

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 27, 2019

The Honorable Sanford Bishop
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Agriculture
2362A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jeff Fortenberry
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Agriculture
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Bishop and Ranking Member Fortenberry:

We write in strong support of Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue's goal to improve customer service, strengthen offices and programs, and save taxpayer dollars by relocating the Economic Research Service (ERS) and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) outside of the National Capital Region.

Key functions of the USDA such as the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) are already located outside of the Washington, D.C. area and have a strong track record of providing quality service to America's farmers, ranchers, rural communities, and research and extension stakeholders. We believe relocating ERS and NIFA would build upon USDA's capacity and improve the agency's ability to recruit top talent from universities across the nation while being closer to rural America and reducing taxpayer expenditures.

We commend the Secretary for his commitment that no ERS or NIFA employee will be involuntarily separated during this transition, and that employees will be offered relocation assistance and will receive the same base pay as before. We also appreciate USDA's notice and attention to its important research, extension, and education mission. It is clear that the Secretary remains committed to mission-delivery both during this transition and once the relocation effort is complete.

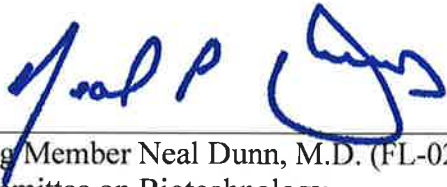
For the above mentioned reasons, we request that no relocation limitation be included in the FY 2020 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill.

While we understand Congressional oversight is appropriate, we are ready to work with you to ensure any logistical complications or issues that may arise are overcome. We appreciate your time and attention to this matter and strongly support this effort.

Sincerely,


Representative Vicky Hartzler (MO-04)

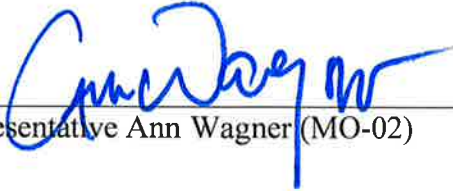

Ranking Member K. Michael Conaway (TX-11)
Committee on Agriculture



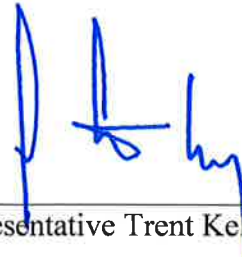
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Representative Glenn "GT" Thompson (PA-15)



Representative Don Bacon (NE-02)



Representative Mike Bost (IL-12)



Representative Joe Wilson (SC-02)



Representative Kevin Brady (TX-08)



Representative Ralph Abraham, M.D. (LA-05)



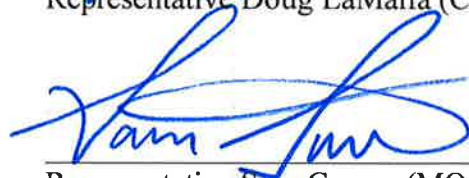
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Representative Doug LaMalfa (CA-01)



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Representative Sam Graves (MO-06)



Representative Bill Flores (TX-17)



Representative David Rouzer (NC-07)



Representative Dusty Johnson (SD-AL)



Representative Jackie Walorski (IN-02)

Austin Scott

Representative Austin Scott (GA-08)

Ted S. Yoho

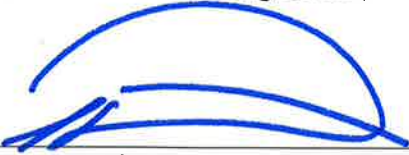
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Rodney Davis

Representative Rodney Davis (IL-13)

Rick W. Allen

Representative Rick Allen (GA-12)