

March 2, 2020

The Honorable John Hoeven
Chairman
Subcommittee on Agriculture
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Hoeven and Ranking Member Merkley:

Each year our nation's international food aid programs, including P.L. 480 Title II Food for Peace, Food for Progress, and McGovern-Dole International Food for Education within the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, help reach millions of vulnerable people around the world. These programs have enjoyed significant bipartisan support for more than 60 years. We, the undersigned organizations, respectfully request that Congress continues to fully support these programs by robustly funding these accounts in Fiscal Year 2021 appropriations.

Global food assistance is required as drought, continuing conflict, and other crises persist around the world. According to the UN World Food Programme, 842 million people, or one in nine, are currently suffering from chronic hunger, while over 213 million children worldwide contend with stunting or wasting due to malnutrition. Going into 2020, USAID's Famine Early Warning System Network projects an uptick in food insecurity, with nearly 100 million people in need of emergency food assistance. With hunger on the rise, now is the time for America to continue its leadership role in the world by showing full support for its international food security programs.

Food assistance programs not only benefit the recipients, but also U.S. economic and national security interests. Food aid, in all its forms, is made available through these programs bearing the

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U.S. flag and/or marked “from the American people.” By furthering stability in fragile countries and sparking hope in countless people who are struggling to survive, U.S. strategic interests are protected and expanded. Ultimately, these kinds of foreign assistance programs help create a firm foundation for vulnerable communities to grow and prosper, which is why many former food aid recipient countries are now among the most important U.S. trading partners

The use of American grown commodities as food aid has been a cornerstone of U.S. foreign assistance programs for decades and U.S. food aid has continually evolved and adapted to meet changing needs. Using a combination of U.S. commodities, cash, vouchers, and locally purchased food, the U.S. has worked to expedite hunger relief and save countless lives. Through a joint public-private partnership, American farmers, fishing families, mariners, port workers, private voluntary organizations (PVOs), and the U.S. Government have developed the strongest frontline response to urgent global food insecurity. Food aid is a tangible source of hope to those in need, and American stakeholders take great pride in their support for the world’s most vulnerable people through these programs.

While our organizations at times have policy differences, we stand united in our belief that U.S. food aid programs are among the world’s most critical foreign assistance programs, save countless lives, bolster our nation’s and global security, and help millions in need around the world. We ask that you continue the lifesaving and life improving work of food aid by providing robust appropriations in Fiscal Year 2021 to carry out the necessary and vital work accomplished in the P.L. 480 Title II Food for Peace, Food for Progress, and McGovern-Dole programs.

Thank you,

Alliance to End Hunger
American Association of Port Authorities
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Maritime Congress
American Maritime Officers
American Maritime Officers Service
American President Lines, LLC
American Soybean Association
Bold Ocean LLC
Bread for the World
Breedlove Foods, Inc.
Bunge
California State University Maritime Academy
Cantera Partners
CARE USA
Catholic Relief Services
Didion Milling
Edesia
Euro-America Shipping & Trade, Inc.
Federal Marine Terminals
Feed the Children
Food for the Hungry
Global Food & Nutrition Inc.
GrainPro Inc.
Great Lakes Maritime Academy
Hapag-Lloyd USA, LLC
InterAction
International Longshoremen's Association
International Organization of Masters,
Mates & Pilots
Kansas Grain Sorghum Producers Association
Liberty Maritime Corporation
LifeLine Foods, LLC
Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association
Marine Firemen, Oilers, Watertenders and Wipers
Association
Maritime Institute for Research and Industrial
Development
Massachusetts Maritime Academy
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Barley Growers Association
National Corn Growers Association
National Farmers Union
National Milk Producers Federation
National Sorghum Producers
Navy League of the United States
North American Millers' Association
North American Stevedoring Co.
Port of Beaumont
Port of Lake Charles
Port of Virginia
Potomac Shipping International, LLC
Sailors' Union of the Pacific
Save the Children
Schuyler Line Navigation Company, LLC
Seafarers International Union
Sealift Inc.
Semo Milling
State University of New York Maritime College
Transportation Institute
U.S. Shipping Corp
US Canola Association
US Dry Bean Council
US Ocean LLC
US Rice Producers Association
USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council
USA Rice
Watco Companies, LLC
Waterman Logistics, Inc.
World Food Program USA
World Vision