

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 22, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representative
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy:

As you consider legislation to address the economic impacts of COVID-19 on the domestic agriculture industry, we urge you to provide or direct the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to provide funds to protect farmworkers and their children.

As highlighted by this national emergency, farmworkers are essential and show up to work every day to ensure the continuity of our domestic food supply. Due to their working and living conditions, many farmworkers and their family members are uniquely susceptible to COVID-19. Since they are at a greater risk of contracting this disease, we risk a significant impact to our food supply chains if farmworkers are not provided with adequate protections.

As Congress debates the role of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) and considers other proposals to support the domestic agriculture sector during this unprecedented emergency, we ask that you provide funding or direct USDA to utilize CCC funding to support farmworkers. Specifically, we urge you to direct USDA to provide grants to states and farmworker-serving non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to:

- **Provide free COVID-19 testing for farmworkers.** In particular, grants to states and NGOs should proactively increase access to free testing to farmworkers in remote locations and at times when they are not at work.
- **Provide education and training to farmworkers.** In particular, grants to states and NGOs should ensure that training and education are suitable for all farmworkers, most of whom do not speak English as their first language.
- **Provide Personal Protective Equipment to farmworkers.** In particular, grants to states and NGOs should ensure that farmers have adequate protections, including masks and handwashing stations.

In addition, we strongly support efforts to ensure that farmworkers receive adequate compensation to reflect their risks and indispensability for agriculture production in our nation.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlights how valuable farmworkers are to our economy, but also how vulnerable they and their families are to the disease. As crops across this country are being harvested, we must act quickly and swiftly to ensure that farmworkers are protected. The USDA can provide those protections with sufficient funding for farmworkers and their families, which, ultimately, can strengthen the food security of our nation.

Sincerely,



Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress

Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress

Sanford D. Bishop
Member of Congress

Julia Brownley
Member of Congress

Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress

David N. Cicilline
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Jim Costa
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Angie Craig
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Nanette Diaz Barragán
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Earl Blumenauer
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Marcia L. Fudge
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John Garamendi
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Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress

Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress

Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress

Josh Harder
Member of Congress

Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress

Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress

Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress

Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress

Ro Khanna
Member of Congress

Joseph P. Kennedy, III
Member of Congress

Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress

Ron Kind
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Al Lawson
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

Ted Lieu
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Zoe Lofgren
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Alan Lowenthal
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Sean Patrick Maloney
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Doris Matsui
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Betty McCollum
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James P. McGovern
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Jerry McNerney
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Gwen Moore
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Joe Neguse
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Eleanor Holmes Norton
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Chellie Pingree
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