

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 3, 2019

Chairwoman Nita Lowey  
Committee on Appropriations  
H-307 The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Ranking Member Kay Granger  
Committee on Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Chairman Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Agricultural, Rural Development, FDA, &  
Related Agencies  
2362-A Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Ranking Member Jeff Fortenberry  
Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Agricultural, Rural Development, FDA, &  
Related Agencies  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Lowey, Chairman Bishop, Ranking Member Granger and Ranking Member Fortenberry:

Thank you for your previous support for competitive agricultural research at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA). As you meet to consider funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020, we urge you to sustain this critical effort. Your leadership will make a difference in helping to ensure that U.S. agriculture remains competitive globally and our country continues to lead the way in food and agriculture innovation.

Since 1948, total U.S. agricultural output more than doubled. Over the same period, the U.S. population also more than doubled. The ability of the farm sector to feed far more people today while using less farmland than six decades ago is attributed to increases in agricultural productivity.

The major driver of growth in agricultural productivity is innovation. Average rates of return to public investments in agricultural research range from 20 to 60 percent.

Investments in public agricultural research are the major factors driving technological change that leads to growth. In the 1940s, almost 40 percent of American research and development spending was focused on agriculture. Today, agriculture research only accounts for 2 percent of federal research and development spending. According to the USDA, total agricultural production has slowed significantly since the turn of the century.

In Fiscal Years 2012-2016, the USDA-NIFA Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) review process identified \$4.9 billion in grants worthy of funding. However, with a limited annual budget, the program could only award \$1.3 billion—about a quarter of the science that the program's expert panels deemed worthy.

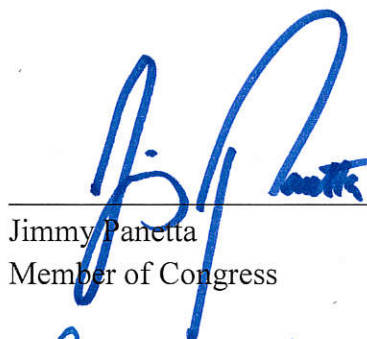
In order to continue the important work made possible by the Committee's prior support, we request robust funding in FY 2020. The Nation's economic prosperity and security depend on our dedication to developing innovative, science-based solutions to meet our growing agricultural needs and managing efficient food systems.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests. We are grateful for your leadership in ensuring that the necessary funds to protect animals, crops, and people will continue to be available.

Sincerely,



Rodney Davis  
Member of Congress



Jimmy Panetta  
Member of Congress



Suzan DeBene  
Member of Congress



Dusty Johnson  
Member of Congress



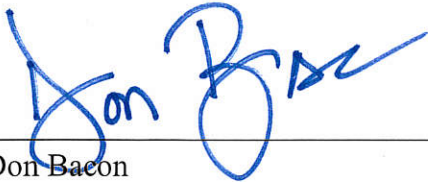
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Antonio Delgado  
Member of Congress



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Anthony Gonzalez  
Member of Congress



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Don Bacon  
Member of Congress



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Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Member of Congress



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Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress



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Katie Porter  
Member of Congress



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Kim Schrier, M.D.  
Member of Congress



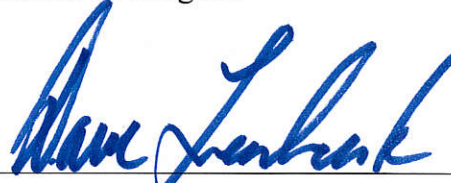
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Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress



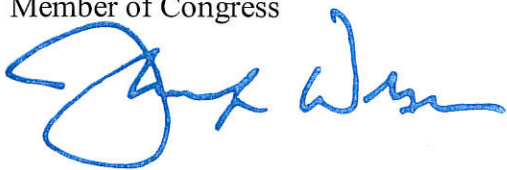
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Sam Graves  
Member of Congress



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Dave Loebsack  
Member of Congress



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Jennifer Wexton  
Member of Congress



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Jared F. Golden  
Member of Congress



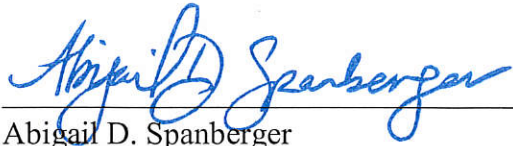
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Ed Perlmutter  
Member of Congress



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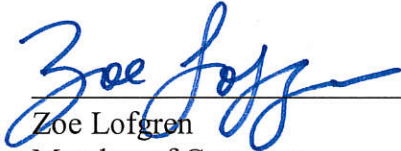
Cheri Bustos  
Member of Congress



Abigail D. Spanberger  
Member of Congress



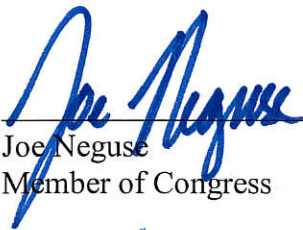
Joseph D. Morelle  
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress



Jahana Hayes  
Member of Congress



Joe Neguse  
Member of Congress



Darin LaHood  
Member of Congress



Salud O. Carbajal  
Member of Congress



Tulsi Gabbard  
Member of Congress



Mike Bost  
Member of Congress



Darren Soto  
Member of Congress



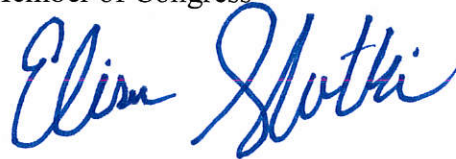
Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress



Angie Craig  
Member of Congress



Jimmy Gomez  
Member of Congress



Elissa Slotkin  
Member of Congress



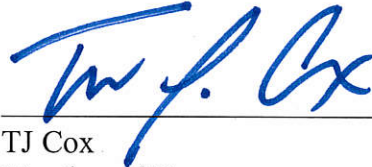
Stephanie N. Murphy  
Member of Congress




Brian K. Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress



Ami Bera, M.D.  
Member of Congress



TJ Cox  
Member of Congress



Ted S. Yoho, D.V.M.  
Member of Congress



Donald M. Payne, Jr.  
Member of Congress



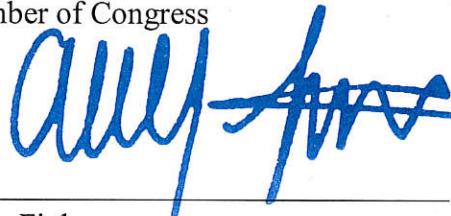
Alan S. Lowenthal  
Member of Congress



Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress



Abby Finkenauer  
Member of Congress



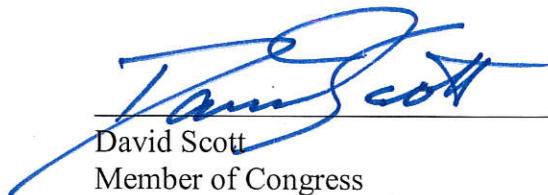
Madeleine Dean  
Member of Congress



Josh Gottheimer  
Member of Congress



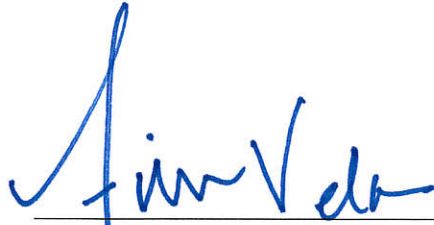
Ro Khanna  
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David Scott  
Member of Congress



Michael Guest  
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Filemón Vela  
Member of Congress



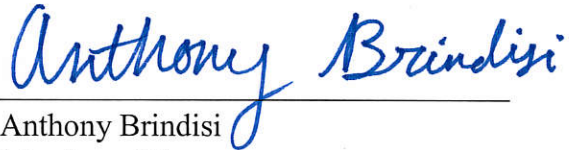
Roger Marshall, M.D.  
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Neal P. Dunn, M.D.  
Member of Congress



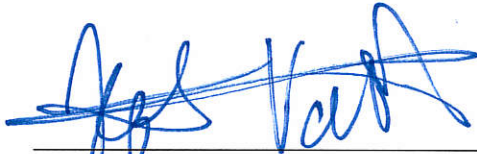
Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress



Anthony Brindisi  
Member of Congress



Cindy Axne  
Member of Congress



Jeff Van Drew  
Member of Congress



Glenn 'GT' Thompson  
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern  
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Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress



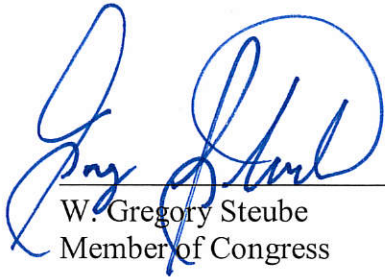
Ralph Abraham, M.D.  
Member of Congress



Xochitl Torres Small  
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress



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W. Gregory Steube  
Member of Congress



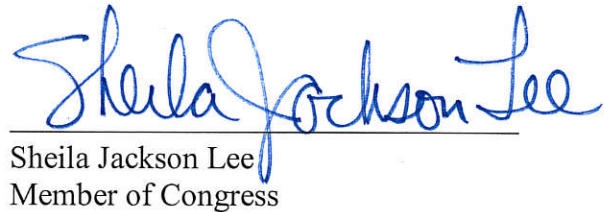
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James R. Baird  
Member of Congress



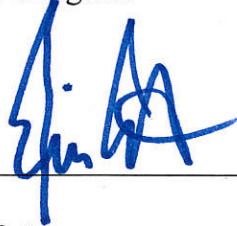
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James R. Langevin  
Member of Congress



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Sheila Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress



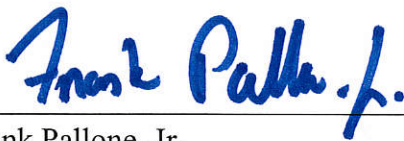
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Jim Costa  
Member of Congress



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Lucille Roybal-Allard  
Member of Congress



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Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Member of Congress



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Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress



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Rick Larsen  
Member of Congress



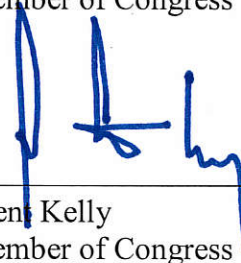
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Peter A. DeFazio  
Member of Congress



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Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress



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Trent Kelly  
Member of Congress



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Mike D. Rogers  
Member of Congress



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Peter Welch  
Member of Congress



Terri A. Sewell  
Member of Congress



Collin C. Peterson  
Member of Congress



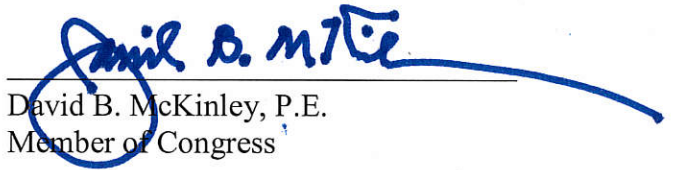
Suzanne Bonamici  
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David N. Cicilline  
Member of Congress



Steve Stivers  
Member of Congress



David B. McKinley, P.E.  
Member of Congress



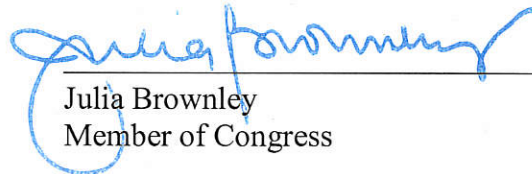
Chris Collins  
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Juan Vargas  
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Adam Kinzinger  
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress



Adam Smith  
Member of Congress



Jerry McNerney  
Member of Congress



Harley Rouda  
Member of Congress



Joyce Beatty  
Member of Congress

*Doris Matsui*

Doris O. Matsui  
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*Ben R. Lujan*

Ben Ray Luján  
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*Sean P. Maloney*

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*Emanuel Cleaver*

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*Scott H. Peters*

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*Daniel W. Lipinski*

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*Al Green*

Al Green  
Member of Congress

*Alcee L. Hastings*

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*Jan Schakowsky*

Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress

*John Garamendi*

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*Rick W. Allen*

Rick W. Allen  
Member of Congress

*Stacey E. Plaskett*


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*Frank D. Lucas*

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*Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan*

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Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly  
Member of Congress



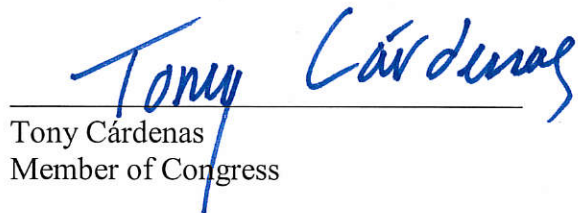
Andy Barr  
Member of Congress



Kurt Schrader  
Member of Congress



Alma S. Adams  
Member of Congress



Tony Cárdenas  
Member of Congress



David Rouzer  
Member of Congress



Bob Gibbs  
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Denny Heck  
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John Katko  
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress