

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 13, 2020

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue S.W.
Washington D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

Thank you for your commitment to supporting American farmers and our agricultural economy throughout the COVID-19 crisis. As you are aware, COVID-19 is severely disrupting meat and poultry production operations essential to our county's food supply, including chicken farming. The Coronavirus Aid, Response, and Economic Security Act (CARES) provided \$14 billion in additional funding to the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) to aid agricultural producers impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak. As representatives of states with substantial chicken operations, we strongly request that USDA provide direct assistance through this funding and any further supplemental monies that USDA may be appropriated in future legislation for chicken farmers impacted by COVID-19.

The U.S. chicken industry provides an essential service in feeding Americans, who on average each consume about 100 pounds of chicken meat each year. As you know, many chicken processing facilities across the country have been forced to reduce operations as a result of the lack of foodservice demand and workforce shortages caused by COVID-19. We appreciate USDA's efforts to comply with President Trump's executive order and work with processing facilities, local officials, and other federal agencies to keep these facilities operating while following all of the latest CDC and OSHA guidelines.

The challenges faced by chicken processing facilities impact the entire supply chain, including the independent family farmers in our districts who raise chickens. This is beginning to have serious effects on bird placements to family farms. As these farmers cope with raising fewer chickens among changing and uncertain demand, we believe it is essential that they be provided with direct financial assistance.

The essential critical industries working to care for, feed, and protect Americans are selflessly serving the nation by showing up to work during this time of crisis. While the selfless contributions of our public health professionals, first responders, and public safety employees are unquestioned, we must also adequately recognize the service of our farmers who wake up every day to protect our food security.

Thank you for your attention to this request. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like more information or have any questions.

Sincerely,



Robert Aderholt
Member of Congress



Trent Kelly
Member of Congress

Austin Scott
Member of Congress

Ralph Abraham, M.D.
Member of Congress

Steven M. Palazzo
Member of Congress

Steve Womack
Member of Congress

Andy Harris, M.D.
Member of Congress

Terri Sewell
Member of Congress

Doug Collins
Member of Congress

Frank Lucas
Member of Congress

Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress

Jeff Fortenberry
Member of Congress

Denver Riggleman
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Mike Rogers
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Rick Crawford
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Scott DesJarlais
Member of Congress

James Comer
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David Scott
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Rodney Davis
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Jody Hice
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Markwayne Mullin
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Mike Johnson
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Chuck Fleischmann
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Rick Allen
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Henry Cuellar
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David Rouzer
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Bruce Westerman
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Tom Graves
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Vicky Hartzler
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French Hill
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Dan Bishop
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Adrian Smith
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Bill Huizenga
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Martha Roby
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Billy Long
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Glenn 'GT' Thompson
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Jim Costa
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Bob Gibbs
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Michael Guest
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Vicente Gonzalez
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Ben Cline
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John Rose
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Kevin Hern
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Ron Wright
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Bennie Thompson
Member of Congress

Roger Marshall, M.D.
Member of Congress