

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

June 04, 2021

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

Thank you for your commitment to supporting American families and agricultural producers throughout their recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. As the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) continues to assist farmers through the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP), we respectfully request that the Department expedite the rulemaking process to administer direct payments to contract chicken growers. We also encourage you to ensure that adequate funding is available for USDA to deliver these payments in full.

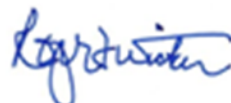
COVID-19 has severely affected the bottom lines of agricultural producers across the country, including many chicken growers in our home states. On December 21, 2020, Congress passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, which included additional resources for USDA to continue supporting American farmers. The bill also included funding for USDA to provide direct payments for contract chicken growers who previously had been excluded from assistance provided by the CFAP. We are concerned by the fact that these chicken growers still have not received federal assistance since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. We recognize that it is challenging to determine how losses and payments should be calculated fairly, given variations in the timing of when growers receive and finish raising their flocks. Still, we encourage you to proceed swiftly with making fair payments.

We appreciate USDA's commitment to administering fair payments to contract chicken growers and your efforts to coordinate with industry stakeholders. Thank you for considering our request to expedite this process. We look forward to continuing to work with you to support our nation's farmers.

Sincerely,



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Roger F. Wicker
United States Senator



Steve Womack
Member of Congress



John Rose
Member of Congress



John Boozman
United States Senator



Richard Burr
United States Senator



Ben Cardin
United States Senator



Tom Carper
United States Senator

/s/ Bob Casey

Bob Casey
United States Senator



Bill Cassidy, M.D.
United States Senator



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Cindy Hyde-Smith
United States Senator



Jim Inhofe
United States Senator

/s/ Tim Kaine

Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Thom Tillis
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Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Mark Warner
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Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



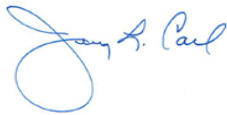
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Member of Congress



Dan Bishop
Member of Congress



Ted Budd
Member of Congress



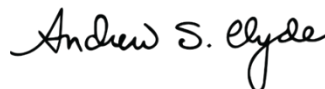
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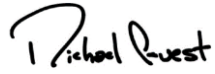
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Member of Congress



Michael Guest
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Andy Harris, M.D.
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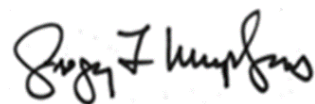
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