

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1313

April 27, 2022

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 2051

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

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

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro, Chairman Bishop, Ranking Member Granger and Ranking Member Harris:

Thank you for your continued support for agricultural research at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). As you meet to consider funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, we urge you to sustain this critical effort by supporting several research programs, including the National Institute of Food and Agriculture's (NIFA) Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), the Agriculture Advanced Research and Development Authority (AGARDA), capacity programs that support existing education, research, and Cooperative Extension that provide the Department's "people power" in all 50 states.

First, we respectfully request further robust increases for NIFA-AFRI, building on the enacted FY 2022 level of \$445 million. AFRI remains the nation's leading competitive grants program for agricultural sciences as it focuses on six priority areas outlined by the Farm Bill including plant and animal health, production, and products; food safety, nutrition, and health; bioenergy, natural resources, and environment; agriculture systems and technology; and economics and rural communities. Increased investment in NIFA-AFRI will drive the technological change that is critical to maintaining the United States' ability to spur innovation for the future.

Historically, only about a quarter of the science that AFRI's expert review panel has deemed worthy for funding has been awarded. Increased funds will support research institutions of all types including land-grant, private, public non-land-grant universities, private colleges, and universities, along with private research foundations, among others. These funds will bolster such efforts to achieve our goals of protecting, securing, and improving our food and agriculture and natural resources systems and help meet our growing agricultural needs and managing efficient food systems.

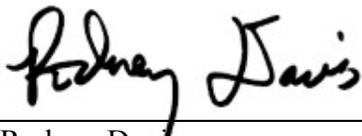
Additionally, we request that the Committee support the Agriculture Advanced Research and Development Authority (AGARDA) which was most recently funded through the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022 (P.L. 117-103) with \$1,000,000 for the purpose of establishing the office. We request that the Committee provide \$10,000,000 for the purpose of completing research projects within the pilot program, to be made available upon USDA's completion of the AGARDA Strategic Plan as funded and directed again through the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022 (P.L. 117-103); further, we request that any unused funds appropriated in FY22 for the purpose of establishing the AGARDA office, pursuant to the Act, be redirected for the purpose of research projects.

AGARDA will provide an array of benefits from increasing mechanization capabilities for the harvesting of specialty crops, addressing labor needs, developing novel countermeasures to prevent animal and plant diseases, and addressing extreme weather changes. This type of high-risk, high-reward research requires federal government involvement to alleviate the technological and financial uncertainties to facilitate meaningful solutions. Through AGARDA, USDA can facilitate public-private partnerships and funding avenues that support innovative concepts and potential commercialization that may not be readily available through other programs.

Further, we request the Committee's support in providing increased funding for research, education, and extension activities through NIFA's capacity programs, including Hatch Act, Smith-Lever, McIntire-Stennis, Evans Allen, 1890 institutions, and 1994 institutions. These programs provide the essential "people power" and multi-state research that supports our nation's experiment stations and extension activities that help keep the United States as the global leader of agriculture research and innovation. These programs are crucial to the long-term success of American farmers, ranchers, and foresters.

Now more than ever, there is an elevated need for increased strategic investments in agricultural research across the board. NIFA-AFRI, AGARDA and capacity programs all play key roles in bolstering the resilience our domestic supply chains. Thank you for your leadership in recognizing the multiple components of a successful agricultural research agenda for the United States and ensuring the continued availability of robust funds to protect animals, crops, and people.

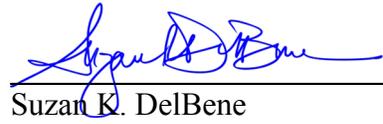
Sincerely,



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Member of Congress



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Suzanne Bonamici
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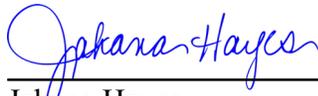
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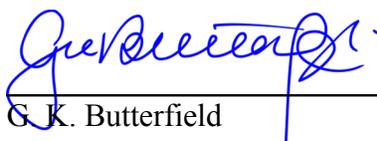
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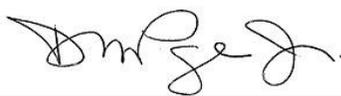
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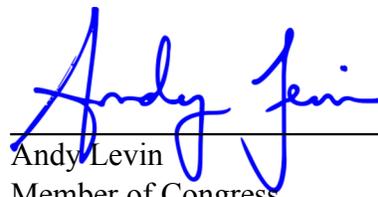
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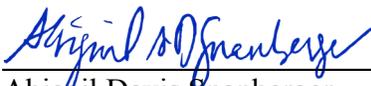
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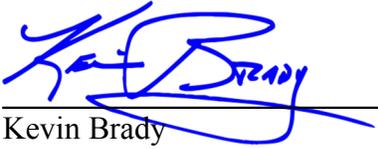
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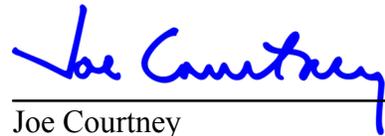
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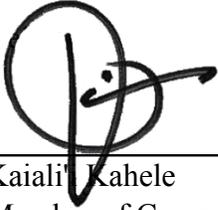
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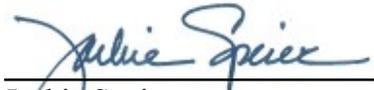
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