

February 21, 2013

President Barack H. Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The undersigned organizations support sustained funding for the Food for Peace (PL 480) and Food for Progress international food assistance programs and strongly oppose proposals to eliminate or drastically reduce program funding or to shift these resources to overseas commodity procurement. Food aid programs have enjoyed strong bipartisan support for nearly 60 years because they work. Our country has the largest and most diverse, reliable, and effective food assistance program in the world. Food for Peace and Food for Progress form the backbone of those efforts.

Under both programs, there are well-honed and dependable systems for identifying the appropriate commodities for targeted populations and for procuring and shipping these commodities. These systems include prepositioning food where emergencies are most likely to occur and diverting cargoes on the high seas when an urgent need arises. The transparency, accountability, and reliability of this system are the result of decades of cooperation through a uniquely sustainable public-private partnership among thousands of committed Americans at faith-based and other non-governmental organizations, and in agriculture, labor, industry, and government.

Growing, manufacturing, bagging, shipping, and transporting nutritious U.S. food creates jobs and economic activity here at home, provides support for our U.S. Merchant Marine, essential to our national defense sealift capability, and sustains a robust domestic constituency for these programs not easily replicated in alternative foreign aid programs. Overseas, Food for Peace has a strong track record of reducing child malnutrition and increasing incomes and food supplies for very poor and vulnerable populations. Food for Progress expands business and income opportunities along the agriculture value chain and improves the quality and quantity of food supplies. Both of those programs are proven models for addressing global food insecurity.

In addition to fighting global hunger and facilitating developmental programs to end the cycle of hunger, these programs are also some of our most effective, lowest-cost national security tools. Bags of U.S.-grown food bearing the U.S. flag and stamped as "From the American People" serve as ambassadors of our Nation's goodwill, which can help to address the root causes of instability. In a time of growing global food insecurity and extremism, these programs need to be expanded, not eliminated.

We therefore oppose shifting resources to overseas commodity procurement and strongly encourage you to sustain funding for the Food for Peace and Food for Progress programs, preserving the unique aspects of these programs that have made them the world's most successful, most dependable humanitarian assistance programs.

Sincerely yours,

ACDI/VOCA  
Adventist Development & Relief Agency  
International  
Alliance for Global Food Security  
America Cargo Transport Corp.  
American Feed Industry Association  
American Maritime Congress  
American Maritime Officers  
American Maritime Officers' Service  
American Peanut Council  
American Soybean Association  
APL Limited  
BKA Logistics LLC  
California Wheat Commission  
Central Gulf Lines, Inc.  
Congressional Hunger Center  
Counterpart International  
Feed the Children  
Food for the Hungry  
Global Food & Nutrition  
Hapag-Lloyd USA, LLC  
International Organization of Masters,  
Mates & Pilots  
International Partnership for Human  
Development  
International Relief & Development  
International Services Corporation  
Joint Aid Management USA  
Lake Charles Harbor and Terminal District  
Land O'Lakes  
Liberty Maritime Corporation  
Maersk Line, Ltd.  
Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association  
Maritime Institute for Research and  
Industrial Development  
National Association of Wheat Growers  
National Barley Growers Association  
National Corn Growers Association  
National Cotton Council  
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives  
National Farmers Union  
National Oilseed Processors Association  
National Potato Council  
National Renderers Association  
National Sorghum Producers  
North American Millers' Association

OIC International  
Pacific Cargoes Incorporated  
PCI  
Planet Aid, Inc.  
Sailors' Union of the Pacific  
Salesian Missions  
Seafarers International Union  
Sealift, Inc.  
Southern United States Trade Association  
TechnoServe, Inc.  
Transportation Institute  
United Maritime Group, LLC  
United Methodist Committee on Relief  
US Dry Bean Council  
U.S. Grains Council  
U.S. Meat Export Federation  
U.S. Overseas Cooperative Development  
Council  
US Rice Producers Association  
U.S. Wheat Associates  
USA Dry Pea and Lentil Council  
USA Maritime  
USA Rice Federation  
Washington State Potato Commission  
Waterman Steamship Corporation  
Western U.S. Agricultural Trade Association  
Winrock International  
World Vision US

February 21, 2013

The Honorable Mark L. Pryor  
Chairman  
Senate Agricultural  
Appropriations Subcommittee  
Dirksen Senate Office Bldg., SD-129

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Ranking Member  
Senate Agricultural  
Appropriations Subcommittee  
Dirksen Senate Office Bldg., SD-190

Dear Chairman Pryor and Ranking Member Blunt:

The undersigned organizations support sustained funding for the Food for Peace (PL 480) international food assistance program and strongly oppose proposals to eliminate or drastically reduce program funding or to shift these resources to overseas commodity procurement. Food for Peace has enjoyed strong bipartisan support for nearly 60 years because it works. Our country has the largest and most diverse, reliable, and effective food assistance program in the world.

American agriculture plays a significant role in alleviating world hunger. The Food for Peace program links rural America and the agricultural transportation industries to communities in the developing world that do not produce adequate amounts of food to meet their needs. Growing, manufacturing, bagging, shipping, and transporting nutritious U.S. food under the program creates jobs and economic activity both here at home and in poor countries. Moreover, the program sustains a robust domestic constituency not easily replicated in alternative foreign aid programs.

In addition to fighting global hunger and facilitating developmental programs, the program is one of our most effective, lowest-cost national security tools. Bags of U.S.-grown food bearing the U.S. flag and stamped as "From the American People" serve as ambassadors of our Nation's goodwill, which can help to address the root causes of instability. We doubt that less reliable foreign-procured food products – whose quality and safety are unknown but paid for by American taxpayers – would have the same impact.

Proposals to slash funding for the program, or to shift to purchases of food aid from foreign (sometimes called "local and regional") suppliers instead of American farmers would be detrimental to our economy and bad national security policy. We therefore strongly encourage you to support funding for the Food for Peace program, preserving the unique aspects of the program that has made it the world's most successful, most dependable humanitarian assistance program.

Sincerely yours,

American Peanut Council  
American Soybean Association  
American Feed Industry Association  
California Wheat Commission  
Global Food & Nutrition  
North American Millers' Association  
National Association of Wheat Growers  
National Barley Growers Association  
National Corn Growers Association  
National Cotton Council  
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives  
National Farmers Union  
National Milk Producers Federation  
National Oilseed Processors Association  
National Potato Council  
National Renderers Association  
National Sorghum Producers  
Southern United States Trade Association  
U.S. Dairy Export Council  
US Dry Bean Council  
U.S. Meat Export Federation  
US Rice Producers Association  
USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council  
USA Rice Federation  
Washington State Potato Commission  
Western U.S. Agricultural Trade Association