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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3219

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMODITY EXCHANGES,
ENERGY AND CREDIT
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COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS AND TRANSIT
SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER RESOURCES
AND ENVIRONMENT

March 19, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Leader McConnell, and Leader Schumer,

In this challenging and uncertain time, we trust that you will remain vigilant in ensuring that federal, state, and local authorities have the resources they need to combat the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19).

As both chambers begin work on additional stimulus measures to mitigate the severe economic disruption caused by COVID-19, we urge you to keep in mind the perilous position of small- and medium-sized farms—many of whom are already struggling during a prolonged downturn in the farm economy. These producers may soon face unprecedented disruptions to market access as direct to consumer sales slow with the closure of farmers markets and schools. What's more, they won't have the support of conventional farm safety net programs such as commodity support initiatives and crop insurance during market restrictions.

With these concerns in mind, we recommend the following be included as part of any stimulus package passed by Congress to respond to the spread of COVID-19:

- **Farm-to-School Markets:** Direct the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to utilize the authorities of the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (62 Stat.1070; 15 U.S.C. 714) related to income stabilization to develop an emergency disaster payment for small and beginning farmers selling fresh and minimally processed food to local and regional schools who have lost markets due to school closures precipitated by the COVID-19 outbreak. Such disaster assistance payments should be available to both producers that market to schools directly or through intermediaries such as food hubs. Additional

payments could also be provided to farmers donating products displaced from these school and institutional markets to the emergency food system.

- **Farmers Markets:** Direct the USDA to utilize the authorities of the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (62 Stat.1070; 15 U.S.C. 714) related to income stabilization to develop an emergency disaster payment to small and beginning farmers selling fresh and minimally processed food through direct marketing channels such as farmers markets that have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak. Disaster payments could be provided as a reimbursement for donating products displaced from farmers markets to the emergency food system. Recognizing the infrastructure to facilitate payments to these farmers and collect donated goods is limited, the USDA should be directed to coordinate with existing farmers market organizations and operators to ensure that financial support is available to all participating producers and to facilitate the collection of donated products to the emergency food system.
- **Local Processing of Excess Product:** Direct the USDA to utilize the authorities of the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (62 Stat.1070; 15 U.S.C. 714) related to income stabilization and commodity distribution to develop an emergency disaster payment to small food hubs and similar processing and intermediary entities to facilitate the processing and storage of excess product displaced from local and regional markets, such as farmers markets and schools. The capacity of the emergency food system to accommodate large quantities of produce may be limited and will require additional support to ensure that donated products can be processed, stored, and distributed to those communities most in need.

We appreciate your attention to this urgent matter and stand ready to work with you in order to accomplish these goals. Please do not hesitate to contact our offices if we can answer any questions.

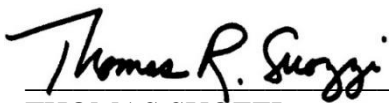
Sincerely,



ANTONIO DELGADO
Member of Congress



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Member of Congress



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CHELLIE PINGREE
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ED CASE
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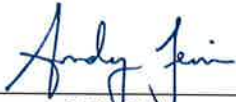
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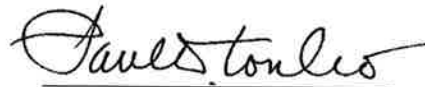
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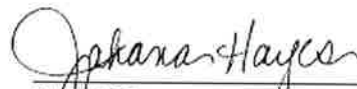
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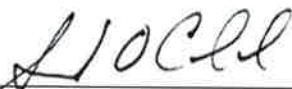
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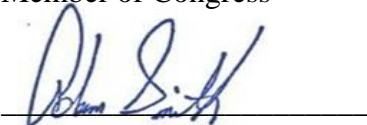
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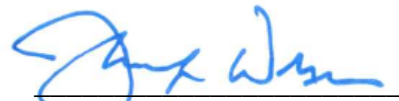
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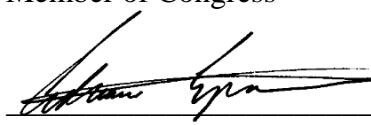
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