



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

June 18, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy:

The 2018 Farm Bill expanded the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) program, known now as the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP), because of significant bipartisan support for the program's benefits to specialty crop farmers, food insecure families and the communities in which they reside. GusNIP increases the purchasing power of SNAP recipients when they buy healthy fruits and vegetables at participating grocery stores and farmers markets by leveraging financial incentives like discounts, coupons and loyalty rewards. We write in support of providing the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) with \$51 million in emergency COVID-19 relief funding to both decrease the required non-federal match funding and to meet surging program demand.

GusNIP is a competitive USDA grant that requires grantees to secure half their funding through state budget appropriations and philanthropic sources. Both have shrunk due to the pandemic, at a time of exponential need.

Fruit and vegetable producers across the country are facing significant financial stress as the pandemic disrupts normal channels of business, especially sales to institutional and food service buyers. Total economic losses of \$1.3 billion are forecast in local and regional markets, during March through May 2020 alone.

Specific estimates are unavailable for how many of the newly unemployed are food insecure, however, there are staggering statistics that help illustrate the growing need across the country. As of May 28, and over the past ten weeks, over 40 million jobless claims have been filed with the U.S. Department of Labor, and 36 states have been approved by USDA to operate Pandemic-EBT. The latter reflects the needs of school children, whereas across the country, prior to schools closing, approximately 21 million received free and reduced-price school meals daily.

GusNIP stretches families' food budgets, incentivizes healthier options and stimulates the economy. Without an emergency increase, GusNIP grantees will be faced with exhausted funding exactly at the time they are most needed in the recovery phase of the pandemic. We urge Congress to expand USDA's match at this critically important time by providing \$51 million in emergency funding into this effective nutrition incentive program.

Sincerely,



Daniel T. Kildee
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



Rick Crawford
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

/s/
Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

/s/
Ralph Abraham, M.D.
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

/s/
Brendan F. Boyle
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

/s/
Don Bacon
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

/s/
Anthony Brindisi
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

/s/
Jim R. Baird
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

/s/
Julia Brownley
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

/s/
Rodney Davis
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

/s/
Cheri Bustos
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

/s/
Brian Fitzpatrick
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
G. K. Butterfield
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
Jeff Fortenberry
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
Salud Carbajal
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
French Hill
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
Ed Case
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
Dusty Johnson
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
David N. Cicilline
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
John Katko
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
J. Luis Correa
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
Mike Kelly
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
TJ Cox
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
Peter T. King
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
Jason Crow
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
Roger Marshall, M.D.
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
Suzan DelBene
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_____/s/_____
David B. McKinley, P.E.
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_____/s/_____
Antonio Delgado
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Cathy McMorris Rodgers
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Val Demings
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Carol D. Miller
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Debbie Dingell
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Dan Newhouse
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Dwight Evans
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Austin Scott
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Bill Foster
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Mike Simpson
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Marcia Fudge
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Elise M. Stefanik
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Jared Golden
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Steve Stivers
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Josh Harder
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Glenn "G.T." Thompson
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

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Denny Heck
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Fred Upton
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_____/s/_____
Sheila Jackson Lee
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Brad R. Wenstrup, D.P.M.
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
Doris Matsui
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
Joseph P. Kennedy, III
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
James P. McGovern
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Ro Khanna
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
Jimmy Panetta
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
Derek Kilmer
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
Chris Pappas
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
Ann McLane Kuster
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
Donald M. Payne Jr.
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

_____/s/_____
Conor Lamb
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Ed Perlmutter
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Jim Langevin
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Chellie Pingree
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Andy Levin
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Mark Pocan
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Alan Lowenthal
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David Price
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Sean Maloney
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Jamie Raskin
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Bennie Thompson
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Tim Ryan
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Nydia M. Velázquez
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_____/s/_____
Linda Sánchez
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Peter Welch
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Mary Gay Scanlon
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Terri Sewell
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Kim Schrier, M.D.
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Darren Soto
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David Scott
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Tom Suozzi
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_____/s/_____
Joyce Beatty
MEMBER OF CONGRESS