

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 20, 2015

Chairman Harold Rogers
Committee on Appropriations
H-305 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Nita Lowey
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth Building
Washington, DC 20515

Chairman Robert Aderholt
Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture,
Rural Development, FDA, & Related Agencies
2362-A Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Sam Farr
Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture,
Rural Development, FDA, & Related Agencies
1016 Longworth Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rogers, Chairman Aderholt, Ranking Member Lowey and Ranking Member Farr:

Thank you for your past support for food and agriculture research at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA). As you consider fiscal year 2016 appropriations we urge you to sustain this important effort. Your leadership will help ensure that U.S. agriculture remains competitive and continues to lead the world in food and agriculture innovation.

Throughout our history, the United States has depended on agriculture not only to feed its citizens, but also as a major driver of its economy. Exports of agricultural products resulted in a \$37 billion trade surplus in 2011. The agricultural sector is currently responsible for 1 in 12 American jobs. The U.S. farmer is among the most efficient in the world and the United States is the global leader in meeting the world's demand for food because of the investments in food and agriculture research made throughout the 20th century.

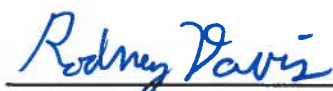
However, investments in agriculture research have stalled or even decreased over the past three decades. More than half of the USDA-NIFA Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) research grant proposals rated as highly innovative go unfunded due to budget constraints. In order to continue the important work made possible by the Committee's prior support, we request robust funding in fiscal year 2016.

We must close this gap in unfunded highly innovative research if the United States is to remain the world's leader in food and agriculture. The United States faces stronger competition as the leaders of China, Brazil, and India increase their agricultural research investment. China has outspent the United States in agricultural research since 2009. Investing in research and innovation through the USDA is necessary to meet the critical challenges facing U.S. agriculture in the 21st century.

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. We are grateful for your leadership in ensuring that the strong funding necessary to protect animal and human health will continue to be available.

Sincerely,



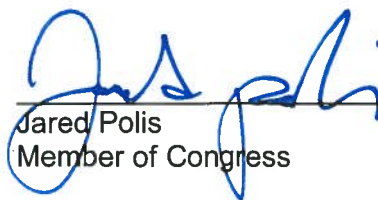
Rodney Davis
Member of Congress



Suzan DelBene
Member of Congress



Mike Bost
Member of Congress



Jared Polis
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



Mike Rogers
Member of Congress



Richard Hanna
Member of Congress



James Langevin
Member of Congress



Glenn "GT" Thompson
Member of Congress



Keith Ellison
Member of Congress



Andy Barr
Member of Congress



Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress



Vicky Hartzler
Member of Congress



Dave Loebsack
Member of Congress



Steve King
Member of Congress



Ron Kind
Member of Congress



Ann Kirkpatrick
Member of Congress



Ben Ray Lujan
Member of Congress



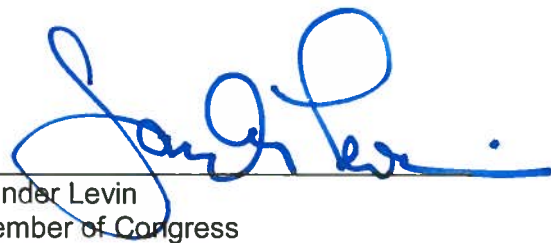
Matt Cartwright
Member of Congress



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



Scott Peters
Member of Congress



Sander Levin
Member of Congress



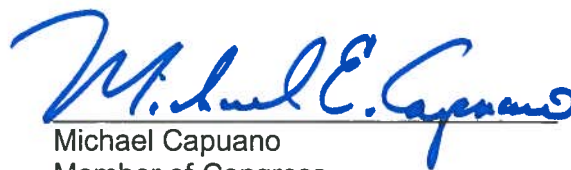
Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress



David Scott
Member of Congress



Filemon Vela, Jr.
Member of Congress



Michael Capuano
Member of Congress



Chris Collins
Member of Congress



Adam Kinzinger
Member of Congress



Mike Kelly
Member of Congress



Richard Neal
Member of Congress



Dan Benishek
Member of Congress



Chris Gibson
Member of Congress



Stacey Plaskett
Member of Congress



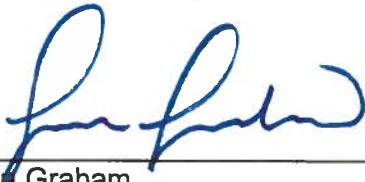
Cheri Bustos
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



Tulsi Gabbard
Member of Congress



Gwen Graham
Member of Congress



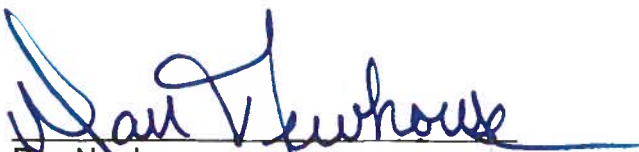
Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress



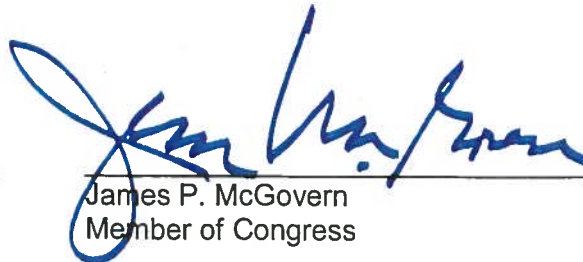
Collin C. Peterson
Member of Congress



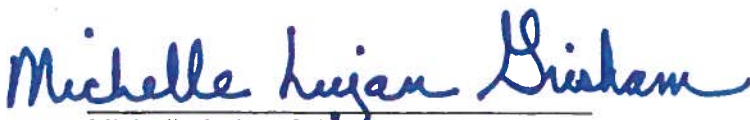
Chaka Fattah
Member of Congress



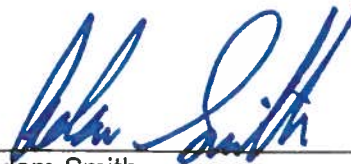
Dan Newhouse
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Michelle Lujan-Grisham
Member of Congress



Adam Smith
Member of Congress



John Moolenaar
Member of Congress



David Cicilline
Member of Congress



John Katko
Member of Congress



Doris Matsui
Member of Congress



Ami Bera
Member of Congress



Frank Guinta
Member of Congress



Mike Doyle
Member of Congress