

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 2, 2025

The Honorable Andy Harris
Chairman
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural
Development, Food and Drug
Administration, and Related Agencies
2362-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Sanford Bishop, Jr.
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural
Development, Food and Drug
Administration, and Related Agencies
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Harris and Ranking Member Bishop:

As you consider the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we write to express our strong support for providing a funding level of \$25 million to the Farm and Food Worker Relief (FFWR) Grant Program at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

USDA created the FFWR Grant Program to help farm workers and meatpacking workers with high pandemic-related health and safety costs. A first of its kind, the FFWR Grant Program provided competitive grants to nonprofits who then distributed funds to workers. Through this program, organizations including Catholic Charities USA, the Cherokee Nation, the United Food and Commercial Workers Charity Foundation, and more provided over \$670 million to farmworkers, grocery workers, and meatpackers. The program was a great success and widely popular among workers in rural communities—the very same workers who kept our nation fed through the pandemic.

Unfortunately, the urgent need for food workers to access emergency funds has not gone away. 2024 was the 14th year in a row in which 10 or more disasters, including Hurricanes Helene, Milton, and Beryl, cost more than \$1 billion in damages. These natural disasters severely disrupted food supply chains across many communities. To guarantee U.S. food supply chains remain resilient, we must ensure frontline food workers are protected.

We respectfully request a funding level of \$25 million for the FFWR Grant Program and inclusion of report language to the FY26 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill:

The Committee encourages the United States Department of Agriculture to use funding to provide hardship pay to membership organizations that represent workers on farms and in grocery stores and meat processing plants to support those workers during a public health emergency, state of emergency, or major disaster.

At every step of our food supply chain, you will find food workers on the frontlines risking their health and safety to ensure our nation's food supply is safe and grocery store shelves are stocked.

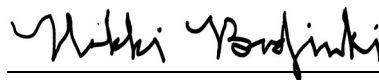
FFWR Grants recognize the incredible service and sacrifices of our country's essential food workers by providing critical financial support when they need it most. Frontline food workers deserve our gratitude and commitment to ensure their health, safety, and financial security.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



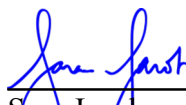
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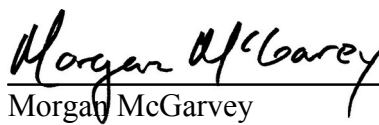
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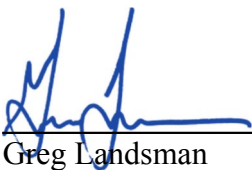
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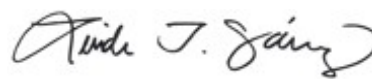
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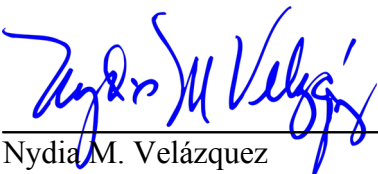
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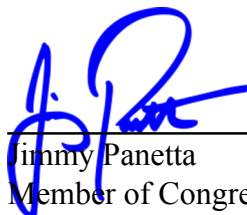
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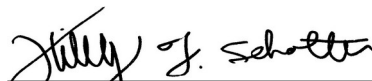
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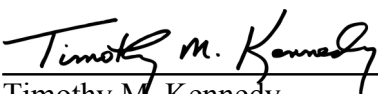
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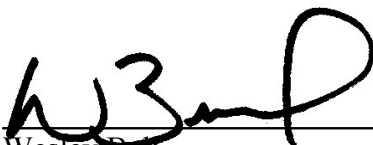
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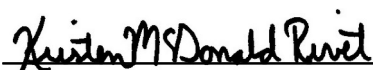
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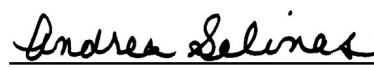
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