

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 27, 2013

The Honorable Debbie A. Stabenow
Chairwoman
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition & Energy
United States Senate

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition & Energy
United States Senate

The Honorable Frank D. Lucas
Chairman
Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Collin C. Peterson
Ranking Member
Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Colleagues:

As you begin the conference process of the *Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management of 2013* (FARRM Bill), we write to implore you to reject any requests and efforts to dismantle the current Food for Peace Program (Title II of PL-480).

The Food for Peace Program has been the largest and most successful international food aid program in the world. Since its inception in 1954, this program has fed more than 3 billion people in more than 150 countries. Bags filled with life-sustaining food marked as gifts “From the American People” and bearing the American flag have generated goodwill toward the United States from recipients abroad, helping fight anti-American sentiment and terrorist breeding grounds.

During floor consideration of the FARRM Bill in the House of Representatives, an amendment to dismantle the Food for Peace Program offered by Chairman Ed Royce was **defeated**. Chairman Royce’s amendment would have **allowed up to 45% of Food for Peace funding to be sent overseas** to be used as part of the local and regional purchase (LRP) program, cash transfers, or vouchers with no accountability, transparency, or requirement that the money actually be spent on food. Instead of sending wholesome food grown by American farmers and shipped in U.S.-flag vessels, **American’s tax dollars would be used to buy foreign commodities, utilize foreign shipping services, or for any other purpose chosen by the foreign organization or entity receiving the cash payment.**

Some argue that providing funds for nations to buy locally purchased food is a cheaper and faster way to provide aid. The 2008 Farm Bill authorized a pilot program to test the theory of local purchase. The resulting study showed that commodity prices are much higher in Africa, and food still needed to be imported to make up the 209 million metric ton food deficit across the continent. Therefore, locally purchased food aid does not always equal cheaper and faster. More of American’s hard earned tax dollars funding a foreign program is not a good investment.

Unlike other foreign aid programs, the Food for Peace program is American-made through and through. Crops are grown by American farmers, processed and packaged in the United States, and carried by rail or barge to deep-sea ports for overseas delivery by U.S.-flag vessels. Americans are employed every step of the

way in the Food for Peace program, supporting about 44,000 jobs in the agriculture, transportation, and maritime industries. According to a 2010 study by the research company Promar International, **if food aid were no longer grown in the U.S., somewhere between 16,000 and 33,000 American jobs would be lost.**

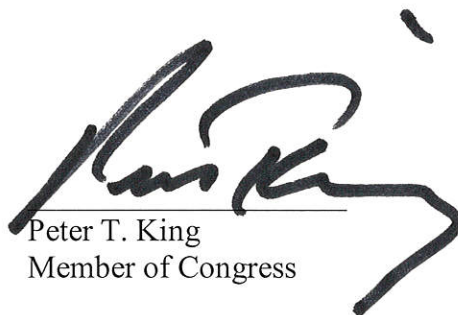
Reforming food aid programs should not hurt American farms and transportation industries in favor of our foreign competitors. American tax dollars should not be used to cut jobs at home in order to support foreign grain traders from the European Union and Russia. We need to focus on creating an economic environment here at home that allows the United States to continue to be generous and directly provide food aid to the countries that need it most.

The United States provides 60% of the world's food aid. We need to be generous to countries that can't grow enough food to feed their people, but not at the expense of American farmers and transportation workers. We ask you to please oppose efforts to dismantle the Food for Peace Program and support the American farmer, the American worker, and the American taxpayer.

Sincerely,



Stephen L. Fincher
Member of Congress



Peter T. King
Member of Congress



Frank A. LoBiondo
Member of Congress



Renee L. Ellmers
Member of Congress



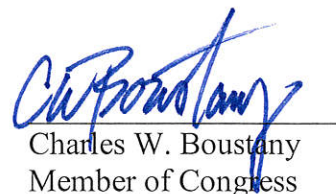
Michael G. Grimm
Member of Congress



Elijah E. Cummings
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Charles W. Boustany
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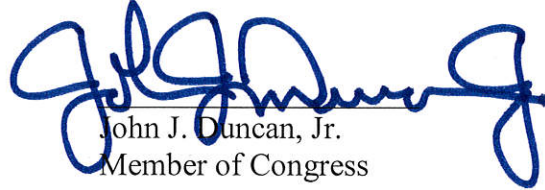
Nick J. Rahall, II
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David B. McKinley, P.E.
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John Caramendi
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John J. Duncan, Jr.
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Robert J. Wittman
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