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
304 6TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(262) 637-0510 . FAX: (262) 637-5689

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1217 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031
FAX: (202) 225-3393

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

TOLL-FREE: 1-888-909-RYAN
INTERNET: WWW.HOUSE.GOV/RYAN

Privacy Act Release/Casework Request Form

Name: Charles S. Paul E-Mail: _____

Address: (b) (6) _____

City and Zip Code: (b) (6) _____

Phone Number (Home) (b) (6) _____ (Work): _____

Social Security Number: _____ Veteran's Number: _____

Agency Involved: US DA

The Problem Is: (attach an additional sheet(s) if necessary) (b) (6) _____

****Privacy Act Release****

I request and authorize U.S. Representative Paul Ryan to act on my behalf and to receive information from proper officials regarding the matter described above. Congressman Ryan is authorized by me to receive on my behalf all correspondence and information about my case.

Signed: (b) (6) _____ Date: _____

Please return this completed form to:
Congressman Paul Ryan
20 South Main Street, Suite 10
Janesville, WI 53545
Phone: (608) 752-4050
toll-free in Wisconsin - 1-888-909-RYAN (7926)
Fax: (608) 752-4711

*** Please note that the Privacy Act Release requires that you authorize access to your private records. Your signature above will enable Congressman Ryan to make the necessary inquiries on your behalf.



OCT 21 2004

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Farm and Foreign
Agricultural
Services

Farm Service
Agency

1400 Independence
Ave, SW
Stop 0501
Washington, DC
20250-0501

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Member, United States House
of Representatives
20 South Main Street, Suite 10
Janesville, Wisconsin 53545

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of August 28, 2004, on behalf of your constituent,
Mr. Charles Paul (b) (6)

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Again, thank you for writing. I regret that my response could not be more favorable.

Sincerely,

for John A. Johnson
Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs

cc: The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1217 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

August 19, 2004

Ms. Mary Waters
Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations
U.S. Department of Agriculture
213 A Whitten Building
1400 Independence Ave. S.W.
Washington, DC 20250-0001

05-4259124
APHIS

Dear Ms. Waters:

I was recently contacted by a constituent, Darlene Yeager of (b) (6)

Enclosed please find a copy of the materials she sent me, which further detail her concerns and questions. I would appreciate it if you would look into this matter to determine if anything can be done – consistent with all laws and regulations – to assist Darlene in resolving this problem by addressing her questions and concerns. (Please note that I have also sent a copy of Darlene's request to her State elected official, so that they can assist her in addressing her concerns about state statutes and regulations pertaining to the care of dogs at dog farms or by breeders.)

Please address your response to my Janesville office and reference my file number 218595. My Janesville office address is 20 South Main Street, Suite 10, Janesville, Wisconsin, 53545. Should you have any questions about this request, my District Director, Ms. Tremmel, can be contacted at (608) 752-4050.

Again, thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Enclosure

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
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RACINE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
304 6TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(262) 637-0510 . FAX: (262) 637-5689

August 8, 2004

AUG 10 2004

Dear Representative Paul Ryan,

WHO WILL SAVE US??

We are so thirsty. Our water is hot and then it is frozen and dirty. We are so hungry, never enough to eat; we have never seen a toy we don't know what a toy is. Our feet have never touched the grass, we have no room to sit or lie down or sometimes stand and our bodies are always being bit by flies, mosquitoes and ticks. We are full of infections and tumors in our ears, eye, rectums, genitals and feet. Our limbs are broken, our jaws are broken and some of us have no teeth. Even if we do our gums bleed from the rock hard food. We have nobody to hold or comfort us in our pain, we are not worthy of any veterinary care. We cowl and shudder with no relief. We fear the miller and the 2 X 4 board he carries, who will save us I/we will save you. We hear your cries deep in the woods where all these dirty deeds are carried out, we the good people are coming for you one and all. We promise not to purchase your babies from pet shops or malls anymore. We will speak out for you. We cry for you, we pray for you. We promise we will come for you at the mills.

COPY

I am writing to you regarding the vast number of dogs that are being abused everyday in this entire country in puppy mills. A puppy mill defined is a breeding kennel for the sole purpose of supplying dogs to pet stores across the country. There are laws on the books that are not being enforced. I am enclosing information on the daily torture of these dogs for you to read for yourself, and pleading with you to help me save the dogs. Please Representative Paul Ryan institute and enforce the laws to stop interstate transporting of these animals as many as half are dying during the transport process often without any food, water or adequate ventilation. We need to monitor closely the mills within our own state that are currently are not being regulated or ever inspected for compliance.

I know you will act upon this and I thank you in advance, but the dogs thank you
even more.

Sincerely,
Darlene Yeager

(b) (6)

A solid black rectangular redaction box covers the text in this block.

Enclosures:
Information from www.pupymillrescue.com website



home | web design | the dog house | contact us
 the dog dish | puppy mills | tortured | you paid for it |
 puppy care | breeders | before you breed | behavior | our
 dogs | a great day | reptiles | links

WHERE DO PET STORE PUPPIES COME FROM?



The majority of the puppies sold in pet stores come from breeding farms called puppy mills. These dog farms typically keep dozens or hundreds of dogs in tiny, filthy pest and feces infested crates *their entire lives*, producing litter after litter. They rarely receive veterinary care, exercise, or love. Many of the puppies produced by these places have genetic defects and health problems related to the conditions they are raised in. Most of them will die young. By purchasing a dog from a pet store, you are creating a demand for these puppy millers to supply and are supporting their cruelty and mistreatment of dogs. Please consider adopting a dog from a shelter. Remember...every time a puppy is purchased in a pet store, a pound puppy may be killed.

This severely malnourished dog is likely the parent of hundreds of puppies sold in pet stores across the US.



Below is an example of the size cage a typical puppy mill dog is confined to 24/7. This injured puppy mill dog cannot stand on his foot, yet receives no care:

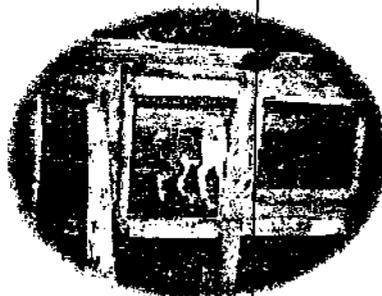


photo from www.peta.com

IMAGINE LIFE AS A DOG IN A PUPPY MILL

Imagine spending your whole life barefoot on a wire floor. Your feet are always bloody and sore. There are three other people sharing your tiny cage with you. When you go to the bathroom, it collects on the ground underneath you and is left there indefinitely. The stench makes you sick. Your only protection from the sun, rain, wind, and snow is a torn tarp that dangles over the top of your cage. You are constantly forced to breed, and your children are taken from you and sold, except for the babies that die from lack of proper care. Many of your babies will die on their way to pet stores due to illness or because they are too young to eat on their own. More will die once they get to the pet stores as a result of inadequate care, fear, loneliness, and disease. Your body aches from having so many children and not getting any exercise. You are exhausted, starving and sick. The large male that shares your cage won't let you eat or drink, and attacks you when you try. The only food you get is stale and moldy anyways. You have infected bites and scratches all over your body, and flies are constantly swarming around your face and eyes. You are always afraid. You may die this month, from any of a number of ailments. If not, you might wish you did. You will die young - whether from neglect and abuse or from being shot when you no longer produce babies to sell. You will die alone, and many of your children will experience the same fate. You have never known love or the freedom of running through an open field with your best friend. Here there are only enemies. The USDA, who is responsible for maintaining healthy standards in breeding mills, ignores your misery because they are more concerned about making sure the farmers are making enough money. They are actually the ones who advised farmers to start farming puppies in the first place. The only way you will every be set free is if all the people out there stop buying your babies from pet stores to put the puppy farmers out of business...

Should any living being be forced to live like this?



YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Please e-mail your Senators and Representatives to let them know we will no longer stand for this kind of animal abuse. You can easily find their names & e-mail addresses at www.mrsmith.com. A few moments of your time will make all the difference in the world to the thousands of suffering dogs across the US.

Feel free to copy and paste the following request in your e-mail:

I am writing to let you know that I find the conditions of dog breeding farms commonly called "puppy mills" to be abhorrent, disgusting, and abusive. I am concerned that the USDA standards for the proper care of dogs in breeding farms are not set high enough and are not regularly enforced. I am urging you to please do all you can to raise the standards and help end the suffering of the thousands of dogs trapped in these farms. Thank you for your time and consideration.

THE AKC PLAYS A MAJOR ROLE IN KEEPING PUPPY MILLS RUNNING

Please take another moment to e-mail the AKC and ask them to stop registering pet store puppies that are produced in puppy mills by clicking here: http://www.akc.org/akc/contact_akc.cfm. If puppy millers could not register their genetically defective, sick, neglected dogs, they would be instantly out of business. Who would pay thousands of dollars for a mutt in a pet store window?

The AKC will tell you that it is not their job to enforce the law and they are doing all they can. This is just a poor excuse - they are making thousands, if not millions of dollars every year from puppy mills, and they have the power to shut them down almost instantly. It's sad that an organization that is supposed to care so deeply about the quality of each breed of dog is making money off the suffering of so many. Their pockets may be lined, but they are definitely dirty. Let them know it is everyone's job to stop animal abuse and they can help by refusing to register puppy mill dogs.

THREE OTHER SIMPLE THINGS YOU CAN DO:

1. Adopt a dog from a shelter or get your puppy from a responsible breeder.
2. Buy your pet supplies from a store that doesn't sell puppies or kittens.
3. and spread the news!

Thank you to the following web sites and organizations for helping to inform everyone of these horrible conditions and for fighting for the dogs who cannot fight for themselves:

→ www.helppuppies.com - Info on Pet Stores and Puppy Mills

→ Prisoners for Profit - Info on Puppy Mills

- Stop-Puppy-Mills.com - More Info on Pet Store Puppies
- www.hua.org - Hearts United for Animals
- www.peta.org - Animal Rights Organization
- [Maureen's Puppy Mills Pages](#)
- [BARK Info on Puppy Mills](#)

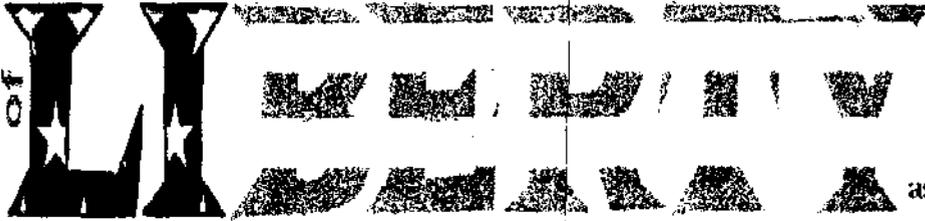
Please distribute the above information to as many people as possible. If we can reach more people we can help stop the cruelty and neglect. Thank you for caring.

◀ BACK NEXT ▶

[[home](#)] [[puppy mills](#)] [[tortured](#)] [[you paid for it](#)] [[puppy care](#)]
[[breeders](#)] [[before you breed](#)] [[behavior](#)] [[a great day](#)] [[samson](#)]
[[delilah](#)] [[mowgli](#)] [[harley](#)] [[tequila](#)] [[our friends](#)] [[reptiles](#)]
[[links](#)]

All the information found on this web page is the sole opinion of the webmaster of this site. Statements made on this page do not refer to any specific pet store or breeder and webmaster makes no claim as to where any specific store receives it's puppies, or which breeders/puppy mills do not maintain healthy conditions for their dogs. All photos are the property of their copyright owners.

Cherish THE Promise



235

written by Patience Renzulli
as told and edited by Mary Magee

The stench. She couldn't believe the stench. Nothing in her life had prepared her for this. Not the worst run city shelters. Not the filthiest kennels. Nothing. The smell of stale urine and fresh feces could not begin to compare with what she now faced. Her eyes smarted. Her nose burned. Her brain tried to process the odor of death: of dying flesh and dying souls. The stink of human greed and cruelty permeated the darkest corners of that room. Every pore of her body was soaking up all of that stench. She had to go outside.

In January, Mary Magee heard about a dog auction that was scheduled to take place in February in Wheaton, Missouri. She had read about these auctions. Never did she imagine herself attending one. A recent article by a woman who routinely rescued dogs from auctions had fascinated her, and Mary had published it in her magazine. She used the Internet to find out more about the upcoming auction, not yet understanding where this path would lead, or why she felt compelled to follow it. The Internet inquiries brought her in touch with someone who had rescued more than 2000 dogs from puppy mills and auctions. Other people with experience in the dark under-workings of the commercial dog market were advising her, and she became conscious of the fact that she was thinking of going to a dog auction.

Four days later, she learned about three Whippet bitches being offered at the auction. Mary's breed. A breed rarely seen in pet store cages in the past, but starting to appear more frequently now. Every time a Whippet is found in a pet store, it sparks a heated discussion on the Internet Whippet lists. Kind but misguided people want to purchase the puppy from the pet store to "rescue" it. More experienced people beg that no one buy the puppy, as each sale only serves to make pet stores order more Whippets. The real rescuers know that the *breeding stock* that produce pet store puppies live in unspeakably horrid conditions, and every pet store puppy sale condemns more *breeding stock* to that fate. And now three bitches, believed

to be less than two years old, would be auctioned to the highest bidder in an audience of commercial breeders. The pet stores would have a great supply of Whippet puppies in the near future.

So Mary was going to a dog auction. On February 17th in Wheaton, Missouri, a thirteen-hour drive from her home, Mary Magee was going to a dog auction.

She contacted Peggy Bush, the irascible national president of Whippet Rescue. Mary's Internet research had also led her to the stark reality that she would need financial help to be able to purchase all three of the Whippets, and though she hated to ask, she knew Peggy was the first stop. Mary feared she might have a fight on her hands, but Peg knew the importance of keeping three young Whippet bitches out of the grip of puppy millers. With Peggy's blessing and the approval of the Board of Directors of the American Whippet Club, Mary felt the tremendous relief of not having to face leaving any of the young Whippets behind. But she was already thinking about leaving the auction with the hounds in hand, and she still had a very long way to go to get there.

It was time to call on other good friends and Whippet lovers for their help. Ron Boutelle agreed to meet Mary in Wheaton to give what turned out to be tremendous moral support and to help in any way he could. Ron and his wife Cheri are very active in Whippet Rescue and are rarely without a foster rescue Whippet in their home. Jamie Henry's initial reaction was that buying the Whippets would be "putting money into the bad guys' pockets," but he agreed to help Mary with the drive, and would be by her side in case of problems. Halfway through the trip, they stopped at Marilyn Harvey's house for a rest. They had started out immediately after work on Friday and at Marilyn's home Jamie took a much-needed nap. Mary was wound too tight to sleep, and was grateful that Marilyn stayed up and listened to all of her concerns about the auction.

They resumed the drive at 2:30 AM. They took turns resting in the back of the van while the other drove. As they approached

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the tiny town of Wheaton, their apprehension became palpable. They met Ron in a little "Ma and Pa" convenience store, where they realized what a close knit community they were in. "You goin' to the auction?" the cashier queried, eyeing them with suspicion. "We don't want no trouble here. You belong to one of them animal groups?" Eyes around the store peered their way. "No." Choking on the words, they said they were commercial breeders, looking to get into some new breeds. It made Mary sick to her stomach. After getting out of the store, Ron gave her a hug.

The little group arrived at Southwest Auctions, a livestock farm/holding/auction center, and the number of people who were there for the auction left them dumfounded. There was a guard with a radio, gun, and handcuffs as they pulled into the long drive to the parking lot. Another guard, also with a radio, gun, and handcuffs was stationed at the parking lot entrance. Both armed guards checked for cameras, which were emphatically not allowed on the premises. Mary parked, noticing the number of expensive new cars, vans, and motor homes in the lot.

They faced a plain pole building. Inside the first door was the office, the second ... a line to get catalogs and bidding numbers. The sales staff added personnel to accommodate the shocking numbers of bidders. Ron headed for the dog room to find the Whippets while Mary and Jamie waited in line for their bidding number. Ron returned, visibly shaken, and reported that the Whippets were very young, and pretty, "they are just babies," and that he had to fight the urge to grab them from the cage and just run. Jamie went to look at the pups, while Mary found the person who would do the actual Whippet bidding. When it is known that a rescuer is bidding on any dog, the commercial breeders will bid the dog up to escalate the price. It is crucial to have someone not easily recognized as a rescuer to do the bidding. (This person will remain anonymous, even to the writer, and will not be mentioned again.) That job completed, Mary headed to the dog room to get her first glimpse of the three Whippets.

She walked through the auction room. It had a high ceiling with a large ventilation duct, and two large garage doors, opposite each other, one on either side of the building to accommodate trucks driving through for loading and unloading.

There was a food vendor producing smells of hot dogs and hamburgers. Another vendor was openly selling bags of Purina dog food that were clearly marked "Not for Retail Sale."

People were chatting and laughing, visiting and greeting old friends. There were banners on the walls advertising The American Pet Registry, and signs advertising the DoBoTri Kennel, the broker that was providing the auctioneer service for the sale. There were more armed guards.

As Mary passed through the small sliding barn door into the dog room she gasped. (*Oh my God in heaven, the smell.*) The dog room had a low ceiling, which leaked through the drooping insulation, dripping water directly into the cages. There were rows and rows of wire cages with wire bottoms stacked three to four and even five cages high. Along one wall there were "runs" for large breeds. These were chain link pens, approximately five feet high and three feet wide with a trough running along them to collect excrement. None of the animals in the room had food or water. There were multiple dogs in each cage. Only a few had room to stand in their cage; the rest were crammed in crouched positions. There were around two hundred and fifty dogs in that room. (*Dead eyes. Lost hope. Eyes pleading for release, death, anything. Feet horribly deformed from life on wire grid cage bottoms. Quiet whimpers. People laughing belly laughs. Children scampering with their chillidogs and calling to their parents. Urine and feces from dogs in the upper crates dripping on the dogs below. Occasionally a growl. That inescapable smell.*)



Photo Paula Tahr

Mary tried to get her wits about her. She didn't want to show her emotion, to risk everything by being

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having to leave some of the Bostons behind. "I haven't gotten used to it. I will never get used to it. Tonight I will be ill. I will vomit. I'll pace. I'll cry. I'll second-guess myself. I don't know how long I can do it. But I know I must keep doing it as long as I can."

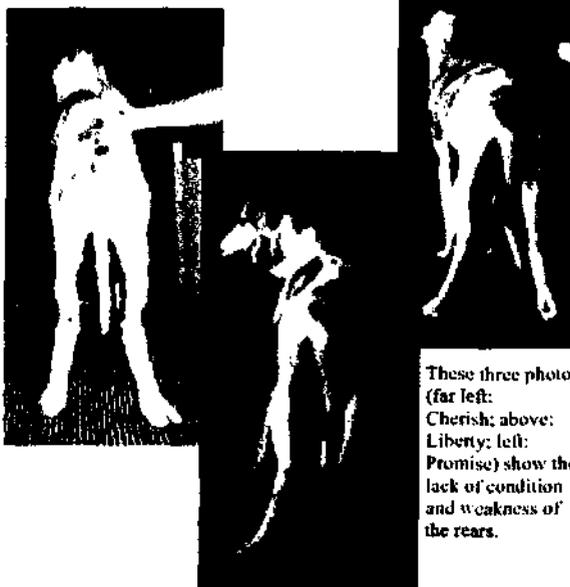
There was a terrified seven and a half year old Bull Mastiff bitch brought out for bidding. She would take two trembling steps and drop to her belly. Two steps and drop. Two steps and drop. All the while the auctioneer was claiming what a great producer she was. Tricia was tugging on the big tight chain around her neck that held the cow tag with her lot number on it. Two steps and drop. Shaking head to toe. Sold! No Bull Mastiff rescue person was there. "Three hundred and fifty dollars for the seven and a half year old brood bitch."

A champion male Brussels Griffon imported from Russia brought \$950. Three bull terriers were sold to one person for \$850 a piece. Auctioneer Bob announced that the English Toy Spaniel bitch had an underbite and an umbilical hernia before she sold for \$550. There were Jack Russell Terriers and Japanese Chins. One woman who the auctioneer referred to on a first name basis as "Joyce" bought one Cavalier King Charles Spaniel for \$3,450. Most of the crowd was having a fun time. Parents were letting their children do the bidding sometimes. People would laugh at Auctioneer Bob's jokes. The dogs with the tight chains around their necks and their cow tag lot numbers kept being dragged in. The door to the dog room would slide open and there would be a brief but gagging blast of stench. The whines from the dog room turned to barks and cries, as puppies were taken from mothers, and littermates were separated for the first time.

Mary's eyes widened in disbelief as she seen the first three of the 13 Bernese Mountain Dogs brought out. Puppies, little nine month old puppies. The wagged and wiggled - tried to give kisses to her unreceptive "handlers." Mary's heart ached as she watched knowing the pups' had no idea what their new lives would soon become. Imports brought in just for this sale. "This one has a level bite," said the auctioneer. Bidding was fast and furious. Commercial breeders bidding left and right - a rescuer having his price ran, and ran high! "Sold for \$3000 times three." Prices climbed on some to

\$8000! A three month old male, hernia - \$2250, a female two months old, hernia - \$2400, two more nine month old females sold together \$6150 times two. (My God! These

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Photos Whipped Watch

These three photos (far left: Cherish; above: Liberty; left: Promise) show the lack of condition and weakness of the rears.

people are phirana!) Two were auctioned sight unseen! Over \$60,000 for one breed, and most believed to have been purchased and taken into rescue.

"We have a fine 1999 model here, and see for yourself, folks, this one is ready right now!" The little Llasa was held up in the air, butt facing the bidders, tail held out of the way, so everyone could see her swollen vulva. There were 20 Papillons, two Pekingese, and then the two Pembroke Welsh Corgis that brought \$650 a piece. Pomeranians and poodles were in abundance. The poodles were in particularly bad shape. Missing teeth, matted coats soaked with filth. The rat terriers brought bids of \$25 to \$195. The first french bulldog was brought out, a tiny palm sized piebald bitch. The auctioneer started at \$500, nothing, down to \$300, still no bids. "How about an opener of \$100?" still nothing. Not even a \$25 bid. They were returned to the dog room unsold.

When Mary was a small child she had a dear friend named Beardsly. Beardsly was an exemplary

member of the Newfoundland breed. Mary cringed when she saw a three-year-old Newfoundland bitch and her two yearling puppies – both bitches – come through the door, along with the stench from the dog room. "Hey, look here, folks. We've got a fine '97 model and two 2000 models, right here!" The mother walked the walk of the damned, eyes already dead, seemingly unaware of her surroundings. The two pups were terrified, being dragged by their tight chains, hysterically struggling. The three of them



Liberty was very weary of anything and anyone. Peeking around the crate in the above photo became something commonly seen by her. Also note how down in pasture this 17 1/2 week pup is.

were completely saturated with urine from their "run." Auctioneer Bob announced that the mother "may already be bred" and that two of the three had "reverse scissor bites." The *darn* was sold for \$2700. The young bitches went for \$1500 and \$2450. All three to bidder #143. Once again, Mary headed outside to get herself together. She was trembling, she couldn't hold back the tears, and her belly was in a tight hard knot.

The crowd was thinning. The auction had started at ten o'clock in the morning and it was nearing six. Commercial breeders were lining up at the office to pay for their purchases. The auctioneer was nearing the end of the alphabet. (*W for Whippet.*) Mary's chest tightened. She couldn't get a deep breath. There wasn't enough air. Her thoughts were chaotic, circling around the image of the three little Whippet puppies. What was she thinking? It had to work. Even with the backing of AWC Rescue, she had a strict limit, and the prices on some of the dogs had been astronomical. Those three Newfoundland bitches had cost \$6,650. (*Please, dear God, please let me get them out.*) Tricia brought out the Whippets. Bob asked for an opening bid of \$500. More people got up to leave. (*Breathe, damnit!*) Bob asked for an opening bid of \$100. Nothing. "Do I hear \$75, then?" The bidding started at \$75. They were

bidding against the commercial breeder who had bought a large number of the sad little poodles. (*Oh, no!*) Back and forth, up to \$350. (*Please, God.*) \$400. "Do I hear \$450? I have \$400. Anyone, \$450?" The Whippets strained against their tight chains with the cattle tag lot numbers. The timid one looked petrified. Tricia looked tired and bored. (*Bid, for God's sake, bid! That's not our bid! Jesus, bid!*) "I have \$450, now boys, do I hear \$500?" Mary looked at the commercial breeder, he shook his head. "I have \$450. Are we all done at \$450? Do I hear \$500? Going once at \$450, going twice for \$450... sold. How many do you want at \$450?" (*All three. We want all three.*) "That's it, folks. Three Whippets at \$450 a piece."

After the final breed was auctioned – the little Westies – auctioneer Bob thanked everyone for attending, reminded the buyers that the seller guarantees the purchases to be Brucellosis free for forty days, and invited all to come to the next sale on March 3rd.

When their bid had gotten the Whippets, Mary had felt a great sense of relief, elation, and success. The song "We are the champions" pounded into her awareness. But now, standing in line with the commercial breeders for 20 minutes to pay for the puppies (cash, checks and all major credit cards accepted) she felt overwhelmed with sadness and fatigue. As happy as she was about getting the Whippets, she couldn't block out what she had witnessed. The filth. All of the bitches in season whose genitals were shown to the bidders. The eyes. Eyes of panic, eyes of death, eyes of indifference, eyes of greed. All of those eyes, human and canine, would be haunting her dreams. How many eyes had she looked into that belonged to puppy millers? How many eyes belonged to sad, scared rescuers like her? Never would she be able to rid herself of the image of those three Newfoundlands. Another wave of nausea passed right through her. She looked up from writing her check and looked directly into the eyes of the commercial breeder whom they had outbid to get the Whippets. His hatred burned through his eyes. She returned his stare. Time stopped. He knew she was a rescuer. She knew what he was. She refused to look away, despite the cold cruelty in his eyes. He would not win. He looked away. She had won. She saw the names on the check he was writing to pay for those pathetic poodles and the other dogs he had bought. Barry and Kathy Warren. *Sorry, Mr. Warren, this time the Whippets had won!*

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photo Paula Tabor



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

1400 Independence
Avenue, SW
Washington, DC
20250

NOV 12 2004

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Member, U.S. House of Representatives
Suite 10
20 South Main Street
Janesville, Wisconsin 53545

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letters on behalf of Mr. Dale Noble and Ms. Darlene Yeager concerning our Agency's regulation of commercial dog breeding facilities under the Animal Welfare Act (AWA). We sincerely regret the delay in responding.

We share your constituents' concern for the welfare of animals in these facilities and assure you that our Agency works hard to ensure their protection. In enforcing the AWA, we require people who breed dogs and cats at the wholesale level and the wholesale dealers who supply these animals to retail pet stores to be licensed with us. These people are required to meet the minimum standards of care established by our Agency. Accordingly, they must provide their animals with veterinary care, a balanced diet, clean and structurally sound housing, proper ventilation and sanitation, and protection from extremes of weather and temperature, among other things. In addition, we require licensed breeders to employ a full-time veterinarian or arrange for a private veterinarian to make regularly scheduled visits to their facilities. If the attending veterinarian finds deficiencies in care or management practices that may be jeopardizing the health of the animals, the breeder would be expected to follow the veterinarian's recommendations. We must point out, however, that breeders who sell their animals directly to customers are not regulated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA); typically, these individuals fall under the purview of State and local governments.

Our Animal Care officials conduct unannounced inspections to ensure that facilities are maintaining the minimum standards of animal care established under the law. If an inspection reveals deficiencies in meeting the AWA standards, the inspector instructs the facility operator to correct the problems within a given time frame. If deficiencies remain uncorrected, we document the problems and consider enforcement action. In cases where the violations are relatively minor, a licensee may be required to pay a smaller penalty or make specific improvements to their facilities and the care provided to their animals. In cases of serious or repeat violations, penalties may include more substantial fines, cease-and-desist orders, and license revocations or suspensions.



Safeguarding American Agriculture
APHIS is an agency of USDA's Marketing and Regulatory Programs

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The Honorable Paul Ryan
Page 2

Our Agency has undertaken numerous regulatory measures to further ensure that animals covered by the AWA receive the care they deserve. For example, in recent years our Agency has published several rules amending the requirements for the care and treatment of dogs and cats in the commercial pet trade. These rules prohibit the permanent tethering of dogs as a primary means of enclosure and require that certain wire floors be coated to improve comfort and eliminate foot injuries to dogs and cats. Our Agency has also published a proposed rule which, if finalized, would require regulated facilities to keep more detailed medical records to better ensure that their animals receive adequate veterinary care. Most recently, our Agency issued a final rule that revises and clarifies the AWA licensing requirements for breeders (including commercial dog breeders), dealers, and exhibitors; the procedures for applying for licenses and renewals; and the restrictions upon the acquisition of dogs and other regulated animals. We are enclosing copies of the final rule, "Animal Welfare; Inspection, Licensing, and Procurement of Animals," for Mr. Noble and Ms. Yeager's reference.

Your constituents may also be interested to learn that our Agency makes efforts to educate commercial dog breeders about the proper care and treatment of their animals. During the past several years, we have worked with various State departments of agriculture and local colleges of veterinary medicine to host canine care workshops in several States. These workshops are designed to assist pet breeders in enhancing the health and well-being of their dogs; topics have included neonatal care and kennel design. In educating commercial dog breeders, we hope to promote the overall welfare of their animals.

We appreciate the opportunity to explain our efforts and hope this information is reassuring. For more information about our AWA enforcement activities, your constituents may wish to visit our Web site at www.aphis.usda.gov/ac/.

Sincerely,



W. Ron DeHaven
Administrator

2 Enclosures

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 29, 2004

Mr. Joshua B. Bolten
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, D.C., 20503

06-4261109
APHIS

Dear Director Bolten:

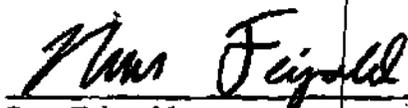
As the Office of Management and Budget works to draft the Administration's fiscal year 2006 budget request, we urge you to provide sufficient funds so that the Departments of Agriculture and Interior can fully implement actions outlined in the *Plan for Assisting States, Federal Agencies, and Tribes in Managing Chronic Wasting Disease in Wild and Captive Cervids* (Plan) that was presented to Congress.

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is a progressive, degenerative disease of the central nervous system that infects deer and elk in states across the country. A number of federal agencies, state wildlife management agencies, tribal governments, and private organizations have worked together to address the challenges presented by this disease. Progress has been made on surveillance, management, research, and information dissemination regarding this disease, as was reported in a progress report drafted by the Agriculture and Interior Departments and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies on implementation of the Plan. We are attaching a copy of this for your information.

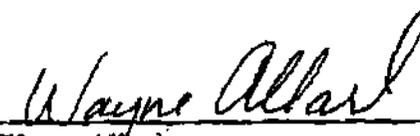
More funds are needed to continue these worthwhile efforts. First, we continue to urge OMB to finalize the Plan. A national strategy is acutely needed to manage a disease that does not respect state borders. Also, the progress report provides a number of concrete recommendations that have been identified as "critical for CWD control efforts," and we urge you to provide adequate funds to fully implement these recommendations in the fiscal year 2006 budget.

We thank you for your attention to this important matter, and we look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Russ Feingold



Wayne Allard

Herb Kohl

Herb Kohl

Ben Nighthorse Campbell

Ben Nighthorse Campbell

David Obey

David Obey

Joel Hefley

Joel Hefley

Jim Sensenbrenner

Jim Sensenbrenner

Diana DeGette

Diana DeGette

Tom Petri

Tom Petri

Tom Tancredo

Tom Tancredo

Ron Kind

Ron Kind

Mark Udall

Mark Udall

Mark Green

Mark Green

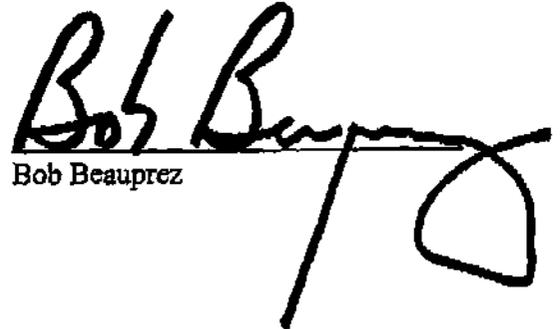
Marilyn Musgrave

Marilyn Musgrave

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OMB Director Joshua Bolten
FY06 CWD Funding
Page 3


Paul Ryan


Bob Beauprez


Tammy Baldwin

cc: Ann Veneman, Secretary of Agriculture
Gale Norton, Secretary of the Interior
Marcus Peacock, Associate Director for Natural Resource Programs

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 29, 2004

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Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, D.C., 20503

06-4261670
APHIS

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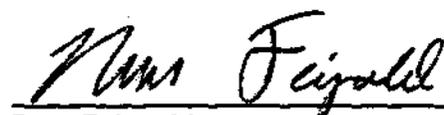
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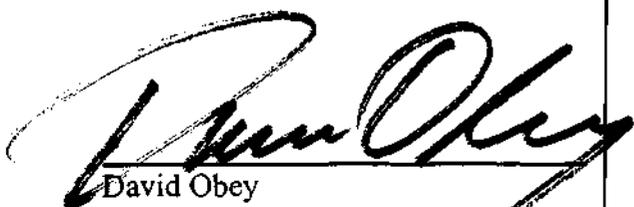
Wayne Allard



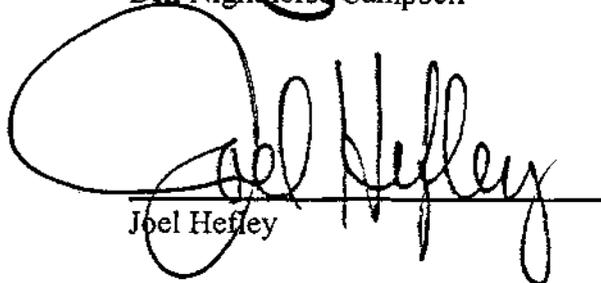
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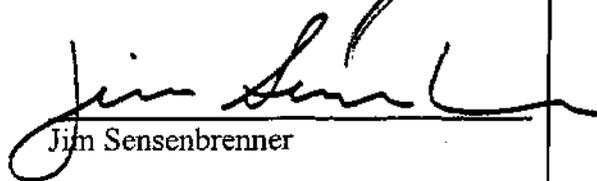
Ben Nighthorse Campbell



David Obey



Joel Hefley



Jim Sensenbrenner



Diana DeGette



Tom Petri



Tom Tancredo



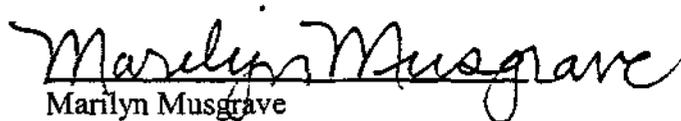
Ron Kind



Mark Udall

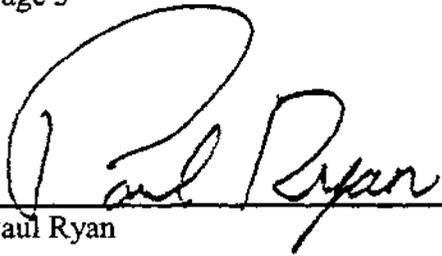


Mark Green

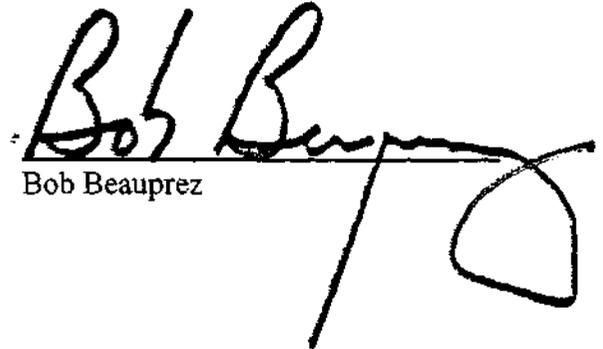


Marilyn Musgrave

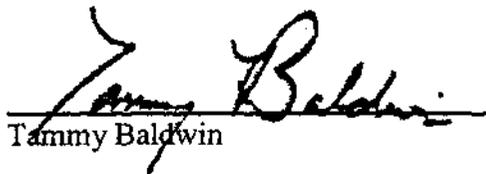
OMB Director Joshua Bolten
FY06 CWD Funding
Page 3



Paul Ryan



Bob Beauprez



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cc: Ann Veneman, Secretary of Agriculture
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PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1217 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031
FAX: (202) 225-3393

TOLL-FREE: 1-888-909-RYAN
INTERNET: WWW.HOUSE.GOV/RYAN

**COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS**

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

October 20, 2004

Ms. Mary Waters
Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations
U.S. Department of Agriculture
213 A Whitten Building
1400 Independence Ave. S.W.
Washington, DC 20250-0001

05-4264291
APHIS

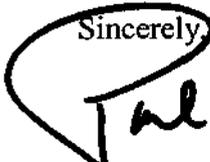
Dear Ms. Waters:

This is in further regard to my letters to you of August 19, 2004, concerning Dale Noble, and August 19, 2004, regarding Darlene Yaeger. I have enclosed copies of my previous inquiries for your reference.

It has now been over two months since I have submitted these inquiries, and I have not yet received your replies. I want to bring this matter to your immediate attention and ask that you do everything possible – consistent with all laws and regulations – to expedite a final response to my inquiries.

Should you have any questions about this, please contact my District Director, Ms. Tremmel, at (608) 752-4050.

Your prompt attention to this matter would be most appreciated.

Sincerely,


Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Enclosure

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 SOUTH MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
(608) 752-4050 . FAX: (608) 752-4711

KENOSHA
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
5712 7TH AVENUE
KENOSHA, WI 53140
(262) 654-1901 . FAX: (262) 654-2156

RACINE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
304 6TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(262) 637-0510 . FAX: (262) 637-5689



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Farm and Foreign
Agricultural
Services

Farm Service
Agency

1400 Independence
Ave. SW
Stop 0501
Washington, DC
20250-0501

APR 12 2005

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Member, United States House
of Representatives
304 6th Street
Racine, Wisconsin 53403

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of March 11, 2005, on behalf of your constituent,
(b) (6), expressing her concerns with the Rock
County Farm Service Agency (FSA) Office (b) (6)

[Redacted]

Again, thank you for writing. I appreciate the opportunity to address Ms. Waite's concerns.

Sincerely,

John W. Williams
Deputy Administrator for
Management

cc: The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1217 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1217 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

April 7, 2005

Ms. Mary Waters
Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations
U.S. Department of Agriculture
213 A Whitten Building
1400 Independence Ave. S.W.
Washington, DC 20250-0001

05-4278845
AMS

Dear Ms. Waters:

I was recently contacted by a constituent, Mr. Neal Butcher of Janesville, Wisconsin, regarding questions he has pertaining to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

(b) (6)

I would appreciate it if you would look into this matter to determine if anything can be done – consistent with all laws and regulations – to assist Mr. Butcher in finding answers for his questions.

Please address your response to my Racine office and reference my file number 241976. My Racine office address is 304 6th Street, Racine, Wisconsin, 53403. Should you have any questions about this request, my Office Administrator, Scott Rausch, can be contacted at (262) 637-0510.

Again, thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 SOUTH MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
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RACINE, WI 53403
(262) 637-0510 . FAX: (262) 637-5689

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 27, 2005

The Honorable Mike Johanns
Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
14th and Independence, SW
Washington, DC 20250

35-4285832
FSA

Dear Secretary Johanns,

We urge you to expedite the review of Wisconsin's request for federal disaster declarations for 31 counties that sustained significant forage crop and winter wheat losses due to winterkill during last winter. Further, we request your assistance in quickly considering any future requests for disaster designations presented by the State of Wisconsin.

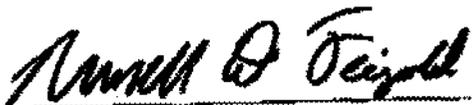
Mother Nature has not been kind to Wisconsin farmers so far this year. During the winter months, weather conditions were such that many farmers' alfalfa, forage stands and winter wheat were damaged or even killed. Many livestock producers had hoped to recover with promising weather in the spring and summer, but instead the rains have been sparse in many parts of the state. While many losses could still be averted if the weather improves, the entire state is now abnormally dry, with many areas already experiencing moderate or severe drought, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor.

We are very concerned about the hardship caused by this winter's losses and the potential for even more damage this summer. In response to these severe weather conditions, the governor requested federal disaster declarations earlier this month for 31 Wisconsin counties: Barron, Brown, Burnett, Calumet, Clark, Dodge, Door, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Kenosha, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marathon, Marinette, Milwaukee, Oconto, Outagamie, Ozaukee, Polk, Racine, Rusk, Sawyer, Shawano, Sheboygan, Walworth, Washburn, Washington, Waukesha, Waupaca, Waushara and Winnebago. We urge you to expedite the review and consideration of this request in order to provide much needed federal assistance to our state's farmers.

Further, if the drought conditions persist and the governor makes additional disaster requests, we urge you to expedite your review of these as well.

On behalf of farmers in Wisconsin who have suffered from disastrous weather conditions during this past year, we thank you for your attention to this important matter.

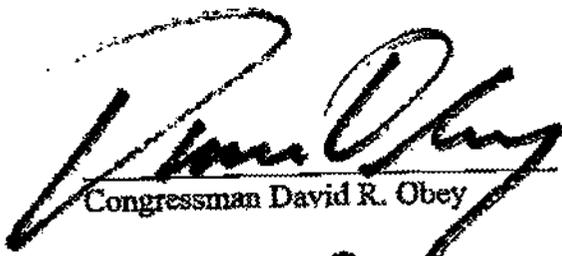
Sincerely,



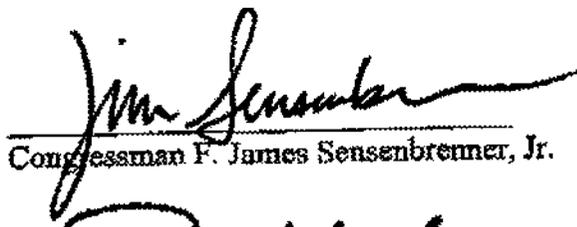
Senator Russell D. Feingold



Senator Herb Kohl



Congressman David R. Obey



Congressman F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.



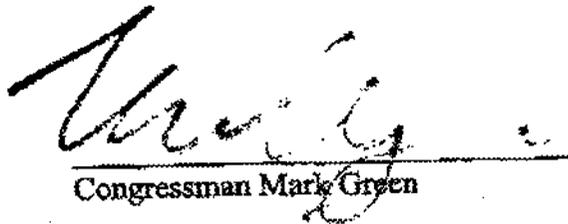
Congressman Thomas E. Petri



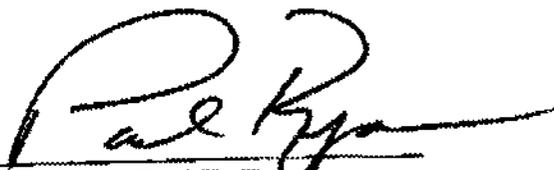
Congressman Ron J. Kind



Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin



Congressman Mark Green



Congressman Paul D. Ryan



Congresswoman Gwen S. Moore



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

SEP 02 2005

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1113 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Ryan

On behalf of Secretary Johanns, thank you for your letter of July 27, 2005, jointly signed by your colleagues, supporting a request for a Secretarial disaster designation for counties in Wisconsin because of adverse weather conditions.

Unfortunately, the Department of Agriculture (USDA) did not receive a request in July 2005 from Governor Jim Doyle for a Secretarial disaster declaration for Wisconsin. However, on August 30, 2005, USDA received two requests for a disaster declaration from Governor Doyle. The first letter, dated August 17, 2005, requested 31 counties be declared disaster areas due to winterkill losses to forage and winter wheat that occurred from January through May 2005. A second letter, dated August 25, 2005, requested that three counties be declared disaster areas due to tornadoes and severe storms that damaged corn, tobacco, and other crops that occurred on August 18, 2005.

USDA will review the requests as expeditiously as possible to determine whether these counties suffered a 30-percent or greater loss to one or more crops. Once a determination is made, you will be promptly notified.

You may be assured that USDA will continue to use every available resource to assist farmers and ranchers affected by natural disasters and provide this assistance as expeditiously as possible.

Again, thank you for your letter. A similar letter is being sent to your colleagues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J.B. Penn", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

J.B. Penn
Under Secretary
Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1217 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031
FAX: (202) 225-3393

TOLL-FREE: 1-888-909-RYAN
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

June 13, 2005

Ms. Mary Waters
Asistant Secretary for Congressional Relations
U.S. Department of Agriculture
213 A Whitten Building
1400 Independence Ave. S.W.
Washington, DC 20250-0001

Dear Ms. Waters:

This is in further regard to my letter to you of April 29, 2005, concerning Ms. Pamela Garelli. I have enclosed a copy of my previous inquiry for your reference.

It has now been over one month and I have not yet received your reply. I want to bring this matter to your immediate attention and ask that you do everything possible – consistent with all laws and regulations – to expedite a final response to my inquiry.

Should you have any questions about this, please contact my Office Administrator, Scott Rausch, at (262) 637-0510.

Your prompt attention to this matter would be most appreciated.

Sincerely,



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Enclosure

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 SOUTH MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
(800) 752-4050 . FAX: (608) 752-4711

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PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

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COMMITTEE ON
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SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

April 29, 2005

Ms. Mary Waters
Asistant Secretary for Congressional Relations
U.S. Department of Agriculture
213 A Whitten Building
1400 Independence Ave. S.W.
Washington, DC 20250-0001

VIA FAX – URGENT REQUEST

Dear Ms. Waters:

I was recently contacted by a constituent, Ms. Pamela Garelli of Milton,
Wisconsin, regarding the (b) (6)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I would appreciate it if you would look into this matter to determine if anything
can be done – consistent with all laws and regulations – to assist Ms. Garelli in resolving
this problem.

Please address your response to my Racine office and reference my file number
241956. My Racine office address is 304 6th Street, Racine, Wisconsin, 53403. Should
you have any questions about this request, my Office Administrator, Scott Rausch, can be
contacted at (262) 637-0510.

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 SOUTH MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53645
(800) 752-4050 . FAX: (608) 752-4711

KENOSHA
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
5712 7TH AVENUE
KENOSHA, WI 53140
(262) 854-1901 . FAX: (262) 654-2156

RACINE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
304 6TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(262) 637-0510 . FAX: (262) 837-5689

Again, thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul". The letter "P" is large and stylized, with a loop at the top. The letters "a", "u", and "l" are written in a cursive, lowercase style.

Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Enclosure

LEGISLATION OFFICE
IN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031
FAX: (202) 225-3393

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

TOLL-FREE: 1-888-909-RYAN
INTERNET: WWW.HOUSE.GOV/RYAN

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

Privacy Act Release/Casework Request Form

Name: JANELA A. GARELLI E-mail: _____

Address: (b) (6)

City and Zip Code: (b) (6) Date of Birth: (b) (6)

Phone Number (Home): _____ (work): _____ SSN: _____

Agency Involved: USDA - RURAL HOUSING CENTRALIZED SERVICING CTR
PO BOX 66818 ST. LOUIS, MO. 63166

The Problem Is: (attach an additional sheet(s) if necessary) _____

(b) (6)

****Privacy Act Release****

I request and authorize U.S. Representative Paul Ryan to act on my behalf and to receive information from proper officials regarding the matter described above. Congressman Ryan is authorized by me to receive on my behalf all correspondence and information about my case.

Signed: (b) (6) Date: 04-09-05

Please return this completed form to:
Congressman Paul Ryan
304 6th Street
Racine, WI 53403
Phone: (262) 637-0510
Fax: (262) 637-5689

*** Please note that the Privacy Act Release requires that you authorize access to your private records. Your signature above will enable Congressman Ryan to make the necessary inquiries on your behalf.

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 S. MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
(808) 752-4050 . FAX: (808) 752-4711

KENOSHA
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
5712 7TH AVENUE
KENOSHA, WI 53140
(262) 654-1901 . FAX: (262) 654-2156

RACINE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
304 8TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(262) 637-0510 . FAX: (262) 637-5689

APR 04 2005

Message for Congressman Ryan:

Name:

PAMELA GARELLI

Address:

(b) (6)

04-01-05

Phone number

DEAR MR. RYAN,

(b) (6)

SINCERELY,
PAM GARELLI

APR 04 2005

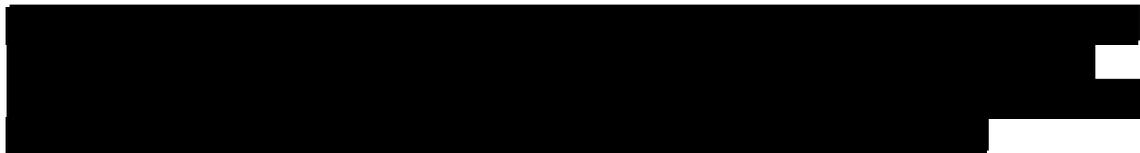
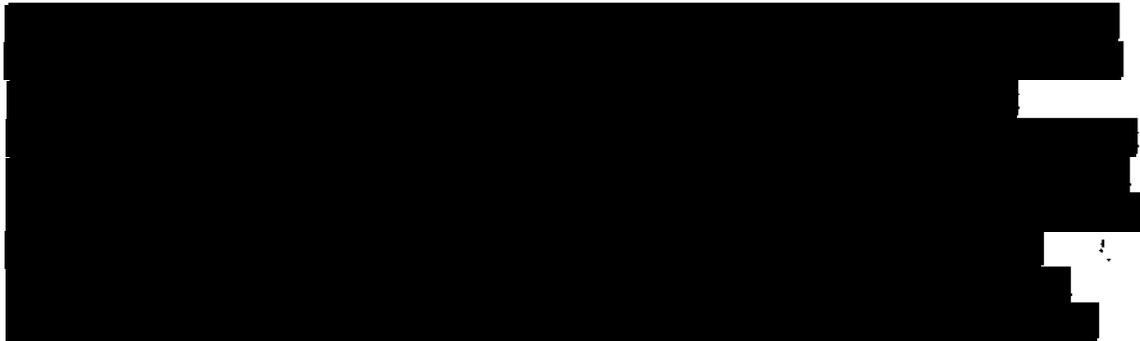
To: USDA Rural Development
Centralized Servicing Center
1520 Market Street FC-214
St. Louis, MO. 63103

Re: Account Number(s) (b) (6)

Attention: Account Representative

Dear USDA,

(b) (6)

A large rectangular area of the document is completely redacted with black ink. The redaction covers approximately four lines of text.A large rectangular area of the document is completely redacted with black ink. The redaction covers approximately six lines of text.A large rectangular area of the document is completely redacted with black ink. The redaction covers approximately three lines of text.A large rectangular area of the document is completely redacted with black ink. The redaction covers approximately seven lines of text.

(b) (6)

in appeal.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Pamela Cesana Garett

(b) (6)

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 28, 2005

The Honorable Mike Johanns
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Mr. Secretary:

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Rita and other adverse weather events, U.S. confectioners and other sugar-consuming industries are facing a dire shortage of sugar to keep their production lines running and their workers employed. The continued closure of a major sugar refinery in Chalmette, Louisiana, which suffered substantial damage from Hurricane Katrina, means that a significant source of refined sugar has been temporarily removed from the U.S. market.

This refinery closure has exacerbated an already tight supply of sugar that requires continuing attention and action on the part of the Department of Agriculture. USDA should be commended for its response to this situation to date, and we are aware that you have taken a number of steps aimed at supplying liquidity to the refined sugar market. However, a number of our constituents own and work for businesses that continue to have serious problems in procuring sufficient quantities of sugar to operate.

Even though sugar suppliers want to meet their customers' needs, in some cases they are unable to do so because sugar is simply unavailable unless users are willing to pay an astronomical amount for this critical ingredient. Even then, transportation and logistical problems constrain the system's ability to get sugar from suppliers to customers. As the fiscal year proceeds, it will be necessary not only to supply the market with more refined sugar, but also to increase the amount of raw sugar imported into the United States for refining.

USDA's "Sugar and Sweeteners Outlook," released on September 29, 2005, effectively argues that the U.S. market is in need of more sugar: "...it would seem probable that raw sugar imports will have to be higher than what is currently shown in the September WASDE." This report also notes that year-end beet sugar stocks are at their lowest amount in 15 years.

The current U.S. sugar supply deficit is widely expected to persist well into the future. The Gulf Coast disaster has meant that some sugar suppliers have been unable to fulfill existing contractual obligations and in other cases, severe transportation bottlenecks have limited access to supplies. Unfortunately, temporary plant closures or other adverse events are possible if the current supply tightness is not rectified by significant action by USDA. Under these circumstances, it is critical that USDA take

additional actions within its authority to offset the approximately 90,000 tons per month of refined sugar output that has been lost while the Louisiana refinery remains closed.

Therefore, we strongly urge you to announce a substantial increase in both the raw and refined sugar tariff-rate quotas (TRQs), so sugar imports can offset the loss of refined sugar from the Louisiana refinery, and so that adequate supplies will be available to the entire refining sector once the Louisiana facility reopens. By taking such action in a timely manner, you will help to ensure a more orderly market that will benefit sugar users and consumers alike.

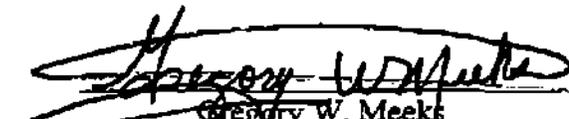
Thank you for your consideration of our request. We look forward to your response.

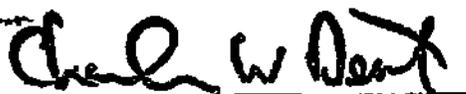
Sincerely,

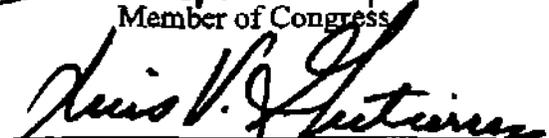

Mark Steven Kirk
Member of Congress

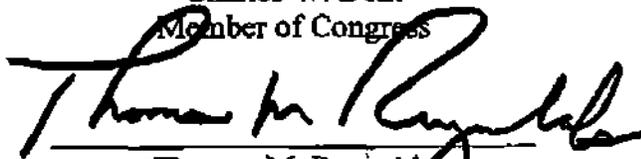

Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

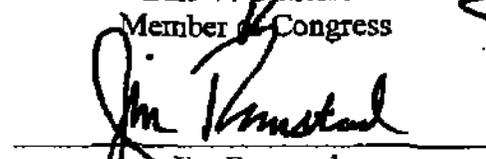

Judy Biggert
Member of Congress

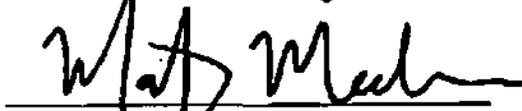

Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress

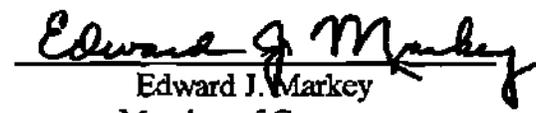

Charles W. Dent
Member of Congress


Luis V. Guterrez
Member of Congress


Thomas M. Reynolds
Member of Congress


Jim Ramstad
Member of Congress


Martin T. Meehan
Member of Congress

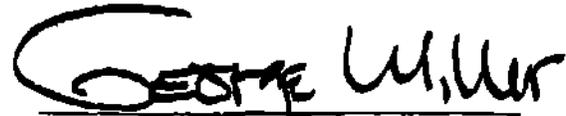

Edward J. Markey
Member of Congress


Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress

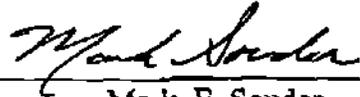

Jim Matheson
Member of Congress



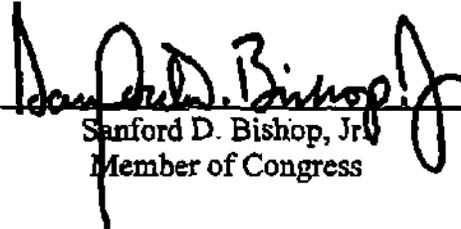
Christopher Shays
Member of Congress



George Miller
Member of Congress



Mark E. Souder
Member of Congress



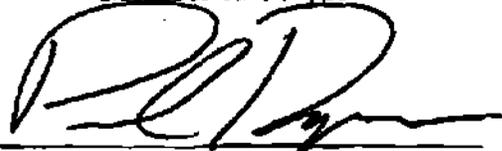
Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress



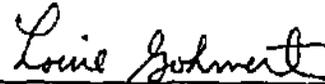
Geoff Davis
Member of Congress



Zach Wamp
Member of Congress



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress



Louie Gohmert
Member of Congress



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 01 2005

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1113 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of October 28, 2005, to Secretary Johanns cosigned by your colleagues, regarding the U.S. sugar supply in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma. I have been asked to reply for the Secretary.

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) recognizes the importance of this matter to manufacturers of sugar containing products across the U.S. industry. As noted in your letter, USDA has already taken actions to facilitate additional supplies of raw and refined sugar to meet urgent market needs in light of the supply disruptions caused by these hurricanes. We recognize the impact of the damage to a major refinery in Chalmette, Louisiana, and other loss of production capacity in the affected areas. We continue to closely monitor the U.S. sugar market and industry fundamentals. Should additional sugar be required, USDA will certainly consider further expansion of sugar imports, as you suggest.

Again, thank you for your letter. A similar reply has been sent to each of your colleagues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J.B. Penn".

J.B. Penn
for J.B. Penn
Under Secretary for Farm and
Foreign Agricultural Services

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 2, 2005

The Honorable Mike Johanns
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave, S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Johanns:

We are writing you today to request that USDA expeditiously promulgate a rule to permit the importation of mature cattle for slaughter and the beef products derived from such animals. Many U.S. beef packers that specialize in the slaughter of older animals still find themselves in an extremely difficult economic situation because cattle more than 30 months of age are not permitted entry from Canada.

The North American beef industry is best served by eliminating technical barriers to trade. Each country has a sovereign right to establish regulations to ensure food safety and protect animal health, but for too often these regulations are inconsistent with the Organization of International Epizootics (OIE) standards and scientific rationale. We agree with rules that are based on scientifically sound control and intervention measures that protect human and animal health, rather than arbitrary rules that inhibit trade and impose unnecessary costs on a country's citizens and its industries. Establishing a uniform set of rules that are consistent with the OIE guidelines is a necessary step to restore trade in cattle and beef products among North American trading partners and the world.

USDA's Foreign Animal Disease Advisory Committee subset, the International Review Team for BSE acknowledged the importance of taking this action when it stated in its report, that the "U.S. should demonstrate leadership in trade matters by adopting import/export policies in accordance with international standards, and thus encourage the discontinuation of irrational trade barriers..."

The U.S. and Canada both require the hygienic removal of all known specified risk materials from the human food supply, a measure that is internationally recognized as the most critical in protecting consumer health. Additionally, mitigation measures have been implemented in concert for more than 15 years in both countries. No case of the human form of BSE, variant Creutzfeldt-Jacob disease has ever been linked to eating American or Canadian beef.

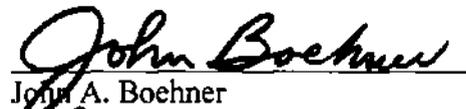
Continuing to limit importation of live cattle to those animals less than 30 months and to restrict the importation of beef products from those animals is without scientific foundation. USDA's Veterinary Services' assessment of its minimal risk rule published in January 2005 properly concluded that importation of beef from cattle over 30 months was scientifically warranted, yet USDA unscientifically excluded the importation of older cattle. The resulting economic inequities continue to adversely impact an important component of the beef industry.

Under OIE guidelines, cattle and beef trade between the U.S. and Canada is permitted. The negative economic impact of the border closure has led some beef processing plants to significantly reduce hours or close indefinitely to absorb the increasing pressure of the current situation, resulting in job loss, reductions in workers' take home pay, and plant closures.

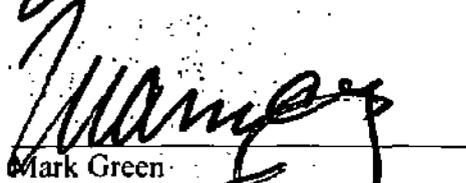
Mr. Secretary, adopting a science-based approach to agricultural trade for the North American market puts us on much stronger ground to demand that other trading partners do the same. Given the minimal risk of BSE and the aggressive mitigation measures implemented in North America, we respectfully request that USDA expeditiously promulgate a rule to permit the importation of mature cattle for slaughter and the beef products derived from such animals. Thank you for your attention to this matter and we respectfully await your timely response.

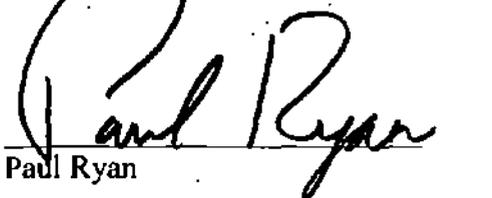
Sincerely,

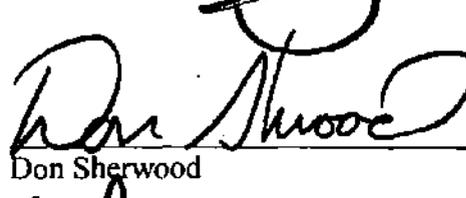

Michael Conaway


John A. Boehner

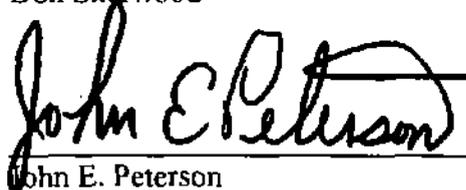

Gil Gutknecht


Mark Green


Paul Ryan


Don Sherwood


Charles W. Dent


John E. Peterson


Charles A. Gonzalez



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

DEC 19 2005

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1113 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of November 2, 2005, to Secretary Johanns concerning the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) current import restrictions on Canadian cattle and beef products.

We recognize the economic difficulties that the U.S. meat packing industry has experienced since the detection of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in Canada. Resuming the import of Canadian cattle over 30 months of age, and beef products derived from such animals, is a top rulemaking priority for USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). APHIS officials have initiated work on the rulemaking and the supporting analyses required, including a thorough risk assessment, economic analysis, and environmental assessment, among other things. Once these documents are complete, USDA expects to publish a proposed rule that will amend current regulations to allow additional imports (including cattle 30 months of age and older) from BSE minimal-risk regions such as Canada, bringing USDA's BSE-related regulations more in line with the World Organization for Animal Health code chapter on BSE. We assure you that we are proceeding as expeditiously as possible.

We believe that our current efforts, in addition to prior rulemaking such as the BSE Minimal-Risk Regions rule that you mention, demonstrate leadership in showing that USDA trade regulations are based on science and that USDA acts in accordance with international guidelines. We hope this information assures you of our commitment to safeguarding American agriculture and ensuring the continuation of science-based trade. We are sending an identical response to all of the Members of Congress who signed your letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chuck Lambert".

Chuck Lambert
Acting Under Secretary
Marketing and Regulatory Programs



FEB 14 2006

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Farm and Foreign
Agricultural
Services

Farm Service
Agency

1400 Independence
Ave. SW
Stop 0501
Washington, DC
20250-0501

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Member, United State House
of Representatives
20 South Main Street, Suite 10
Janesville, Wisconsin 53545

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter dated November 16, 2005, on behalf of the DeLong Company, Inc., regarding the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) denial of their proposal submitted under the transportation differential provisions of Federal Register Notice, Volume 70, Number 192, "Actions Taken to Ease Bulk Grain and Soybean Storage and Transportation Issues Exacerbated by Hurricane Katrina" (Notice). You requested that USDA review the situation and provide any guidance and appropriate steps that the DeLong Company might take in this matter.

Proposals received under the Notice were evaluated by the Commodity Credit Corporation objectively in accordance with the regulations on "Competition in the awarding of discretionary grants and cooperative agreements" found at 7 CFR Part 3015.158. As stated in the Notice, part of the criteria used in evaluating proposals was whether the proposal would have a net positive impact on transportation logjams. After carefully reviewing the information submitted, along with a review of the criteria used under the Notice by USDA, the denial of the proposal remains as issued. We do not dispute that the DeLong Company's proposal met the spirit or intent of the Notice in that they move commodities from inland elevators using inter-modal containers to the West Coast ports in lieu of the commodities moving down the Mississippi River. However, while USDA would have liked to assist all who submitted proposals, the necessity of having to make an immediate impact to relieve pressure on the Mississippi River system, along with limited funds, resulted in accepting only those proposals that reduced bulk shipments destined to travel out of the New Orleans area and redirected those bulk shipments to other regions.

Regarding any further action the DeLong Company can take on this matter, this is the final administrative determination by USDA. The DeLong Company may pursue other legal remedies as it deems appropriate.

Again, thank you for your letter.

Sincerely,

Bert Farrish
Deputy Administrator for Commodity Operations

cc: The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1113 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

USDA is an Equal Opportunity Employer

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1113 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031
Fax: (202) 225-3393

TOLL-FREE 1-888-909-RYAN
INTERNET: WWW.HOUSE.GOV/RYAN

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

December 15, 2005

Ms. Mary Waters
Asistant Secretary for Congressional Relations
U.S. Department of Agriculture
213 A Whitten Building
1400 Independence Ave. S.W.
Washington, DC 20250-0001

Dear Ms. Waters:

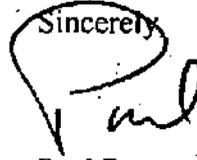
I was recently contacted by a constituent, Jennafer Jackson of Racine, Wisconsin, regarding the concerns she has about a recent decision made by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Chief Administrative Judge.

Enclosed, please find a copy of the e-mail that Jennafer recently sent to my office, which further details her concerns. I would appreciate it if you would look into this matter to determine if anything can be done – consistent with all laws and regulations – to assist Jennafer in addressing her concerns.

Please address your response to my Janesville office and reference my file number 270611. My Janesville office address is *20 South Main Street, Suite 10, Janesville, Wisconsin, 53545*. Should you have any questions about this request, my Constituent Services Representative, Ms. Engel, can be contacted at (608) 752-4050.

Again, thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Enclosure

JANESVILLE

CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 SOUTH MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
(608) 752-4050 Fax: (608) 752-4711

KENOSHA

CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
5712 7TH AVENUE
KENOSHA, WI 53140
(262) 654-1901 Fax: (262) 654-2156

RACINE

CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
304 8TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(262) 637-0510 Fax: (262) 637-5689

Date: 12/03/2005 Time: 18:46

Name: Jennafer Jackson

(b) (6) [Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Thanks,
Jennafer Jackson



United States
Department of
Agriculture

FEB - 9 2006

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

1400 Independence
Avenue, SW
Washington, DC
20250

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Member, U.S. House of Representatives
Suite 10
20 South Main Street
Janesville, Wisconsin 53545

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of December 15, 2005, (file number 270611) on behalf of Ms. Jennafer Jackson concerning the progress of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) enforcement case against John F. Cuneo, Jr., and Hawthorn Corporation.

We recognize Ms. Jackson's interest in expediting this case and appreciate the opportunity to provide an update on this situation. Ms. Jackson may be encouraged to know that thus far, a number of Hawthorn elephants covered under the consent decision and order have been placed with three AWA-licensed and -approved entities: Chris Hamblen, the Elephant Sanctuary, and the Endangered Ark Foundation. In late November 2005, Hawthorn Corporation and the Elephant Sanctuary executed a donative agreement to place nine other female members of the Hawthorn herd at the Elephant Sanctuary's facility in Hohenwald, Tennessee. Regrettably, one of the nine elephants—Sue—died on December 30, 2005. However, you may be encouraged to hear that on January 31, 2006, two of these elephants—Minnie and Lottie—were moved to their new home at the Elephant Sanctuary. They were followed by Queenie and Liz on February 2, 2006. We understand that the other four female Hawthorn elephants will be moved to that facility soon. Discussions with various entities regarding the placement of the remaining Hawthorn elephants continue.

We appreciate your interest in the welfare of these animals and hope this information is helpful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Shea" with a stylized flourish at the end.

W. Ron DeHaven
Administrator

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
NATIONAL APPEALS DIVISION**

In the matter of

EAST TROY SOD FARMS, INC.

And

FARM SERVICE AGENCY

Case No. 2006ED00338

APPEAL DETERMINATION

East Troy Sod Farms, Inc. (Appellant) filed an appeal in which it challenges a Farm Service Agency (FSA) State Committee (STC) adverse decision dated December 14, 2005. The STC reaffirmed a May 31, 2005, determination that granted Appellant 2004 Crop Disaster Program (CDP) benefits on 32.4 acres and denied CDP benefits on 43.0 acres of turf-grass sod. The STC determined the 43.0 acres, not saturated by water in June 2004, that had an outbreak of bent grass (an undesirable weed), is ineligible for CDP benefits since the bent grass outbreak was not due to eligible disaster conditions. The STC contends dryer than normal conditions should have had no or minimal affect on the crop in July and August.

Appellant argues wet weather in the spring, followed by a severe drought adversely affected its sod fields in 2004. Appellant contends it normally harvests the sod from June through October, with August being a slow month. Appellant further contends it was unable to harvest sod in the spring of 2004 due to the wet weather and asserts the subsequent drought made the sod unmarketable. Appellant also asserts it notified the FSA County Office of the damage twice in August, but the loss adjuster did not inspect the fields until December. Appellant acknowledges the only method of controlling bent grass in sod is to apply a non-selective herbicide to the affected areas that would also destroy the sod. Appellant contends the bent grass invaded the sod after the drought damaged the sod and it was prohibited in taking any corrective action until after the FSA adjuster inspected the fields. Appellant requests CDP benefits on the remaining 43.0 acres of sod damaged by drought.

I conclude that FSA was in error by denying Appellant 2004 CDP benefits on the 43.0 acres of turf-grass sod. I base my conclusion on the evidence and arguments submitted by the parties at an in-person hearing held on February 7, 2006, and the program rules that apply to this situation. The rationale for my decision follows:

East Troy Sod Farms, Inc.
Case No. 2006E000338

STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE

The issue is whether FSA correctly applied its regulations in denying Appellant's request for 2004 CDP benefits on 43.0 acres of turf-grass sod. The specific questions I must answer are:

1. Did Appellant's sod farm experience losses resulting from adverse weather (excess moisture and drought) in 2004?
2. Did Appellant timely report 2004 crop damage to the FSA County Office?
3. Is bent grass (weeds) a condition eligible for disaster benefits under the CDP?

FINDINGS OF FACT (FOF)

1. On June 1, 2004, at the request of FSA, an adjuster completed an inspection of Appellant's sod fields. The adjuster's report found the sod in the north end of a nine-acre field looked good with the south end having thin spots with poor quality. The report identified a 26-acre sod field with standing water and the balance of sod acreage in acceptable condition. (*Agency record, pages 70, 84-85, and Appellant exhibit D, pages 1 & 2*)
2. On December 3, 2004, Appellant signed a Notice of Loss and Application for Payment, Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) due to late drought on the 2004 sod. Appellant had previously informed FSA of the loss on August 8, and August 26, 2004. (*Agency record, page 90 and Appellant exhibits A-1 & C*)
3. On December 10, 2004, the FSA adjuster inspected Appellant's sod fields. The adjuster identified harvested acres, reseeded acres, and acreage that was brown and dead or dormant. The adjuster reported "bent grass" was spreading in the majority of the sod fields. (*Agency record, pages 86-87, 96, and Appellant exhibit D, pages 3 & 4*)
4. On December 13, 2004, the FSA County Committee (COC) denied Appellant's application for NAP benefits for 2004 losses on sod. (*Agency record, page 90 and Appellant exhibit C*)
5. On February 22, 2005, as the result of an appeal, the FSA State Committee (STC) overturned the COC denial of Appellant's application for NAP for 2004 losses on sod. The STC determined sod with heavy infestations of bent grass had zero value and had no marketable value. The STC determined the infestation with creeping bent grass was the result of a natural disaster. It determined sod with no production value for loss calculation purposes. Appellant was paid \$71,295.00 in NAP benefits. (*Agency record, pages 91-94*)
6. USDA declared the County in which Appellant's sod farm is located eligible for USDA disaster assistance due to rain, flooding, dry summer weather, and an early frost that occurred from March 18, 2004, through October 8, 2004. (*Appellant exhibit A*)

East Troy Sod Farms, Inc.
Case No. 2006E000338

7. On April 13, 2005, the COC denied Appellant's application for CDP benefits based on a late drought (August 2004 through December 2004). The COC determined the bent grass invasion in the 2004 crop of turf-grass sod was due to poor management and not due to an eligible disaster condition. *(Agency record pages 72-80)*
8. On May 31, 2005, as the result of an appeal of the COC decision, the STC determined Appellant was eligible for CDP payments on 32.4 acres of sod that were saturated with water in June and used a value of zero on those acres. The STC determined 43.0 acres not saturated with water in June, were fully valued for CDP purposes. The STC determined the 43.0 acres with a bent grass outbreak were ineligible for CDP because the bent grass outbreak was not due to eligible disaster conditions. The STC determined bent grass outbreaks can and do occur in sod production outside of natural disaster conditions. The STC determined Appellant was eligible for approximately \$12,788 in CDP payments. *(Agency record, pages 57-67)*
9. On December 14, 2005, as a part of the mediation process, the STC reconsidered its original decision (FSA clarified the correct date of the initial STC decision was May 31, 2005, not April 18, 2005). The STC determined dryer than normal conditions should have had no or minimal affect on the crop in July and August. *(Agency record, pages 31-35)*
10. The Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service (WASS) reported on July 2, 2005, that soil moisture conditions in the area of the State in which Appellant's farm is located as 56 percent surplus and zero percent short. WASS reported on July 16, 2004, that the soil moisture conditions as 22 percent surplus and four percent short, in this same area. *(Agency record, pages 20-25)*
11. FSA reviewed 2004 precipitation data reported by five weather stations in the southeast part of the State. The precipitation ranged from 9.70 to 13.55 inches (May), 3.23 to 7.52 inches (June), 1.01 to 3.38 inches (July), 3.20 to 5.55 inches (August), and 0.28 to 0.64 inches (September 2004). None of the weather stations are located in Appellant's County and the closest one is located approximately ten miles from Appellant's farm. *(Agency record, pages 26-30 and Appellant exhibit F)*
12. NOAA (National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration) /USDA Joint Agricultural Weather Facility indexed the crop soil moisture needs from July 17, 2004, through October 2, 2004. An index of zero (0) indicates favorable moisture, minus one (-1) topsoil moisture short, minus two (-2) abnormally dry, minus three (-3) excessively dry, minus four (-4) potential yields severely cut by dryness, and below -4 as extremely dry, most crops ruined. The 2004 index for the region of the State Appellant's farm is located was: July 17 (0); July 27 (-1); July 31 (-4); August 7 (-1); August 21 (-5); September 4 (-3); September 18 (-10); and October 2 (-10). *(Appellant exhibit B)*

East Troy Sod Farms, Inc.
Case No. 2006E000338

DISCUSSION

Part 11 of Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations (7 C.F.R.) governs the appeal. Seven C.F.R. Parts 1437 (NAP) is interrelated to 7 C.F.R. Part 1479 (2003-2005 CDP published in the *Federal Register*, Volume 70, Number 59, on March 29, 2005) governing the CDP issue on appeal.

Appellant's sod farm experienced losses resulting from adverse weather (excess moisture and drought) in 2004. Seven C.F.R. §1479.102 specifies disaster includes damaging weather such as drought and excessive moisture. On June 1, 2004, an FSA adjuster identified sod fields with standing water. WASS reported soil moisture conditions in the region with a 56 and 22 percent surplus on July 2 and July 16, 2004, respectively. Weather stations reported excessive moisture in May 2004 and substantial precipitation during June 2004 in the area. NOAA/USDA reported a topsoil moisture shortage in the area beginning July 27, 2004, a severe shortage resulting in potential yield cuts on July 31, 2004, and as severely dry, most crops ruined by August 21, 2004. (FOF 6, 10-12) Appellant's sod farm experienced excess moisture and subsequently a drought during 2004. USDA confirmed these conditions by declaring the county eligible for disaster assistance. (FOF 6)

Appellant properly reported 2004 crop damage to the FSA County Office. Seven C.F.R. §1437.10(a) requires at least one producer having a share in the unit to provide a notice of loss in the administrative FSA office for the unit. In addition, §1437.10(d) requires that acreage not harvested remain intact until released by an approved loss adjuster. The regulations do not require completion of any specific form to file a notice of loss. FSA sent an adjuster to Appellant's farm on June 1, 2004. The adjuster identified excessive moisture conditions, but no report of any weed (bent grass) problems. Appellant contacted FSA on August 8, and August 26, 2004, reporting losses occurring in its sod fields. FSA did not send out an adjuster until after Appellant signed a NAP Notice of Loss and Application for Payment (December 3, 2004). Appellant listed in its application, the cause of loss as late drought and the subsequent invasion of bent grass. The FSA adjuster confirmed the presence of bent grass during a December 10, 2004, inspection. This FSA inspection did not establish the presence of bent grass in August 2004. (FOF 1-3) Appellant met its responsibility for providing notice of loss. Based on the delayed inspection, Appellant has met the burden of proving that the bent grass invasion occurred due to the drought.

Bent grass (weeds) is not a condition eligible for disaster benefits or a disaster causing loss under CDP. Section 1479.102 defines a related condition to mean, with respect to a disaster, a condition that causes deterioration of a crop, such as insect infestation, plant disease, or aflatoxin, that is accelerated or exacerbated as the result of damaging weather, as determined in accordance with instructions issued by the Deputy Administrator. Regulations for the NAP are not as restrictive regarding related conditions. See 7 C.F.R. §1437.9(a)(3). FSA correctly determined the infestation of the sod with bent grass is not an eligible cause of loss for CDP. The STC determined for the NAP that the infestation with bent grass was the result of a natural disaster. (FOF 3, 5, & 7-9) Based on the delayed inspection and drought, Appellant has met the burden that the drought resulted in the loss of marketability of the sod and not the subsequent bent grass invasion.

East Troy Sod Farms, Inc.
Case No. 2006E000338

I have considered Appellant's argument that the excessive moisture and subsequent drought adversely affected the sod before the invasion of the bent grass. Appellant's argument is persuasive based on the delayed FSA inspection. There is reason to find FSA erred in its decision.

DETERMINATION

Seven C.F.R. §11.8(e) provides that an appellant bears the burden of proving that an agency's adverse decision is erroneous by a preponderance of the evidence. In this case, Appellant met this burden. The FSA decision to deny 2004 CDP benefits on 43.0 acres of turf-grass sod is erroneous.

This is a final determination of the Department of Agriculture unless a timely request for review is filed.

Dated and mailed this 23rd day of February 2006.



Harold D. Van Beek
Hearing Officer
National Appeals Division

Attachments:

Notice of Right to Request Director Review and/or Copy of Audio Recording
Request for Director Review



Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

July 20, 2006

The Honorable Mike Johanns
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Mr. Secretary:

In January, the Department held an emergency hearing at the urgent request of multiple dairy farmer manufacturing cooperatives and dairy processing companies to review the current make allowances for Class III and Class IV price formulas. However, no action has been taken since that time.

As you know, make allowances are tools within classified pricing formulas that help manufacturers cover the costs associated with turning raw milk into finished products. The fixed make allowances set by the Department have not been updated in six years.

Because the Department wants to be certain it has the best possible data in making a decision, it recently announced it will reconvene the January hearing to gather further information from Cornell University. However, the Department also solicited additional changes to the Class III and Class IV price formulas.

This is a significant issue for the dairy industry. While we appreciate the Department wanting to make a well-reasoned decision in the long-term, we are concerned in the short-term with the losses these cooperatives and companies are experiencing, which prompted their request. Therefore, we urge you to issue an appropriate interim decision on updating these make allowances that will stand until any further evidence is received in support of a final decision.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Gutfreund". The signature is written over a horizontal line.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan O'Rourke". The signature is written over a horizontal line.

Wally

Ron Kind

Mark Kennedy

J. Klein

Candy Kuhl

Paul Ryan

PETE SESSIONS

Don Mason

Leonard Basing

Steve King

Danny L. Davis

Henry E. Brown

Jenny Baldwin

Tom Lahan

Betty McCallum

Martin Olov Sabo

Jim Ouster

John

Tom Peters

Stephanie Joseph

Mac Thy

Jane Camp

Jim Threutal

Jim Thurman

Marjorie

Joe Shy M.D.

Bob Biny

C.W. Foust Jr.



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20250

SEP 12 2006

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1113 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of July 20, 2006, letter signed by you and 29 other Representatives urging the Department of Agriculture (USDA) to issue an interim decision on dairy product make allowances in advance of receiving additional survey data from Cornell University. The Secretary has asked that I reply on his behalf.

USDA fully understands the importance of the make allowances used in the Class III and Class IV product price formulas to cooperatives and proprietary companies operating dairy manufacturing plants. We also appreciate your understanding that a decision of such importance must be based on the best information available.

During the rulemaking hearing on this issue two data sets were submitted to the record—California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) data and Rural Business Cooperative Service (RBCS) data. The CDFA data represent audited manufacturing costs of proprietary and cooperative plants located in California while the RBCS data are compiled from a voluntary survey of certain cooperative manufacturing plants located outside of California. Although we cannot specifically address our concerns regarding these data due to ex parte restrictions, during the hearing proponents of the proposal to increase the make allowances testified that they questioned some aspects of these data presented by RBCS and CDFA. For example, the proponents supported excluding cost data on dry whey and suggested an alternate procedure to arrive at the cost of manufacturing dry whey.

To ensure that the most representative data are available for considering changes to the make allowances, we have determined that it is necessary to reconvene the make allowance hearing to incorporate manufacturing cost data released by Cornell University. The Cornell survey data includes a representative cross-section of plant manufacturing costs for cooperative and proprietary plants ranging in size from small to large.

When USDA issued the notice to reconvene the hearing, we also requested additional proposals to address all aspects of the Class III and Class IV price formulas. We included this request in the Notice of Intent to Reconvene because USDA made a commitment to the industry that if an emergency hearing were held on make allowances, then a hearing addressing the rest of the

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Page 2

Class III and Class IV formula issues would be held quickly and not be delayed by the emergency hearing. Asking for the submission of the additional proposals on the Class III and Class IV price formulas is consistent with that commitment. These proposals are due by September 30.

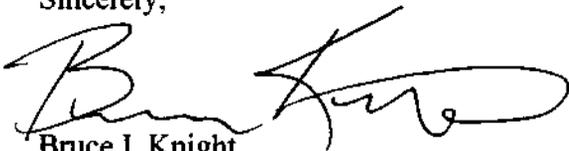
Our request for additional proposals is not delaying the reconvening of the hearing to obtain additional data on make allowances. The hearing is being reconvened beginning at 8:30 a.m. on September 14, 2006, and will be held at the Holiday Inn Select, Strongsville, Ohio.

USDA fully recognizes the urgency of this issue. However, it is important for changes in the make allowances to be based on the best available information. While dairy product manufacturers should have their costs accurately reflected in these pricing formulas, dairy farmers also must be assured that any changes in the make allowances are fully justified. As you know, changes in the make allowances will affect the minimum prices paid by dairy processors and, consequently, the minimum prices received by dairy farmers.

A copy of your letter and this response will be placed in the rulemaking record.

Thank you for writing to share your concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce I. Knight", written over a horizontal line.

Bruce I. Knight
Under Secretary
Marketing and Regulatory Programs

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 14, 2006

The Honorable Mike Johanns
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Johanns:

We urge you to expedite the review of Wisconsin's request for federal disaster declarations for 19 counties that sustained significant crop losses due to the continuing moderate, severe, and even extreme drought across much of Northern and Central Wisconsin. Preliminary reports show that the drought has already had significant impacts on forage, corn, soybeans, and small grains in these areas. Unfortunately, the intensity and area of the damage could increase, so we further request your assistance in quickly considering any additional requests for disaster designations presented by the State of Wisconsin as well.

The preliminary reports from the drought-stricken Wisconsin counties show a very serious situation. Estimates show that more than a million acres have been affected, with losses topping 60% for many crops and the lack of regrowth essentially making the second hay cutting a complete loss in many places. While other crops have seen damage as well, the preliminary estimates for three major crops illustrate the hardships faced by farmers throughout the region - over 280,000 acres of corn, 130,000 acres of soybeans, and 620,000 acres of forage and pasture have seen significant damage as of late July.

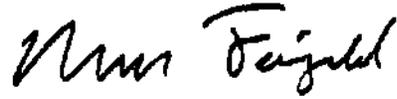
We are very concerned about the hardship caused by this summer's drought, especially considering the unfortunate potential for even more damage as the season continues. In response to the preliminary damage reports, the Governor requested federal disaster declarations earlier this month for 19 Wisconsin counties: Adams, Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Dunn, Iron, Langlade, Lincoln, Marquette, Polk, Price, Rusk, St. Croix, Sawyer, Taylor, Washburn, and Waushara. We urge you to expedite the review and consideration of this request and any supplemental requests in order to provide much needed federal assistance to our state's farmers.

On behalf of farmers in Wisconsin who have suffered from and continue to face disastrous weather conditions this year, we thank you for your attention to this important matter.

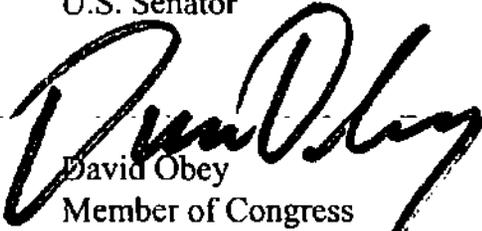
Sincerely,



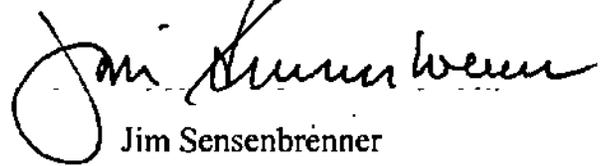
Herb Kohl
U.S. Senator



Russ Feingold
U.S. Senator



David Obey
Member of Congress



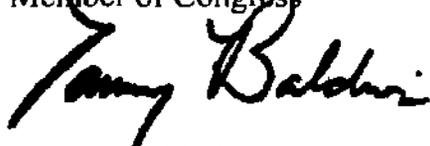
Jim Sensenbrenner
Member of Congress



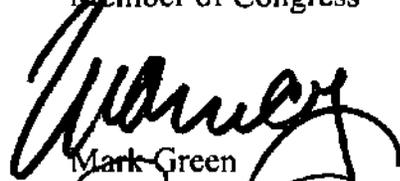
Thomas Petri
Member of Congress



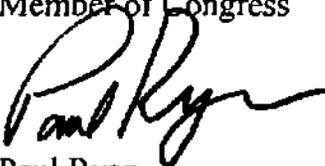
Ron Kind
Member of Congress



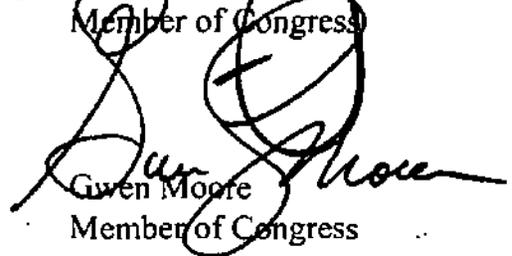
Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress



Mark Green
Member of Congress



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress



Gwen Moore
Member of Congress



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

OCT 04 2006

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1113 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of August 14, 2006, jointly signed by your colleagues, supporting Governor Jim Doyle's request for a Secretarial disaster designation for 19 counties in Wisconsin because of drought.

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) is aware that farmers and ranchers in Wisconsin are experiencing drought conditions. On August 22, 2006, USDA received Governor Doyle's letter dated August 2, 2006, requesting a Secretarial disaster designation for 19 counties in Wisconsin because of drought conditions that occurred beginning on April 1, 2006.

I am pleased to inform you that on August 25, 2006, the Secretary designated 19 counties as agricultural disaster areas as a result of losses caused by drought that occurred from April 1, 2006 and continuing. These counties include:

| | | | | |
|----------|---------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Adams | Burnett | Langlade | Price | Taylor |
| Ashland | Douglas | Lincoln | Rusk | Washburn |
| Barron | Dunn | Marquette | Sawyer | Waushara |
| Bayfield | Iron | Polk | St. Croix | |

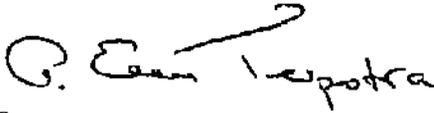
These designations make farmers and ranchers in both primary and contiguous counties eligible for Farm Service Agency (FSA) emergency (EM) loans. Farmers have 8 months from the date of the declaration to apply for low-interest EM loans to help cover the cost of their losses. FSA considers each loan application based on its own merits, taking into account eligibility, the extent of losses, security available, repayment ability, and other regulatory criteria. A copy of the news release is enclosed for your information.

You may be assured that USDA will continue to use every available resource to provide relief to America's farmers and ranchers who have been affected by drought conditions. A similar letter is being sent to your colleagues.

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Page 2

Again, thank you for your letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Gaibler". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

^{for} Floyd D. Gaibler
Acting Under Secretary
Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services

Enclosure



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

February 20, 2007

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on the Budget
U.S. House of Representatives
207 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Ryan:

I am writing to provide additional details regarding funding for the Conservation Security Program (CSP) under the Administration's 2007 Farm Bill proposal.

Recent discussions between staff of the Office of Management and Budget and staff at the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) have indicated that language contained in the Administration's 2007 Farm Bill proposal for CSP does not specify whether the Administration supports a statutory cap on CSP funding. CBO staff indicate that they intend to score our CSP proposal as an open-ended commitment and cost it out on the basis that all eligible acreage that producers want to sign up over the life of the 2007 Farm Bill would be enrolled and funded.

This is not our intention. Specifically, the Administration's proposal for CSP provides for a discrete level of funding that would be allocated by a priority ranking system. We are proposing that \$8.5 billion in mandatory spending over ten years be made available in the Farm Bill for CSP, an increase of \$500 million over the Administration's fiscal year (FY) 2008-2017 baseline estimate. Funding at this level will permit USDA to enroll only about 10 percent of the Nation's eligible land, or 96.5 million acres. This level would apply for the duration of the authorization, and does not reflect an open ended commitment. Accordingly, the Administration's proposal clearly contemplates a limit and, therefore, includes a statutory cap imposed on CSP funding within it.

Our Farm Bill proposals were designed in the aggregate to fit within the President's plan to eliminate the deficit by 2012. An open-ended commitment for CSP is inconsistent with the President's goal. The Administration's proposal provides for a finite increase for CSP that balances deficit reduction needs with other priority needs reflected in the Farm Bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to clarify the Administration's Farm Bill Proposals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Johanns".

Mike Johanns
Secretary

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 29, 2007

The Honorable Mike Johanns
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Mr. Secretary,

In February, the Department announced an interim final decision to change make allowances in the Class III and Class IV milk price formulas. The make allowances announced were lower than dairy manufacturers had requested, stressing the financial position of these manufacturers.

This year, a new concern is adding additional stress to the bottom line of dairy manufacturers across the nation. The rising value of dry whey powder has inflated the Class III milk price. As you know, the price of dry whey is built into the Other Solids price in the Class III formula. And this Other Solids price is at record levels.

Nearly all medium and small sized cheese manufacturers in the U.S. do not manufacture dry whey. These manufacturers make whey protein concentrate or sell liquid whey to other processors. These whey markets do not offer the returns that dry whey now earns, and manufacturer margins are strained.

This is a significant issue for the dairy industry. Dairy manufacturers that must pay the minimum classified milk price are facing diminished or negative margins. We are concerned that USDA's classified pricing may cause cheese manufacturers to fail, and reduce markets for dairy producers' milk.

Therefore, we urge you to amend the interim final decision on manufacturing allowances. The hearing record on these make allowances could not anticipate the recent, sudden increase in the dry whey price. An increase in the make allowances for cheese and dry whey will stabilize the cheese industry, stem widespread losses and assure orderly marketing of milk.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this important issue.

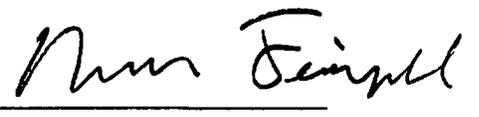
Sincerely,



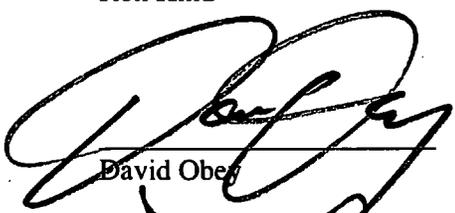
Ron Kind



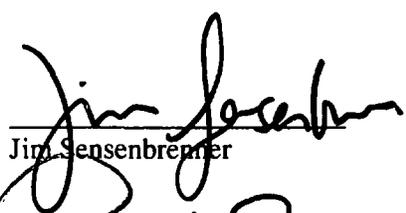
Herb Kohl



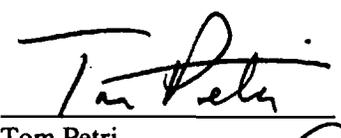
Russell Feingold



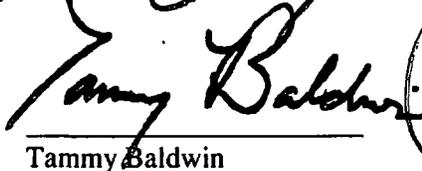
David Ober



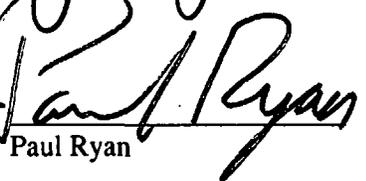
Jim Sensenbrenner



Tom Petri



Tammy Baldwin



Paul Ryan



Gwen Moore



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D C. 20250

JAN 3 2008

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1406 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter earlier this year cosigned by your Wisconsin delegation colleagues in both the U. S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. Your letter concerns Class III and Class IV milk prices with specific reference to the pricing of other solids and your views on make allowances including dry whey.

A public rulemaking hearing was reconvened on July 9, 2007, to consider proposals on the Class III and Class IV price formulas including make allowances that are critical elements of those formulas. The hearing ended on July 11, 2007, with briefs and comments due September 14, 2007, from proponents and opponents of the 16 proposals covered during the hearing. Since the hearing record continues to be an open issue, the Department of Agriculture, in accordance with the Rules of Practice that govern formal rulemaking, is unable to comment further on the substantive issues involved in the hearing record. As an ex parte communication, your letter and this response will be posted to the Agricultural Marketing Service website at www.ams.usda.gov/dairy.

Please be assured that all of the issues considered during the rulemaking process will be considered as expeditiously as possible. Thank you for your continued interest in the Federal milk order program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce I. Knight", written over a horizontal line.

Bruce I. Knight
Under Secretary
Marketing and Regulatory Programs

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 3, 2007

George W. Bush
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to thank you for your strong leadership on the farm bill reauthorization and request that you hold firm in your resolve that any new farm bill must contain meaningful reform of subsidy programs, real investment in rural America, and adherence to fiscal responsibility. With the House-passed bill falling short of these qualities, your continued advocacy will be critical to securing a better result in the Senate.

We commend Secretary Johanns for proposing a bold set of reforms that would go a long way toward strengthening the farm safety net while making it work responsibly for taxpayers. The heart of this safety net would be a counter-cyclical program (CCP) based on farm revenue rather than the current crop target prices. The price-based system has proved ineffective at protecting farmers when they need it most, paying, instead, when farmers already receive large profits and distorting the market by encouraging overproduction to maximize government payouts. In contrast, moving to a revenue-based CCP would ensure that farmers receive assistance only when their actual incomes fall, saving taxpayers nearly \$500 million over the next five years.

Similarly, Secretary Johanns has proposed altering the marketing loan and loan deficiency payment programs to prevent producers from gaming the system by picking and choosing when they can lock in the best loan rates and then selling at the highest profits. Clearly, the program was not intended to work this way by heaping government subsidies on top of corporate profit. Commonsense fixes are needed. Nevertheless, both our Fairness Amendment and an amendment offered by Minority Leader Boehner, which would have made these reforms, were defeated on the House floor.

Your Administration also has advocated for one last major reform to the subsidy structure – eliminating the planting restriction in place for Direct Payment recipients. Recognizing that this reform is not politically viable in Congress, we proposed in our amendment a reduction in Direct Payments over the life of the farm bill with the ultimate goal of phasing out this third leg of the subsidy stool, which was intended to be a temporary transition program in 1996 to wean farmers off of government subsidies. By doing away with these direct subsidy payments, Congress would alleviate the need for the planting restriction, thereby avoiding the more contentious domestic issue and eliminating a possible basis for challenge at the World Trade Organization.

The House ignored the threats our agriculture programs face at the WTO by not only continuing to support these generous subsidy programs, but actually making them more trade-distorting in some instances. The House-passed bill raises target prices for wheat and soybeans, further restricts imports of sugar and regulates domestic production, and increases the payment cap for Direct Payments while eliminating the cap on loan deficiency payments. Our amendment would have addressed all of these problems, and also would have imposed a more meaningful limit on

government payments to the wealthiest producers by lowering the limit of \$1 million dollars in adjusted gross income found in H.R. 2419 to \$250,000, much closer to your Administration's proposed \$200,000 limit.

Finally, the federal crop insurance program is also ripe for reform. Chairman Waxman and Representative Cooper have taken up this issue on the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, where they found that the crop insurance program is one of the most inefficient programs in the federal government. The sixteen private insurance companies that comprise the entire industry made \$2.8 billion in profits off of the American taxpayer in the last five years by gaming the crop insurance system. Furthermore, these 16 companies diverted almost 40 percent, or \$8 billion, of the \$18.7 billion appropriated for farmers since 2000. The House bill took initial steps to address this waste and abuse, more needs to be done.

It is unfortunate that passage of the farm bill has become as controversial as it has. Reauthorization of our farm and food policies offered Congress and the Administration, Democrats and Republicans, urban districts and rural ones the opportunity to come together in support of a forward-looking bill to lead us into the 21st Century. By maintaining an important safety net for our family farms while finding savings through these commonsense reforms, we can redirect our investment in rural America to non-market- or trade-distorting priorities such as conservation funding, rural development, nutrition programs, renewable energy, and specialty crops, and at the same time have deficit reduction. All of this can be accomplished without raising taxes. Although the House did not seize on this opportunity, prospects may be better in the Senate when that body considers the farm bill later this year.

Therefore, we urge you to continue to push for a reform-minded bill that does not rely on budget gimmicks or unnecessary tax increases to fund these vital programs. The American people deserve better.

Sincerely,



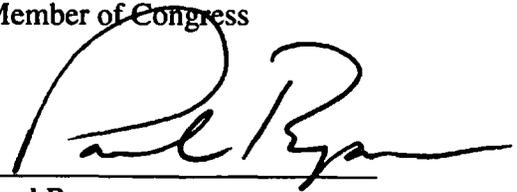
Ron Kind
Member of Congress



Jeff Flake
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress



Jim Cooper
Member of Congress



Dave Reichert
Member of Congress

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 3, 2007

734391

George W. Bush
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

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Sincerely,



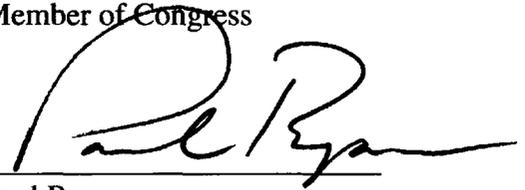
Ron Kind
Member of Congress



Jeff Flake
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress



Jim Cooper
Member of Congress



Dave Reichert
Member of Congress



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

OCT 29 2007

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1113 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of August 3, 2007, to President George W. Bush, cosigned by your colleagues, addressing the Administration's push for a reform-minded farm bill. I appreciate your positive comments on the Administration's efforts to achieve meaningful reform of farm subsidy programs, and also pleased to be able to respond to your letter on behalf of the President.

This Administration could not agree with you more that passing a farm bill should not be as controversial as it has become. We need to look forward and provide our agricultural community with common sense farm programs that maintain a safety net for producers, while redirecting investment of taxpayer dollars to non-distorting programs. Former Secretary Johanns expressed concerns over the House-passed farm bill, just as you have in your letter. We look forward to interacting with Congress in the months ahead and finalizing the next farm bill.

When the 2002 Farm Bill was passed, times were quite different: commodity prices were low, exports had declined for five straight years, and the debt-to-asset ratio was relatively low. It was the first-ever farm bill with an energy title, and it really stepped forward in the conservation arena. Times have changed, however. Commodity prices are now strong for most program crops. Agricultural exports have increased every year, and are expected to reach a record \$79 billion this year. We have the lowest debt-to-asset ratio in recorded history, at 11 percent. Renewable fuels are now a significant contributor to the economy of rural America.

When we put together our 2007 Farm Bill proposals in this new climate, our overall goals were to make our support programs more market-oriented, more predictable, more equitable, and more secure from World Trade Organization (WTO) challenge. Greater predictability means that we want to preserve the strong safety net for farmers and ranchers that the 2002 Farm Bill started to put in place. Greater equity would be achieved by moving away from policies that direct virtually all of our support payments to just a few crops, and helping find ways to assist the 60 percent of U.S. farmers who receive no support. As a result, we have proposed \$7.8 billion in new conservation programs and \$5.5 billion in new direct payments.

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Page 2

The Administration's proposal does not call for the extent of subsidy reform that is in the Kind-Flake Farm Bill proposal. There are, however, a number of points that we have in common. We both believe, for example, that fruit and vegetable planting restrictions should be eliminated. Doing so would increase the market orientation of our farm programs and help protect us from challenge in the WTO. We also share common sentiments on the importance of renewable fuels to our future, the need to expand many of our important conservation programs, the need to strengthen our Food Stamp Program, and other topics.

Once again, thank you for your comments on our Farm Bill Proposals, and let me assure you that this Administration will continue to push for farm bill policy change. I look forward to working with you and others as we move forward in the debate and try to craft the best possible 2007 Farm Bill for all farmers and ranchers. A similar letter is being sent to your colleagues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark E. Keenum", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark E. Keenum
Under Secretary
Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

1400 Independence
Avenue, SW
Washington, DC
20250

DEC 12 2007

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Member, U.S. House of Representatives
Suite 10
20 South Main Street
Janesville, Wisconsin 53545

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of October 12, 2007, (reference number 294816) to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) concerning Mr. Kenneth H. Swan's receipt of an Animal Welfare Act (AWA) licensing application for his business, Swan's Pumpkin Farm.

We appreciate the opportunity to respond to Mr. Swan's concern. The AWA requires that people who exhibit certain animals in circuses, aquariums, and zoos—including petting zoos and petting zoo environments—be licensed with our Agency. Additionally, we require that exhibitors provide their animals with, among other things, an appropriate diet, clean and structurally sound housing, protection from extremes of weather and temperature, and veterinary care. With regard to Mr. Swan's question about licensing versus registration, the AWA requires individuals who use certain animals in research to register with us.

Local personnel with our Agency's Animal Care (AC) program—which enforces the AWA—have been in contact with Mr. Swan and have explained how the AWA pertains to his animals. As AC veterinary medical officer Dr. Dawn Barksdale explained to Mr. Swan, his animals are regulated under the AWA because they are not being used for agricultural purposes but are, rather, being used to attract customers to his pumpkin farm and are in a petting zoo-like environment. We are pleased to report that AC recently processed the AWA license application for Swan's Pumpkin Farm and mailed to Mr. Swan USDA exhibitor's license 35-C-0275.

We recognize that Mr. Swan would have preferred to receive correspondence bearing a personal rather than a stamped signature. However, Dr. Elizabeth Goldentyer, AC's Eastern Region Director, is responsible for signing official correspondence to more than 5,000 licensees, registrants, and applicants annually, so the use of the stamp is a practical necessity. We have assured Mr. Swan that AC staff and officials are personally available, both in the local and regional offices, to speak with him should he have further questions. Dr. Barksdale may be reached at (703) 812-6596; Dr. Goldentyer is



Safeguarding American Agriculture
APHIS is an agency of USDA's Marketing and Regulatory Programs
An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Page 2

also available by telephone at (919) 855-7103. Mr. Swan may also write directly to Dr. Goldentyer at the following mailing address: AC, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA, Suite 200, Main Campus Drive, Raleigh, North Carolina 27606.

We appreciate Mr. Swan's efforts to comply with the AWA and we hope this information is helpful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Snee" followed by a stylized flourish that appears to be "for".

Cindy J. Smith
Administrator



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

4700 River Road
Riverdale, MD
20737

DEC 21 2007

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Member, U.S. House of Representatives
Suite 10
20 South Main Street
Janesville, Wisconsin 53545

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your followup letter of December 5, 2007, to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) concerning Mr. Kenneth H. Swan's receipt of an Animal Welfare Act (AWA) licensing application for his business, Swan's Pumpkin Farm.

We hope that by now you have received our December 12, 2007, response to your previous letter. For your convenience, we are enclosing a copy. In that response, we clarified how the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) pertains to businesses such as Mr. Swan's. We also reported that Mr. Swan had both applied and been approved for an AWA license to exhibit animals at Swan's Pumpkin Farm. We hope that Mr. Swan has received his license (number 35-C-0275) by now. We appreciate Mr. Swan's efforts to comply with the AWA and encourage him to contact us (using the information provided in the enclosed letter) should he have questions in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christina J. Myers". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue horizontal line.

Christina J. Myers
Director
Executive Communications
Legislative and Public Affairs

Enclosure



Safeguarding American Agriculture
APHIS is an agency of USDA's Marketing and Regulatory Programs
An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

1400 Independence
Avenue, SW
Washington, DC
20250

DEC 12 2007

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Member, U.S. House of Representatives
Suite 10
20 South Main Street
Janesville, Wisconsin 53545

Dear Congressman Ryan:

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APHIS is an agency of USDA's Marketing and Regulatory Programs

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Page 2

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We appreciate Mr. Swan's efforts to comply with the AWA and we hope this information is helpful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Smea" followed by a stylized flourish or initials.

Cindy J. Smith
Administrator

745459

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

January 28, 2008

Dear Mr. President:

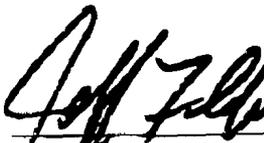
We write to urge you to veto any Farm Bill reauthorization conference report that funds agriculture programs by raising taxes, fails to substantively reform current U.S. farm programs, and is not fiscally responsible.

Your Administration has made clear that continuing the status quo in our domestic farm policy is unacceptable, especially given both the strength of the U.S. farm economy for the foreseeable future and the need for trade compliance. As a result of the hard work of U.S. farmers and ranchers, they are enjoying historically low debt-to-asset ratios, consistently high cash receipts and robust farm export values. With reports of strong prices for program crops likely for at least the next several years, the strength of the U.S. farm sector is unlikely to fade any time soon.

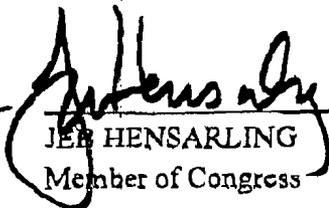
We owe it to farmers and ranchers across the nation to promote policies, such as repealing the Death Tax, expanding U.S. agricultural export opportunities abroad, and increasing production of American sources of energy, that will support U.S. agriculture's competitiveness and continue to move U.S. agriculture policy in a positive direction that supports family farms. However, the House and Senate versions of the Farm Bill move U.S. agriculture policy in the opposite direction. Both versions in conference finance billions in new spending with various tax increases, expand or add new unnecessary farm programs, lack the reforms your Administration has identified as necessary and include numerous trade distorting provisions that would jeopardize existing U.S. trade agreements. In particular, rather than reduce spending in lower priority farm programs, the House and the Senate bills include tax increases that could escalate the tax burden on taxpayers by \$4 billion or more than \$16 billion, respectively. Increasing taxes will harm the economy, and is a particularly bad idea with the increasing evidence that the economy may be weakening.

We support your opposition to Farm Bill provisions that will send U.S. agriculture in the wrong direction and harm the economy instead of reflecting 21st Century farm sector needs and realities. We strongly urge you to veto any Farm Bill conference report that increases taxes on Americans, lacks reforms, distorts trade and fails the test of fiscal restraint.

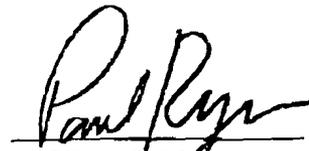
Sincerely,



 JEFF FLAKE
 Member of Congress



 JEFF HENSARLING
 Member of Congress



 PAUL RYAN
 Member of Congress



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

MAR 11 2008

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1113 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of January 28, 2008, to President George W. Bush, cosigned by your colleagues, concerning issues important to the ongoing farm bill debate. In particular, your letter emphasizes the need to move U.S. agricultural policy in a positive direction that supports family farms, while at the same time imposing no new taxes, supporting export opportunities, and offering true reforms. I have been asked to respond to your letter on behalf of the President.

As you indicate, the farm economy is, in aggregate, very strong—in fact, the strongest it has ever been. Net farm income is forecast to be \$92.3 billion for calendar year 2008, up 4.1 percent above the \$88.7 billion farmers are projected to have earned in 2007 and 51 percent above its 10-year average of \$61.1 billion. While livestock producers are facing high input costs, the crop sector is extremely strong. The Department of Agriculture's February *World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates* report raised the season average 2007/08 corn price forecast to \$3.75-\$4.25 per bushel, up from the previous record of \$3.24 in 1995/96. For soybeans, the 2007/08 projected price is \$10.00-\$10.80 per bushel, eclipsing the past record of \$7.83 reached in 1983. The season average price across all classes of wheat is expected to reach \$6.45-\$6.85 per bushel, compared to the prior record of \$4.55 reached in 1995.

In such an environment, this Administration could not agree with you more that the time is ripe for reform. And, like you, we are in complete agreement that good farm policy must go hand in hand with good fiscal policy and that changes to farm policy should not result in new taxes. The importance of moving farm policy in a more market-oriented direction cannot be overstated. We must set our own agricultural policies, not ones that will ultimately be dismantled one piece at a time by the challenges of our trading partners in the World Trade Organization. The reward for choosing reform lies beyond our borders, where rapid economic growth in developing countries is creating millions of new middle class consumers who are buying more agricultural commodities and prepared foods.

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Page 2

Again, thank you for your letter and for your support of the Administration's position on many items important to our Nation's farmers, ranchers, and consumers. A similar letter is being sent to your colleagues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark E. Keenum', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark E. Keenum
Under Secretary
Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

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1113 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
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INTERNET: www.house.gov/ryan

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET
RANKING MEMBER

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

February 14, 2008

Lowell Randel
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations
United States Department of Agriculture
212A Whitten Building
1400 Independence Ave, S.W.
Washington, DC 20250-0001

Dear Mr. Randel:

I was recently contacted by a constituent, Laura Gentele of (b) (6)

I would appreciate it if you would look into this matter to determine if anything can be done – consistent with all laws and regulations – to assist Laura in resolving this problem. Please review the enclosed documents detailing Laura's difficulties.

Please address your response to my Janesville office and reference my file number 296600. My Janesville office address is 20 South Main Street, Suite 10, Janesville, Wisconsin, 53545. Should you have any questions about this request, my Constituent Services Center, can be contacted at (608) 752-4050.

Again, thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Enclosure

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Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 1, 2008

The Honorable Edward Schafer
 Secretary of Agriculture
 Room 200-A, Whitten Federal Building
 1400 Independence Avenue, SW
 Washington, D.C. 20250

Secretary Schafer:

As leaders of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, we are writing to express our concern about the substantial delay of implementing a final Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) rule and its adverse impact on cervid farming across the nation. The final rule for *Chronic Wasting Disease Herd Certification Program and Interstate Movement of Farmed or Captive Deer, Elk, and Moose* (71 FR 41682-41717, Docket No. 00-108-3) was published on July 21, 2006, with an original implementation date of October 19, 2006. However, the subsequent rescission of this rule and the continued delay of an updated final rule would mean damage to this crucial farming industry will continue indefinitely.

Due to a lack of federal regulation, deer, elk, and moose farms throughout the United States currently exist under a patchwork of state herd certification programs. The lack of continuity of herd certification programs greatly hinders – or even prevents – interstate commerce in the industry. The cervid farming industry accounts for revenues of \$3 billion annually nationwide; and yet, individual farmers are facing dire circumstances as they are prevented from selling or buying breeding stock or commercial animals due to restrictions on the interstate shipment of cervids imposed by the various state CWD programs. Federal regulations establishing uniform requirements for animal identification, testing and monitoring, herd management, and movement of animals in and out of herds is absolutely necessary if cervid farmers are able to operate their agribusiness just as producers of other commercially-produced livestock species.

Establishing a final rule for herd certification programs will help to eliminate Chronic Wasting Disease from farmed and captive cervid herds in the United States. A federal rule has been in development since 1997, percolating through the exhaustive regulatory process for the last ten years. The cervid farming industry strongly suggests that the Department of Agriculture implement a CWD rule immediately.

We thank you for your agency's hard work in planning a CWD herd certification program, and appreciate your consideration of our comments. We look forward to an update on the process of this rulemaking at your earliest convenience.

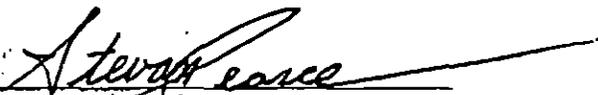
Sincerely,



Representative Paul Ryan
 Co-Chair, Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus



Representative Ron Kind
 Co-Chair, Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus



Representative Steve Pearce
 Vice Chair, Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus



Representative Dan Boren
 Vice Chair, Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

JUL 07 2008

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Co-Chair, Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus
U.S. House of Representatives
1113 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of May 1, 2008, regarding the final rule, "Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Herd Certification Program and Interstate Movement of Farmed or Captive Deer, Elk, and Moose."

We appreciate the opportunity to update you on the final rule's status. As you know, our Agency delayed the rule's implementation in response to petitions we received in 2006 from the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, National Assembly of State Animal Health Officials, and U.S. Animal Health Association. The petitions challenged certain provisions in the rule and requested a stay in its implementation. In November 2006, we published the petitions for public comment, and in June 2007 we requested additional information from States regarding restrictions on the movement of cervids entering their States.

Since then, we have carefully studied the comments and information received. Currently, we are completing a draft of a new supplemental proposed CWD rule that addresses the concerns voiced in the petitions, as well as other issues. We intend to publish this new supplemental proposed rule for public comment later in 2008 and hope to finalize and implement the rule in 2009. While we share your concerns regarding the delay in the rule's implementation, we believe that it is critical to resolve the issues raised by the States regarding interstate movement and surveillance requirements. In order to be effective, this rule must be implemented as a Federal-State-industry cooperative program that meets the needs of all stakeholders.

We recognize the impact of CWD on the cervid farming industry, and we assure you that finalizing this rule is important to the Department of Agriculture. We are sending similar letters to your colleagues.

Thank you again for your letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Schafer", written in a cursive style.

Edward T. Schafer
Secretary

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

754172

May 12, 2008

President George W. Bush
The White House
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. President:

We write in support of a veto of the pending Farm Bill reauthorization conference report, should it remain bloated with spending and fail to address the criteria you have spelled out for much-needed reform.

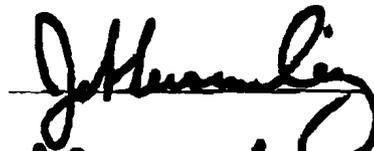
According to a recent *Washington Post* story, "top priorities for the White House include tightening limits on federal farm payments to wealthy individuals; closing a loophole that allows farmers to sell crops above the support price and still collect a subsidy; modifying a plan that would guarantee U.S. sugar growers 85 percent of the domestic sugar market through government purchase of excess imported sugar; and adjusting U.S. farm policy to bring it into compliance with international trade treaties."

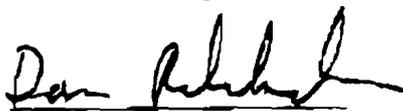
Your Administration made clear from the outset of the reauthorization debate that continuing the status quo in our domestic farm policy is unacceptable. Taxpayers should not be forced to foot the bill for farm payments to millionaires, persistent subsidy loopholes, or worsening an already troublesome sugar program. Given record food prices and the sustained strength of the U.S. farm sector, we agree with your recent comment that "this is the right time to reform our nation's farm policy by reducing unnecessary subsidies."

We support a veto of a Farm Bill conference report that misses the mark on fiscal restraint or fails to satisfy your requirements for reform.

Sincerely,







United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

JUN 25 2008

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1113 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of May 12, 2008, to President George W. Bush, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding your support for the Administration's veto of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008. I have been asked to respond to your letter.

The President has stated many times that a new farm bill that fails to reform farm programs at a time when farm income and crop prices are setting records is unacceptable. The 2008 Farm Bill Conference Report contains many wasteful and unnecessary provisions. For example, a \$170 million earmark for the salmon industry was slipped into this bill at the last moment. Congress also included last minute changes to the Average Crop Revenue Election farm subsidy program that likely will result in tens of billions of new government outlays in the future. It is irresponsible to ask the American taxpayer, who is struggling to make ends meet, to subsidize those farmers who make more than a million dollars a year.

Congress's override of the President's veto means that the Conference Report provides the statutory framework for our programs through 2012. We at the Department of Agriculture (USDA) strongly support our Nation's farmers and ranchers, and are working very hard to implement the law's provisions in a timely manner. USDA will be issuing regulations, *Federal Register* notices, and other official documents starting later this summer that provide specific definitions and implementation details regarding farm bill provisions.

Again, thank you for writing and for your continued support for policy reform. A similar letter is being sent to your colleagues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "E. Schafer", written in a cursive style.

Edward T. Schafer
Secretary

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

1601706
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET
RANKING MEMBER

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

December 11, 2008

President-elect Barack Obama
451 6th St., NW
Washington D.C. 20001

Dear President-elect Obama:

We applaud your recent statements indicating that you will work to combat waste in our nation's farm programs. As leaders of the effort to achieve reform in American agricultural policy, and we would like to work with you to achieve that result.

The ongoing financial crisis in the United States and the Federal government's response to it has put a tremendous strain on the Federal budget. The Fiscal Year 2008 (FY2008) budget deficit was \$455 billion, and it appears the FY2009 budget deficit could exceed \$1 trillion. Given these circumstances, we agree with you that we must scrutinize the Federal budget line-by-line to eliminate waste and to reduce spending for non-essential, low-priority, and low-performing programs.

The recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) report on Federal Farm Programs that you cited in a recent press briefing makes it abundantly clear that the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) process for examining payments to farmers is not adequate and that a great deal of waste is occurring. As you know, the GAO's report found that over 2,700 individuals whose earnings exceeded \$2.5 million received subsidies from the Federal government, many of whom are not farmers at all. To make matters worse, the USDA stated in its own databases that at least 87 of these individuals were ineligible for payments, but made them anyway. We support your willingness to address this problem and look forward to working with you on this important task.

We would also encourage your Administration to take its scrutiny of our farm programs a step further. In addition to reducing waste in subsidy programs as they are currently structured, we should also reform these programs to reduce unnecessary, low-priority spending. Far too much of our nation's agricultural spending is targeted toward large corporate entities and does not help the family farmers with the greatest need for assistance.

For example, under the current Farm Bill, households with an adjusted gross income (AGI) of up to \$1.5 million per year would remain eligible for payments. Worse yet, one can combine on- and off-farm income in such a way that households making up to \$2.5 million would be eligible. This is clearly not the best use of taxpayer dollars. A

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(262) 637-0510 FAX: (262) 637-5689

more reasonable limit of \$250,000 AGI, as we proposed earlier this year, would result in considerable budgetary savings while also ensuring that an adequate safety net for farmers remains in place. We encourage you to propose reforms of this nature.

In this time of economic hardship and mounting Federal budget deficits, we are very encouraged by your recent comments about the need to eliminate waste in USDA programs and look forward to working with you to address this problem. We sincerely hope you consider the benefits of going further and implementing serious reforms to our farm programs that will provide an adequate safety net while yielding savings and ensuring taxpayers are not subsidizing wealthy agribusinesses at the expense of everyone else.

Sincerely,



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress



Ron Kind
Member of Congress



Jeff Flake
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

APR 20 2009

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1113 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of December 11, 2008, to President Barack Obama, cosigned by your colleagues, encouraging the Administration to eliminate waste, reduce spending, and reform farm programs. Your letter was referred to the Department of Agriculture (USDA) for a response.

One of the goals of this Administration is to make certain that USDA payments are not issued to individuals and entities that exceed income eligibility limits established by law. The goal is to limit excessive payments while providing for fairness to family farmers.

I am pleased to inform you that on March 19, 2009, I announced that USDA and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) have begun efforts to ensure that high income individuals and entities who request USDA payments meet income limits set forth in the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill). USDA will use income data provided by IRS to validate payment eligibility. However, prior to obtaining this information from IRS, a written release from each producer or payment recipient will be required. You may be assured that FSA will adhere to all disclosure and Privacy Act provisions.

Additionally, the President's budget proposed two types of reductions in payments to large farmers: A limit on farm commodity payments of \$250,000 per farmer, including price support payments; and a phase-out of Direct payments to farmers with farm sales of greater than \$500,000 per year.

Again, thank you for your letter. A similar letter is being sent to your colleagues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Vilsack", written in a cursive style.

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture
Rural Development

DEC - 4 2009

Honorable Paul Ryan
Member, United States House
of Representatives
216 6th Street
Racine, Wisconsin 53403

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter dated July 10, 2009, regarding your constituent's concerns relating to (b) (6)

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this inquiry. If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judith A. Canales". The signature is written in a cursive style.

JUDITH A. CANALES
Administrator
Business and Cooperative Programs

1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250
Web: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>

Committed to the future of rural communities.

"USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender."
To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD).



United States Department of Agriculture
Rural Development

DEC - 4 2009

Honorable Paul Ryan
Member, United States House
of Representatives
216 6th Street
Racine, Wisconsin 53403

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter dated July 10, 2009, regarding your constituent's concerns (b) (5)

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this inquiry. If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judith A. Canales". The signature is written in a cursive style.

JUDITH A. CANALES
Administrator
Business and Cooperative Programs

1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250
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United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

JAN 29 2010

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Ranking Member
Committee on Budget
U.S. House of Representatives
207 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-6065

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of December 17, 2009, cosigned by your colleagues, in which you urge the Department of Agriculture (USDA) to take appropriate actions to reduce fraud, waste, and abuse in the Federal crop insurance program through the re-negotiations of the Standard Reinsurance Agreement (SRA) between the approved insurance providers and the USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA).

The first draft of the new SRA for 2011 was issued by RMA on December 4, 2009, for industry comment. It specifically addresses the concerns expressed in your letter through a number of aggressive changes to the current SRA, including restructuring (enclosed).

We expect the changes incorporated in the first draft SRA, when finalized for the 2011 reinsurance year, will result in a much stronger crop insurance program—a program that will be more responsive to farmers and ranchers, fair and reasonable to approved insurance providers, and a good value for taxpayers.

Again, thank you for your letter. A similar letter is being sent to your colleagues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Vilsack", written over a circular stamp.

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary

Enclosure

Changes to the Current SRA and Restructuring

The following are the current changes to the SRA, including restructuring:

- The Administrative and Operating (A&O) subsidy provided to approved insurance providers to more closely align government expenditures with actual delivery costs, as recommended in the Government Accountability Office (GAO) study of April 2009. The restructuring uses a ten-year average price for major commodities to determine a reference amount per policy for the A&O subsidy. This change will effectively “roll back” the excessive A&O payments of the past few years caused by high commodity prices to more reasonable levels;
- The reinsurance fund for the program’s riskiest policies to ensure that all approved insurance providers have a more significant stake in the outcome for these policies, similar to private auto insurance. This change is expected to bolster program integrity and reduce waste, fraud, and abuse;
- The reinsurance fund for the program’s most profitable business so that approved insurance providers can expect to earn reasonable underwriting gains, but not the excesses of recent years. The Milliman study you cited in your letter provided RMA with the analytical basis for determining a “reasonable” amount of underwriting gains; and
- The reinsurance fund for the most profitable business to include features that rebalance underwriting performance across the country. The GAO study specifically attributes excessive underwriting gains in certain States as the primary cause for incidences of illegal rebating and other marketplace problems. At the same time, other areas of the country with poor underwriting performance can lack sufficient service. The rebalancing feature of the SRA contained in the first draft will reduce incentives in “over-served” states to discourage the types of illegal activities cited in the GAO study while, at the same time, provide increased incentives for more widespread program expansion in underserved areas.



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

SEP 23 2010

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1113 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of July 26, 2010, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding S. 1241 and H.R. 2031. I apologize for the delayed response.

Your letter states that the legislation would lessen the burden on small film crews by allowing them to pay a reasonable annual fee to film on Federal lands. The bills would direct the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture to require annual permits and assess annual land use fees of \$200 for commercial filming on Federal lands involving a crew of five persons or fewer. The bills also would allow a film crew to obtain an annual permit and pay a single land use fee regardless of the number and location of shoots, film crew size, equipment used, resource management needs, and length of filming.

The U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) testified at the April 28, 2010, hearing before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Public Lands and Forests, that DOI could not support S. 1241. At that same hearing, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) also testified that it could not support S.1241. Like H.R. 2031, S. 1241 would inhibit DOI's and USDA's ability to manage Federal lands in the best interest of the American people.

For the past 5 years, USDA has been coordinating with DOI to develop an interagency fee schedule for commercial filming, which would be used nationally by both Departments on lands under their respective jurisdiction. The proposed interagency fee schedule would create fee categories for small film crews and would allow the agencies to retain the authority to issue and condition permits to protect visitors and resources, while providing market value to the American people for the use of Federal lands, as required by the commercial filming statute, 16 U.S.C. AS01-6d. The proposed interagency fee schedule would be sensitive to the needs of small businesses, especially important in these difficult economic times, by providing the option to small film crews to pay a nominal daily or monthly fee to fit the specific needs of the film crew. A single annual permit with a flat \$200 annual fee, irrespective of the number and location of

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Page 2

shoots, film crew size, equipment used, resource management needs, or length of filming, as proposed by S. 1241 and H.R. 2031, would not represent market value for the use of Federal lands and would not be in the best interest of the American taxpayer.

The proposed fee schedule is currently undergoing internal clearance within DOI prior to its publication in the Federal Register for public notice and comment. USDA plans to adopt this fee schedule through its own rulemaking, thereafter; we look forward to continuing to work with you on this issue.

Again, thank you for writing. A similar response is being sent to your colleagues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Wilsack', written in a cursive style.

Thomas J. Wilsack
Secretary

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 26, 2010

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

We are writing concerning companion pieces of legislation S. 1241, sponsored by Senators Inhofe, Tester, Crapo, and Risch, and H.R. 2031, sponsored by Congressmen Boren, Miller, Ryan, Ross, Putnam, Chaffetz, Courtney, and Young. These bills attempt to lessen the burdens on small filming crews on public lands by amending Public Law 106-206 to simply allow small crews to pay a reasonable annual fee to be able to film on public lands. These bills are strongly supported by the Professional Outdoor Media Association and thirty-three sportsmen's and conservation organizations.

Last Congress, Congressmen Boren and Young led the work on this legislation introducing H.R. 5502 which received a hearing in the House Natural Resources Committee. On April 28, 2010, the Senate Subcommittee on Public Land and Forests of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee held a hearing on S. 1241.

At the April 28th hearing, the Department of the Interior testified that it could not support S. 1241 and identified issues such as the need for federal land management agencies to be able to manage commercial filming and know the locations and duration of filming projects, manage disruption to other visitors of federal lands, ensure areas are not overused, evaluate the appropriateness of filming in certain areas, and further testified that commercial filming crews may take advantage of the new special permit authorized in S. 1241 and H.R. 2031. Finally, the Department testified that it may have limited staff available to monitor all the filming which may occur and that \$200 may not be sufficient reimbursement for the appropriate staff time involved and administrative costs. However, the Department testified that it wished to work to address these concerns.

We can all agree that our nation's public lands are a valuable natural resource, and the professional outdoor media industry is a valuable way to bring awareness to our nation's resources through documentaries, sporting programs, and other productions. Public Law 106-206 requires the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture to establish a permit and reasonable fee to commercially film on federal lands, and it allows the Departments to recover costs associated with filming projects.

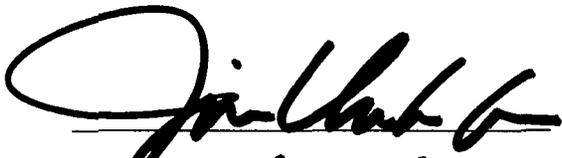
S. 1241 and H.R. 2031 do not change the purpose of Public Law 106-206. Instead, these bills attempt to address the inconsistent implementation of Public Law 106-206 on federal lands for small filming crews which has been recognized by many small filming producers from around the country.

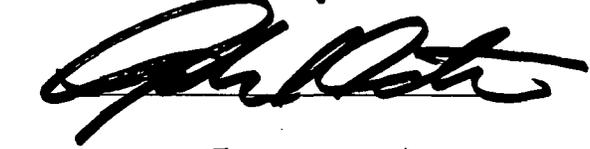
The intent of S. 1241 and H.R. 2031 is not to remove the Department's supervision of filming on federal lands permits. We believe Public Law 106-206 was intended to primarily provide the Department a way to permit major filming operations and the footprint they would make on federal lands. We are simply interested in finding a way, statutorily or administratively, to allow small filming crews to access federal lands through a more standardized manner for a reasonable fee without being charged by the day and allow the Department to continue its responsibility of maintaining our federal lands.

Recently, the Forest Service issued new interim guidance concerning filming in wilderness areas, and it is working toward issuing permanent rules by the end of next year. This seems like an appropriate opportunity to also review the Department of Agriculture's commercial filming rules on all lands subject to Public Law 106-206 to ensure consistency, access, and reasonable costs for small filming crews.

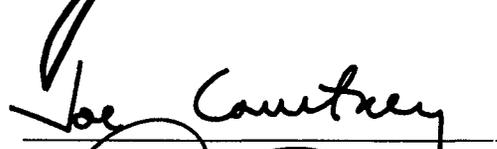
We appreciate your attention to this matter and appreciate your prompt response.

Sincerely,







Penny Bellamy
Mick Row
C. B. M.

Jeff Miller
K. M. H. 27

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 1, 2010

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

We are writing to express our concerns regarding the economic analysis for the proposed rule, published in the *Federal Register* by the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) on June 22, 2010, on the marketing of livestock and poultry under the Packers and Stockyards Act.

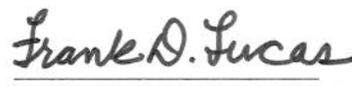
In the 2008 Farm Bill, Congress directed the Department to promulgate a discrete set of regulations under the Packers and Stockyards Act. However, in doing so, GIPSA also included additional proposed regulations that greatly exceed the mandate of the Farm Bill. Such a broad rule that extends so far beyond Congress' direction in the Farm Bill and that would precipitate major changes in livestock and poultry marketing requires a vigorous economic analysis. The analysis contained in the proposed rule fails to demonstrate the need for the rule, assess the impact of its implementation on the marketplace, or establish how the implementation of the rule would address the demonstrated need.

This proposed rule is sweeping in its scope and would have major consequences in the marketing of livestock and poultry for producers and processors of all sizes. In order for Congress and the public to evaluate this rule and its implications with full transparency, a thorough economic analysis is necessary. Our constituents need this analysis in order to participate in the rulemaking process in a meaningful way. We are asking USDA's Office of the Chief Economist to provide such an analysis, specifically addressing the above concerns.

Your prompt response to this request will be appreciated.

Sincerely,


Collin C. Peterson


Frank D. Lucas


David Scott


Randy Neugebauer

Mark Inglis

Paul Simpson

Pat Trill

Bob

Hyman Gendins

Fawn P. Hill

Gregg Harper

Henry Auller

John H. Case

John R. Kelly Jr.

Phil Kane

John Krumholz

Michael T. McCard

Wally Herger

Ron Paul

Carlson

R. Brown

John F. Kennedy

Joseph P. ...

Jean Schmidt

Dwight P. Roe

Thomas P. ...

Scott Murphy

Ammon

Ed A. Lutz

Amos

Brett Guthrie

Larry Kissell

Pete Olson

Boehly

Sam Farr

Ting

Allen Boyd

Arthur P. Carg

John S.

Adrian Smith

Peter Proskam

Louis Lehman

Brad Ellsworth

Ji-Jah

A. Kirkpatrick

Steve King

John Kline

Jerry Moran

Joe Boston

[Signature]

Mike McIntyre

[Signature]

Bill Foster

[Signature]
MO-6

John Boozma

Joe Donely

K.uyildiz

Steve Austin

Michael H. Mahan

Tom Graves

[Signature]

Virginia Foxx

Mike Coste

John Spratt

[Signature]

John Rooney

Robert E. Jatta

[Signature]

Dennis W. Childers

[Signature]

Tom Vilsack

Roy Blunt

Jim Cooper

Marion Berry

Lee Jones

Jack Kingdon

Jim Matheson

Tim Holden

Jimmy Costello

Ed Whitfield

Lamar Smith

Tom Salham

Bob Goodlett

Peter J. Virdon

Rich Simpson

Con D. Rohy

Walter B. Jones

Bennie Thompson

Harold Royer

Chet Edwards

Bill Owens

Max Baer

Kevin McCarty

Alan Thulby

Armando Bump

Todd Tichet

Sam Cole

Shirley Blum

John Hoekstra

Al SX

Paul Rys

John Tut

Hann Teague

Chris Alby

Rory Walden

Gann Emerson

John Sun (ILH)

Rubin Hengjira

Kathy Dahken

Van Burton

Chit Bostan

Pat Elmer

Ed LT

Eric Parker





United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

OCT 15 2010

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U.S. House of Representatives
1113 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of October 1, 2010, regarding the Department of Agriculture's Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration's (GIPSA) proposed rule published on June 22, 2010. The proposed rule encompasses sections 11005 and 11006 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill) and seeks to respond to concerns raised by producers across the country about certain practices in the livestock marketplace.

The proposed rule has started a dialogue on a number of complex issues in the livestock and poultry marketplace. The proposal is a first step in an important process that will include serious consideration of the public comments and further cost-benefit analysis based on those comments. Just as you do, I want a workable, feasible, and commonsense rule, which is why we extended the comment period to 150 days to allow stakeholders additional time to comment on the proposal.

You requested a comprehensive economic study of the proposed rule. Beyond the cost-benefit analysis we have conducted for the proposed rule, we look forward to reviewing the public comments to inform the Department if all factors have been properly considered, if or how changes should be incorporated, and to aid more rigorous cost-benefit and related analyses pursuant to the rulemaking process.

There are two requirements that outline the process for cost-benefit analyses in rulemaking. Under Executive Order 12866, the issuing agency provides an assessment of the potential costs and benefits of the regulatory action. Under the Regulatory Flexibility Act, agencies consider the impact of their regulatory proposals on small entities, analyze effective alternatives that minimize small entity impacts, and make their analyses available for public comment. GIPSA conducted both of these analyses, available on pages 35345 to 35349 of the Federal Register notice or on GIPSA's Web site.

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Page 2

To ensure GIPSA has all relevant information and data to conduct further cost-benefit analysis, GIPSA solicited specific comments in the proposed rule no fewer than eight times about aspects of the proposal's costs and benefits and their magnitudes. In addition to those solicitations, GIPSA invited comments on potential unforeseen consequences of the proposed regulations, the related magnitudes of expected costs and benefits, and whether all types of cost-benefit categories had been considered.

Again, I appreciate your views and interest in the GIPSA proposed rule.

Sincerely,



Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1113 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031
FAX: (202) 225-3393

TOLL-FREE: 1-888-909-RYAN (7926)
INTERNET: www.house.gov/ryan

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET
RANKING MEMBER

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH
SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT

November 30, 2010

Ms. Krysta Harden
Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Congressional Relations
Office of Congressional Relations
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-0002

Dear Ms. Harden:

I was recently contacted by a constituent, June Kaplan of (b) (6) on her enclosed Privacy Act Release form and accompanying documents.

I would appreciate it if you would look into this matter to determine if anything can be done – consistent with all laws and regulations – to assist Ms. Kaplan by addressing her comments and concerns.

Please address your response to my Kenosha office and reference my file number 436437. My Kenosha office address is 5455 Sheridan Road, Suite 125, Kenosha, Wisconsin, 53140. Should you have any questions about this request, my Constituent Services Representative, Nathan Schacht, can be contacted at (262) 654-1901.

Again, thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,


Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Enclosure

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

Privacy Act Release/Casework Request Form

Name: June L. Kaplan E-Mail: _____

(Glen Perry Jr Child)
I prefer to receive correspondence by E-mail (if provided above): YES _____ NO

Address: (b) (6)

City: (b) (6)

Phone (Home): (b) (6)

Social Security Number: _____ Veteran's Number: _____

Agency Involved: USDA

The Problem Is: (attach an additional sheet(s) if necessary) (b) (6)

(b) (6)

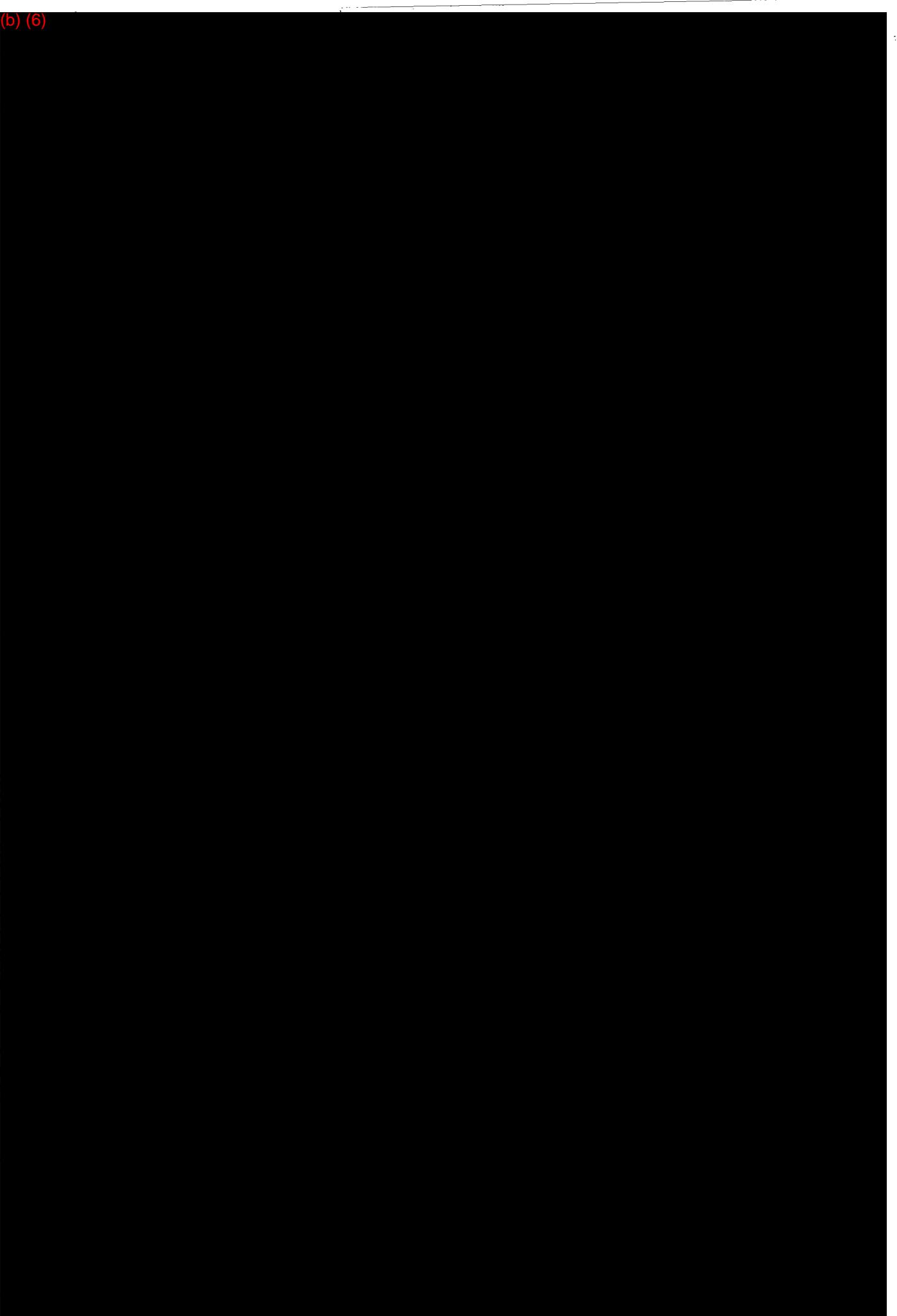
I request and authorize U.S. Representative Paul Ryan to act on my behalf and to receive information from proper officials regarding the matter described above. Congressman Ryan is authorized by me to receive on my behalf all correspondence and information about my case.

Signed: (b) (6) Date: 11/18/2010

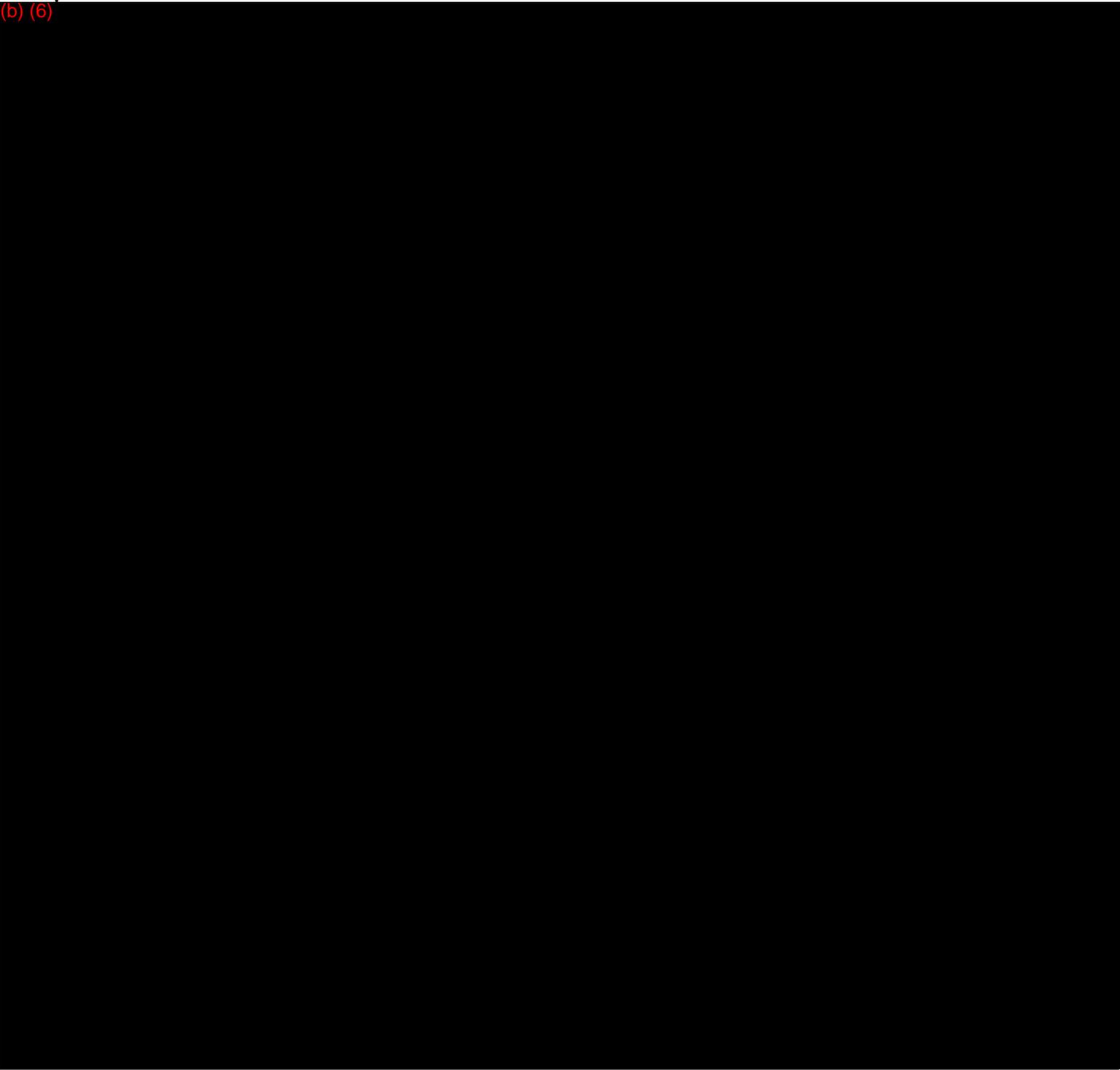
Please return this completed form to:
Congressman Paul Ryan
5455 Sheridan Road, Suite 125
Kenosha, WI 53140
Phone: (262) 654-1901
Fax: (262) 654-2156

*** Please note that the Privacy Act Release requires that you authorize access to your private records. Your signature above will enable Congressman Ryan to make the necessary inquiries on your behalf.

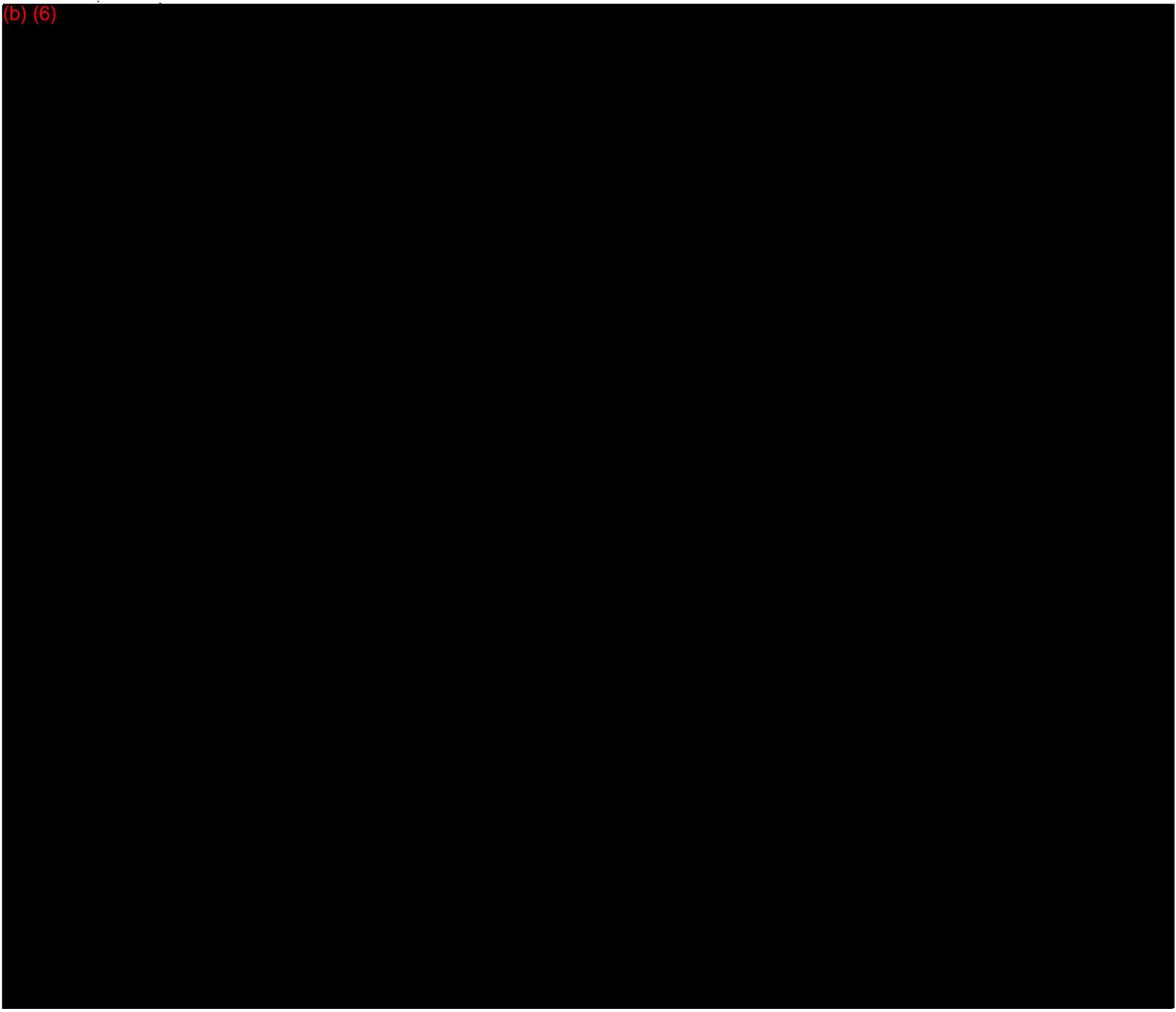
Not Counting on



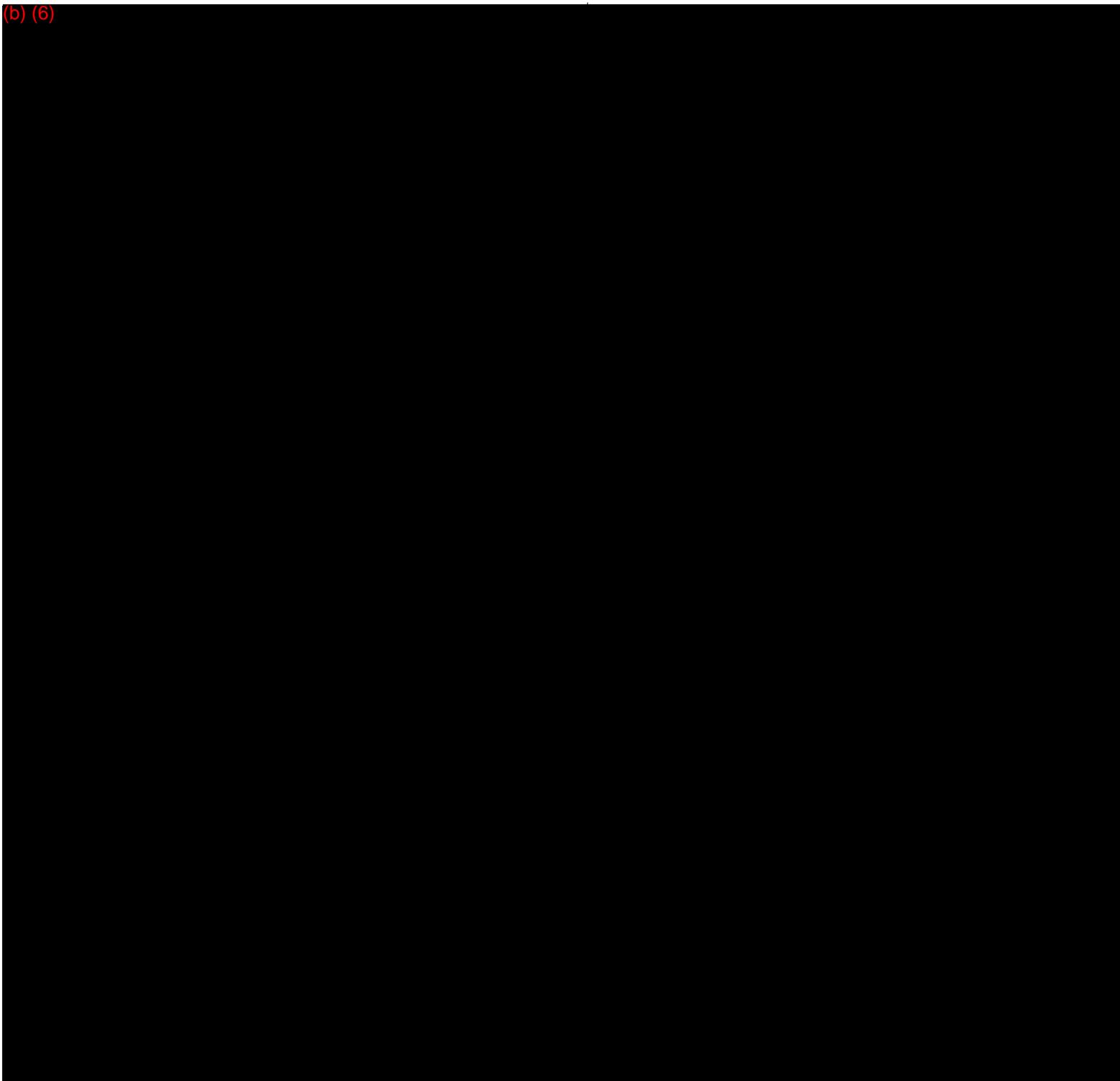
(b) (6)



(b) (6)



(b) (6)



| INCOME ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------|-----------------|-----------------|--------|--------------------|---------|-----------------|-----------------|--------|
| Effective from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| HOUSEHOLD SIZE | FEDERAL POVERTY GUIDELINES ANNUAL | REDUCED PRICE MEALS - 185 % | | | | | FREE MEALS - 130 % | | | | |
| | | ANNUAL | MONTHLY | TWICE PER MONTH | EVERY TWO WEEKS | WEEKLY | ANNUAL | MONTHLY | TWICE PER MONTH | EVERY TWO WEEKS | WEEKLY |
| 48 CONTIGUOUS STATES, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, GUAM, AND TERRITORIES | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 10,830 | 20,036 | 1,670 | 835 | 771 | 386 | 14,079 | 1,174 | 587 | 542 | 271 |
| 2 | 14,670 | 26,955 | 2,247 | 1,124 | 1,037 | 519 | 18,941 | 1,579 | 790 | 729 | 365 |
| 3 | 18,310 | 33,874 | 2,823 | 1,412 | 1,303 | 652 | 23,803 | 1,984 | 992 | 916 | 458 |
| 4 | 22,050 | 40,793 | 3,400 | 1,700 | 1,569 | 785 | 28,665 | 2,389 | 1,195 | 1,103 | 552 |
| 5 | 25,790 | 47,712 | 3,976 | 1,988 | 1,836 | 918 | 33,527 | 2,794 | 1,397 | 1,290 | 645 |
| 6 | 29,530 | 54,631 | 4,553 | 2,277 | 2,102 | 1,051 | 38,389 | 3,200 | 1,600 | 1,477 | 739 |
| 7 | 33,270 | 61,550 | 5,130 | 2,565 | 2,368 | 1,184 | 43,251 | 3,605 | 1,803 | 1,664 | 832 |
| 8 | 37,010 | 68,469 | 5,706 | 2,853 | 2,634 | 1,317 | 48,113 | 4,010 | 2,005 | 1,851 | 926 |
| For each add'l family member, add | 3,740 | 6,919 | 577 | 289 | 267 | 134 | 4,862 | 406 | 203 | 187 | 94 |
| ALASKA | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 13,530 | 25,031 | 2,086 | 1,043 | 963 | 482 | 17,589 | 1,466 | 733 | 677 | 339 |
| 2 | 18,210 | 33,689 | 2,808 | 1,404 | 1,296 | 648 | 23,673 | 1,973 | 987 | 911 | 456 |
| 3 | 22,890 | 42,347 | 3,529 | 1,765 | 1,629 | 815 | 29,757 | 2,480 | 1,240 | 1,145 | 573 |
| 4 | 27,570 | 51,005 | 4,251 | 2,126 | 1,962 | 981 | 35,841 | 2,987 | 1,494 | 1,379 | 690 |
| 5 | 32,250 | 59,663 | 4,972 | 2,486 | 2,295 | 1,148 | 41,925 | 3,494 | 1,747 | 1,613 | 807 |
| 6 | 36,930 | 68,321 | 5,694 | 2,847 | 2,628 | 1,314 | 48,009 | 4,001 | 2,001 | 1,847 | 924 |
| 7 | 41,610 | 76,979 | 6,415 | 3,208 | 2,961 | 1,481 | 54,093 | 4,508 | 2,254 | 2,081 | 1,041 |
| 8 | 46,290 | 85,637 | 7,137 | 3,569 | 3,294 | 1,647 | 60,177 | 5,015 | 2,508 | 2,315 | 1,158 |
| For each add'l family member, add | 4,680 | 8,658 | 722 | 361 | 333 | 167 | 6,084 | 507 | 254 | 234 | 117 |
| HAWAII | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 12,450 | 23,051 | 1,921 | 961 | 887 | 444 | 16,198 | 1,350 | 675 | 623 | 312 |
| 2 | 16,780 | 31,006 | 2,584 | 1,292 | 1,193 | 597 | 21,788 | 1,816 | 908 | 838 | 419 |
| 3 | 21,060 | 38,961 | 3,247 | 1,624 | 1,499 | 750 | 27,378 | 2,282 | 1,141 | 1,053 | 527 |
| 4 | 25,380 | 46,916 | 3,910 | 1,955 | 1,805 | 903 | 32,968 | 2,748 | 1,374 | 1,268 | 634 |
| 5 | 29,660 | 54,871 | 4,573 | 2,287 | 2,111 | 1,056 | 38,558 | 3,214 | 1,607 | 1,483 | 742 |
| 6 | 33,960 | 62,826 | 5,236 | 2,618 | 2,417 | 1,209 | 44,148 | 3,679 | 1,840 | 1,698 | 849 |
| 7 | 38,260 | 70,781 | 5,899 | 2,950 | 2,723 | 1,362 | 49,738 | 4,145 | 2,073 | 1,913 | 957 |
| 8 | 42,560 | 78,736 | 6,562 | 3,281 | 3,029 | 1,515 | 55,328 | 4,611 | 2,306 | 2,128 | 1,064 |
| For each add'l family member, add | 4,300 | 7,955 | 663 | 332 | 306 | 153 | 5,590 | 466 | 233 | 215 | 108 |

Authority: (42 U.S.C. 1758(b)(1))

Dated: March 22, 2009.

E. Enrique Gomez,
Acting Administrator.

[FR Doc. E9-6806 Filed 3-26-09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-30-C

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Dixie National Forest; Tropic To Hatch 138kV Transmission Line Project, Correction to Include Notice of Intent To Amend the Bureau of Land Management, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Management Plan

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA and Bureau of Land Management, USDI.

ACTION: Correction to notice of intent.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 102(2) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) subparts 1500-1508, and 43 CFR subpart 1610.5-5 (Planning Regulations), notice is hereby given that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument intends to prepare an amendment to the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument

Management Plan (MMP) with an associated environmental impact statement (EIS) in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service as lead agency. The Dixie National Forest published a Notice of Intent in the **Federal Register** to initiate this proposal on February 21, 2008, but did not include the BLM's Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (GSENM) Notice of Intent into its heading. The publication of this **Federal Register** notice is to make the public aware that this action also applies to a possible land use plan amendment to the MMP. Discussion of the GSENM amendment was in the body of the original **Federal Register** notice, but was not evident in the title. The public is now provided a second opportunity to review and provide comments on this possible amendment to the BLM's MMP based on the planning criteria identified in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** below.

DATES: Public comments should be submitted in writing to the address listed below within 30 days following the publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Paul Chapman, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, Tropic to Hatch 138kV Transmission Line, BLM Project Leader, 190 East Center, Kanab,

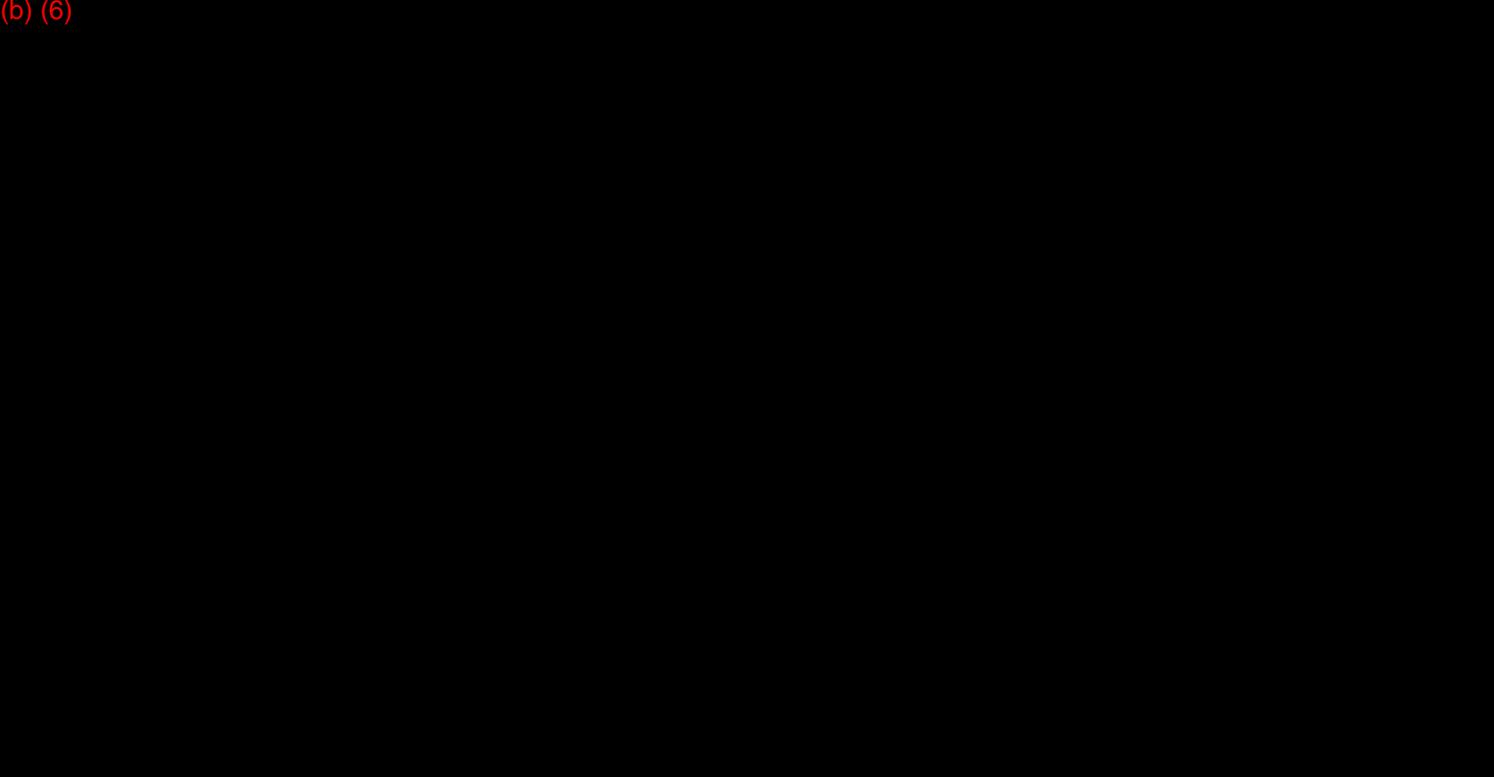
Utah 84741. E-mail: tropic_to_hatch_transmission_line_eis_comments@fs.fed.us. E-mailed comments must be submitted in MS Word (*.doc) or rich text format (*.rtf) and should include the project name in the subject line. Written comments may also be submitted at the above address during regular business hours of 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. Comments may be published as part of the EIS.

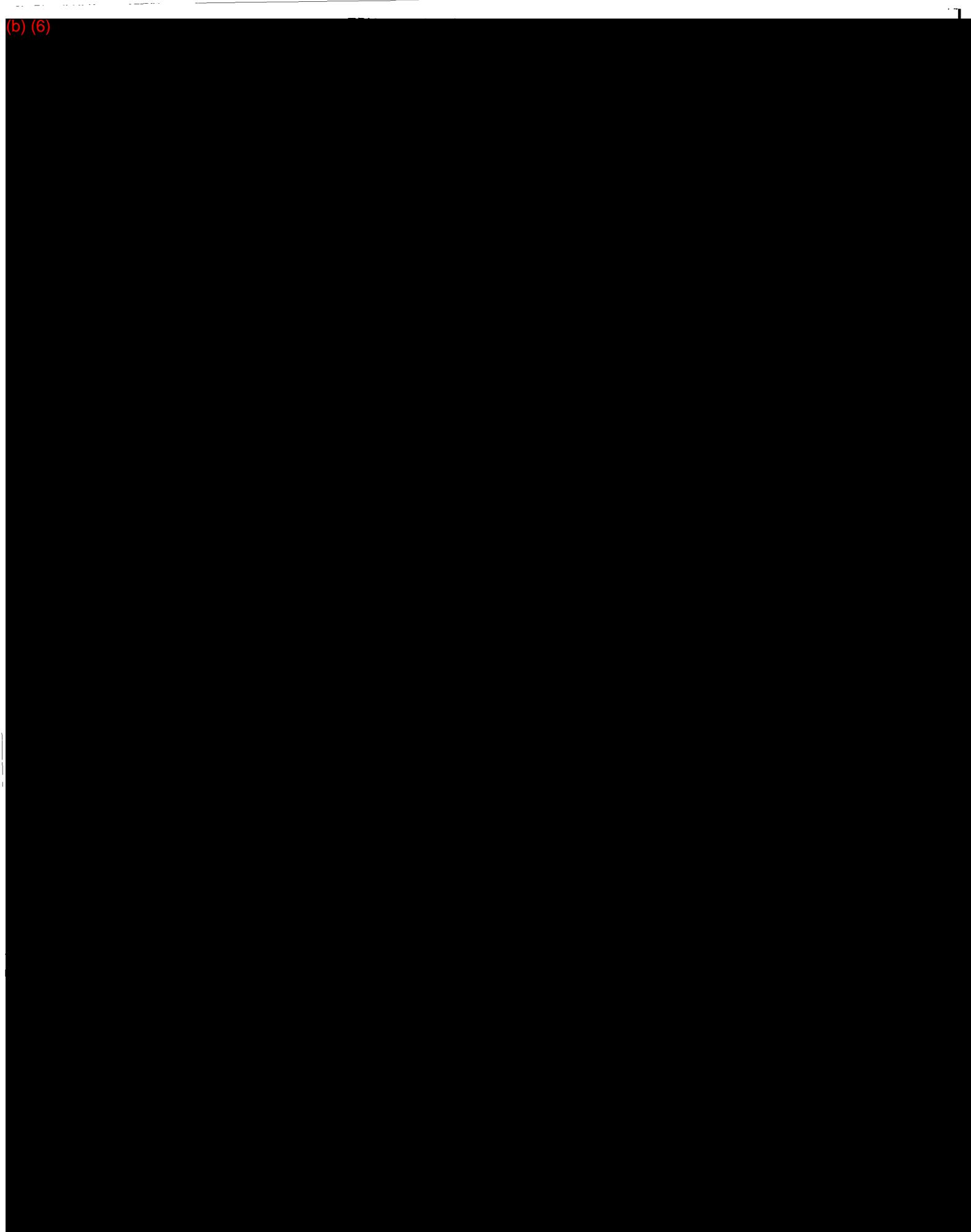
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Paul Chapman, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument project coordinator, 190 East Center, Kanab, Utah 84741 or phone (435) 644-4309.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This Notice of Intent to amend the MMP responds to a proposal from Garkane Energy Cooperative to construct, operate and maintain a 138 kilovolt (kV) electric transmission line in Garfield County,

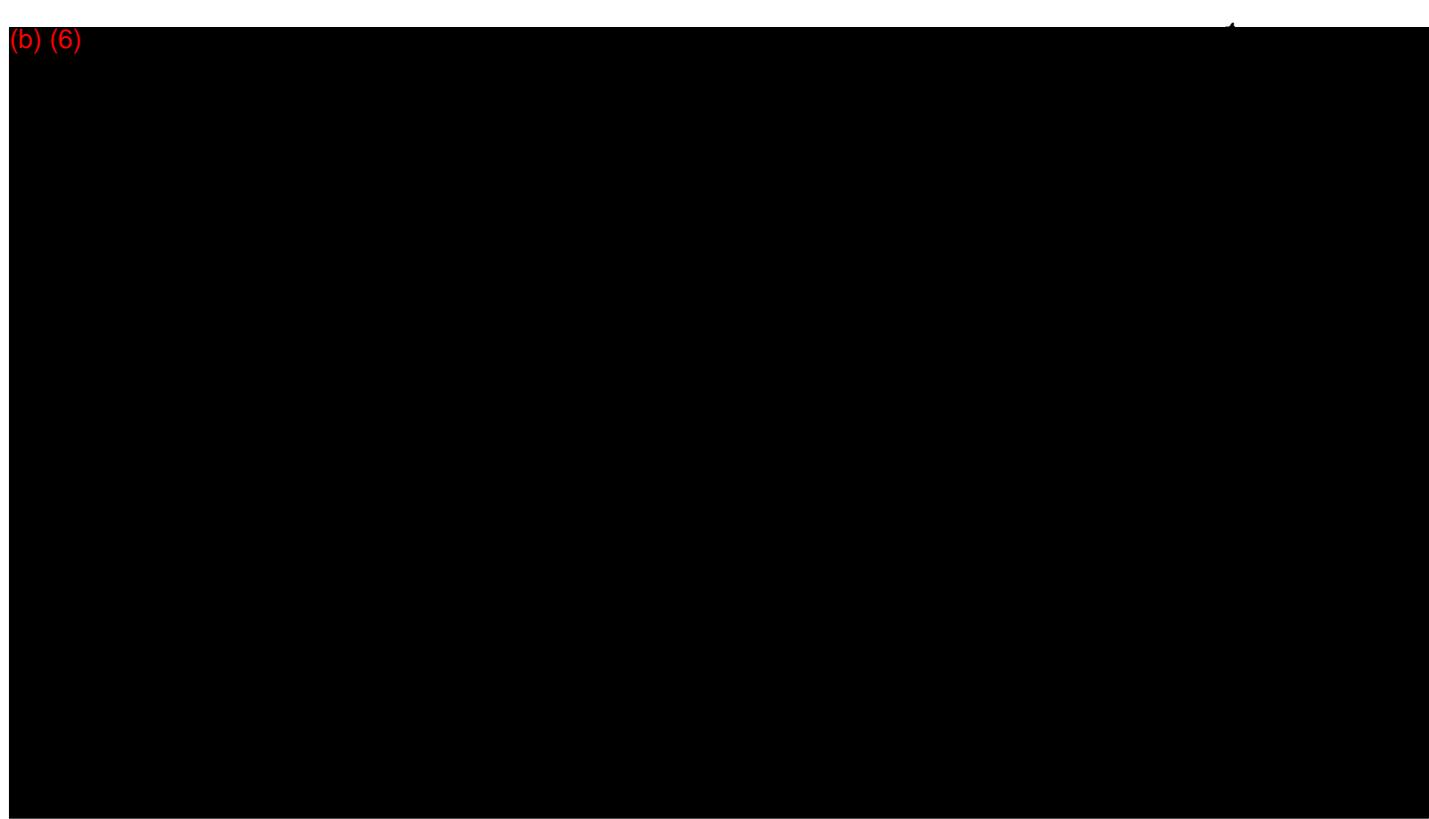
(b) (6)



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(b) (6)

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Select visit [next page]--

**PRESERVATION
SOLUTIONS**

May 17, 2011

P.O. Box 937 • 980 Proctor Drive • Elkhorn, WI 53121
Phone: (262) 723-6715 • Fax: (262) 723-4013
www.preservationsolutions.com

Congressman Paul Ryan's Office
Attention: Nate
5455 Sheridan Rd. Suite 125
Kenosha, WI 53140

MAY 20 REC'D

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Preservation Solutions Inc. manufactures organ transplant solutions for three of the four U.S. companies selling transplant solutions to preserve kidney, livers, and pancreas. One of the major components of the University of Wisconsin cold storage solution is lactobionic acid.

Preservation Solutions Inc. has been importing lactobionic acid through Lonza Chemical, a Swiss company. The lactobionic acid actually is produced and comes from India. Starting in January of 2011, we have experienced delays at U.S. customs New York/Newark. Each shipment of lactobionic acid is being "held up" by customs because U.S.D.A. is requiring a certification signed by a veterinarian who is an official of the Indian government-it must be an original document- notarized.

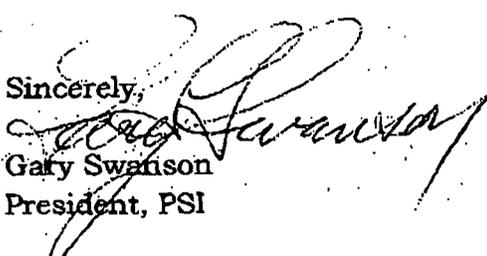
This step delayed the January shipment until mid April. The February shipment arrived 5-16-11.

If this is a new U.S.D.A. requirement, and it is a permanent requirement, the organ transplant solution community will experience shortages starting in July 2011 or August 2011.

We must know what the rules are to allow PSI to work within the rules and still provide the transplant solutions where and when they are required.

Any information you can provide will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,


Gary Swanson
President, PSI

OCR CORRESPONDENCE

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE
SECRETARIAT, USDA

2011 MAY 26 A 7:45

FSIS

ACTION OFFICE



United States
Department of
Agriculture

JUN 27 2011

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

1400 Independence
Avenue, SW

Washington, DC
20250

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Member, U.S. House of Representatives
5455 Sheridan Road, Suite 125
Kenosha, Wisconsin 53140

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of May 23, 2011, on behalf of Mr. Gary Swanson, President of Preservation Solutions Inc., regarding delays to shipments of lactobionic acid held during agricultural quarantine inspections (AQI).

We appreciate Mr. Swanson's interest in complying with Federal regulations and appreciate the opportunity to respond. Our Agency of the Department of Agriculture regulates imports of agricultural products to prevent the introduction of potentially devastating agricultural diseases and pests into this country. The primary disease concern with regard to lactobionic acid produced from India-origin bovines is foot-and-mouth disease, which could, if introduced to the United States, cost millions of dollars in agricultural damage and subsequent eradication efforts. Accordingly, animal products and by-products originating from India are permitted entry only when accompanied by additional documentation and an import permit stating that the product has been properly processed to destroy all disease pathogens of concern. We wish to clarify that these regulations are not new.

We can help Mr. Swanson prevent future delays if he applies for a permit to import a controlled material, organism, or vector into the United States by submitting Veterinary Services Form 16-3 to our Agency's National Center for Import and Export (NCIE). Mr. Swanson can find information on how to apply electronically using our ePermits system at the "Animal Health Permits" page of our Web site, www.aphis.usda.gov/permits/index.shtml. We are also enclosing a document that details the entire ePermits process. Should Mr. Swanson have additional questions, we encourage him to contact Dr. Tracye Butler, Assistant Director of NCIE's Import By-Products staff. Dr. Butler's telephone number is (301) 734-7476; her e-mail address is Tracye.R.Butler@aphis.usda.gov.

Because Mr. Swanson has expressed concerns about the handling of the January 2011 shipment, we are sending a copy of this letter to CBP officials. Should Mr. Swanson wish to directly contact CBP to express his concerns, the telephone number for CBP's Customer Service Center (CSC) is 1-877-227-5511. The address is CSC, Office of Public Affairs, CBP, DHS; 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW; Washington, DC 20229.

We hope this information is helpful.

Sincerely,

 Gregory L. Parham
Administrator

Enclosure



Safeguarding American Agriculture
APHIS is an agency of USDA's Marketing and Regulatory Programs
An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

Instructions for Using the USDA-APHIS e-Permits System

As part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) overall eGovernment initiative to transform and enhance the delivery of its programs, services, and information, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) launched its new electronic permitting system (ePermits) in April 2006. ePermits is a Web-based tool that gives customers the ability to apply for a permit, check its status, and view it online. Initial capability within the system allows applicants to submit applications, track status, and receive permits online. Many permits are processed through this system.

To access the online applications, you first need a Level 2 eAuthentication account, this is a process to confirm your identity. Please follow the instructions below to establish an eAuthentication account.

- Go to <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/>
- Click on "Create an Account" and then "Level 2 access." A form will come up that you need to fill out and submit – the information you provide should match the information on your government-issued photo ID. Remember that you, as an individual, are being certified.
- You will need to choose a user ID and password (take note of it somewhere in case you forget).
- Then click on "Service Centers" in the upper right hand corner on the gray menu bar. An interactive map of the U.S. will appear (give it some time, it is a huge file).
- Click on your state, then your county and surrounding counties, to find the service center closest to you.
- Call and make arrangements to have a Local Registration Authority look at your ID and verify your identity. They will put a code into the account that you created when you filled out the form.
- When you arrive back at your home or office you will receive an email that tells you to activate your account.
- Read all correspondence from eAuthentication carefully and follow the instructions.
- You are ready to go to the Permit page located at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/permits/index.shtml>.
- Click on the application that applies to your situation and submit online!

If you have questions about the eAuthentication process, the Information Technology Services staff is available to assist you. The telephone number is 800-457-3642; the e-mail address is eAuthHelpDesk@ftc.usda.gov.



Congressman PAUL RYAN



Serving Wisconsin's First Congressional District

JANESVILLE CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER

20 South Main Street, Suite 10

Janesville, WI 53545

Phone: (608) 752-4050

Fax: (608)752-4711

FAX TRANSMITTAL

DATE: 8/10/11

PLEASE DELIVER TO:

NAME: Suzanne Palmieri

COMPANY/OFFICE: USDA Congressional

FAX #: 202-720-8077

TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES: 10 (INCLUDING THIS COVER SHEET)

If you do not receive all pages, or receive this fax in error, please call (608) 752-4050.

SENDER: Susie Liston

COMMENTS: Congressional inquiry for Ryan Dover/LocalGrown

PAUL RYAN
1st DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET
CHAIRMAN

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1233 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031
FAX: (202) 225-3393

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

TOLL-FREE: 1-888-909-RYAN (7926)
INTERNET: paulryan.house.gov

August 8, 2011

Ms. Suzanne Palmieri
Acting Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations
U.S. Department of Agriculture
209A Whitten Building
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

VIA FAX:

Dear Ms. Palmieri:

I was recently contacted by a constituent, Mr. Ryan Dover of Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, regarding the matter as detailed on his enclosed Privacy Act Release form and accompanying documents. Please note that Mr. Dover serves as owner of LocalGrown LLC.

(b) (6)



I would appreciate it if you would look into this matter to determine if anything can be done – consistent with all laws and regulations – to assist Mr. Dover with his requests and suggestions.

Please address your response to my Janesville office at 20 South Main Street, Suite 10, Janesville, Wisconsin, 53545. Should you have any questions about this request, my Constituent Services Representative, Susie Liston, can be contacted at (608) 752-4050.

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 SOUTH MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
(608) 752-4050 . FAX: (608) 752-4711

KENOSHA
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
5485 SHERIDAN ROAD, SUITE 125
KENOSHA, WI 53140
(282) 654-1901 . FAX: (262) 654-2156

RACINE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
216 6TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(262) 637-0510 . FAX: (262) 637-5689

Again, thank you for your assistance in this matter. I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Ryan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paul" and last name "Ryan" clearly distinguishable.

Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Attachment

PAUL RYAN
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET
CHAIRMAN

WASHINGTON OFFICE
1233 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4901
(202) 225-3031
FAX: (202) 225-3393

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4901

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

TOLL-FREE: 1-888-909-RYAN (7926)
INTERNET: paulryan.house.gov

Privacy Act Release/Casework Request Form

Name: Ryan Dover, LocalGrown LLC E-Mail: (b) (6)

I prefer to receive correspondence by E-mail (if provided above): YES NO

Address: (b) (6)

City: (b) (6) a State: (b) Zip Code: (b) (6) Date of Birth: [REDACTED]

Phone (Home): (b) (6) (Cell): (b) (6) (Work): 414-459-1890

Social Security Number: _____ Veteran's Number: NA

Agency Involved: USDA

The Problem Is: (attach an additional sheet(s) if necessary)

See attached

****Privacy Act Release****

I request and authorize U.S. Representative Paul Ryan to act on my behalf and to receive information from proper officials regarding the matter described above. Congressman Ryan is authorized by me to receive on my behalf all correspondence and information about my case.

Signed: (b) (6) Date: 7/21/11

Please return this completed form to:
Congressman Paul Ryan
20 South Main Street, Suite 10
Janesville, WI 53545
Phone: (608) 752-4050
(toll-free in Wisconsin - 1-888-909-RYAN (7926))
Fax: (608) 752-4711

*** Please note that the Privacy Act Release requires that you authorize access to your private records. Your signature above will enable Congressman Ryan to make the necessary inquiries on your behalf.

JANESVILLE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
20 SOUTH MAIN STREET, SUITE 10
JANESVILLE, WI 53545
(608) 752-4050, Fax: (608) 752-4711

KENOSHA
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
5455 SHERIDAN ROAD, SUITE 125
KENOSHA, WI 53140
(262) 654-1501, Fax: (262) 654-2156

RACINE
CONSTITUENT SERVICES CENTER
216 6TH STREET
RACINE, WI 53403
(262) 637-0510, Fax: (262) 637-5689

Liston, Susie

From: Ryan Dover [ryan@localgrown.co]
Sent: Tuesday, May 10, 2011 3:52 PM
To: brein@nifa.usda.gov
Subject: AFRI Systems and Technology Program || Grant Submittal Confirmation

Brad -

(b) (6)



(b) (6)



Please call or email me with any questions or comments regarding our application or project in general. I would be (very) happy to either talk or meet with you and the Systems and Technology Team to go over the design, features, and benefits of our system in greater detail.

Thank you again for the opportunity -

Ryan Dover

LocalGrown
P.O. Box 876
Lake Geneva, WI 53147
P: (414) 459-1890
C: (262) 325-0366
E: rdover@localgrown.co
www.localgrown.co

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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Research,
Education, and
Economics

National Institute
of Food and
Agriculture

1400 Independence
Avenue SW
Washington, DC
20250

AUG 29 2011

The Honorable Paul Ryan
U. S. House of Representatives
1233 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Ryan:

Thank you for your letter of August 8, 2011, addressed to Ms. Suzanne Palmieri, Acting Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations, regarding a (b) (6)

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

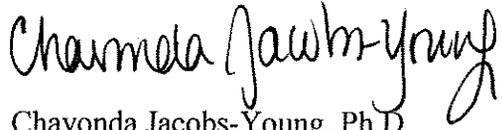
[Redacted]

We understand that the Federal grant application process seems complex to those who are new to it. Accordingly, NIFA offers as much information and support to its grant applicants as possible. For example, NIFA offers grantsmanship workshops several times a year to potential applicants. It also maintains a help desk to provide quick advice to applicants, and publishes contact information for NIFA program staff in all RFA's to make it easier for applicants to get answers to their questions. Please encourage Mr. Dover to consider applying to the AFRI program next year.

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Page 2

Again, thank you for your letter and for your interest in USDA programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chavonda Jacobs-Young". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chavonda Jacobs-Young, Ph.D.
Acting Director

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 20, 2012

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

On July 19, 2012, Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker wrote requesting that you declare 23 Wisconsin counties agricultural disaster areas as a result of production losses caused by severe drought. We respectfully request that you immediately approve that request.

Drought conditions have caused significant crop damage throughout the state. By declaring these counties disaster areas, farmers in the impacted counties will be eligible for emergency loans administered by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA). This financial assistance is necessary to ensure that agricultural operations and family farmers in Wisconsin are able to manage these severe losses.

While southern Wisconsin has been hardest hit by the extreme drought, its impacts are being felt throughout the state. Forecasts continue to indicate low precipitation and high heat into the near future, increasing the likelihood of extreme drought conditions extending across most of the state. If conditions continue to deteriorate and additional counties are added to the Governor's request, we ask that you quickly expedite their approval.

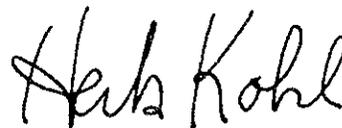
Local FSA offices have begun to receive producer requests for the release of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres for emergency haying and grazing. Many counties have already reached the D2 drought threshold on the U.S. Drought Monitor, thereby qualifying them to apply for the emergency grazing designation, while others have achieved the D3 drought threshold, thereby qualifying them to apply for the emergency haying designation. These requests will be made by the Wisconsin FSA Executive Director and we ask that you quickly review and approve these requests as soon as possible.

Thank you for your prompt consideration of these requests. If you would like more information, please feel free to contact our delegation. We look forward to working with you on this important issue.

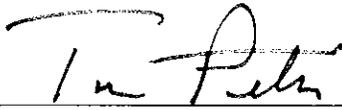
Sincerely,



Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress



Herb Kohl
United States Senator



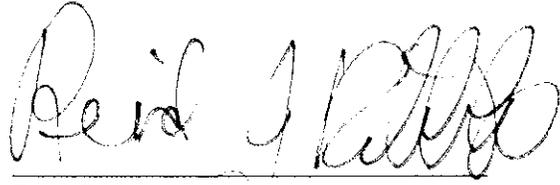
Tom Petri
Member of Congress



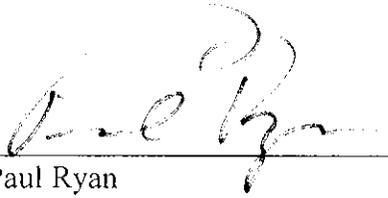
Gwen Moore
Member of Congress



Ron Kind
Member of Congress



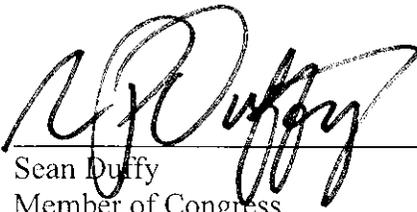
Reid Ribble
Member of Congress



Paul Ryan
Member of Congress



F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.
Member of Congress



Sean Duffy
Member of Congress



Ron Johnson
United States Senator

Cc: Scott Walker, Governor of Wisconsin
Brad Pfaff, Wisconsin Executive Director, Farm Service Agency

MIKE JOHANNIS
NEBRASKA

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404 RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
(202) 224-4224
(202) 228-0436 FAX
(202) 228-4285 TTY

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 19, 2012

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Secretary Vilsack,

In recent weeks, drought conditions have continued to worsen throughout the Midwest. The lack of significant rainfall has resulted in increasingly challenging conditions for Nebraska's farmers and ranchers. As of today, farmers and ranchers in every county in Nebraska are facing drought conditions. And, more than 75 percent of the state is in a state of severe drought. Unfortunately, the weather forecasts predict little relief from the high temperatures and little moisture in the days ahead.

I understand that the Nebraska State Farm Service Agency (FSA) has requested a Secretarial Disaster Designation for 58 counties. As you know, this designation can ensure that farmers and ranchers in these counties are eligible for low-interest emergency loans. Thus, I urge you to act promptly on this and other similar requests in the days and weeks ahead.

Additionally, I appreciate the U.S. Department of Agriculture's efforts to streamline the authorization of emergency haying and grazing on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) land. In particular, this will help provide some relief to our livestock producers. Currently, 69 of Nebraska's counties have been approved for emergency haying and grazing of CRP. I ask you to consider approving the rest of the state for this much needed relief.

Thank you for your prompt consideration of the Secretarial Disaster Designation request. If I may be of assistance to you or a member of your staff, please do not hesitate to contact my office at 202-224-4224.

Very truly yours,



Mike Johannis
United States Senator

LINCOLN OFFICE
287 FEDERAL BUILDING
100 CENTENNIAL MALL NORTH
LINCOLN, NE 68508
(402) 476-1400
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SCOTTSBLUFF, NE 69361
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FAX: (308) 632-6295