

**U.S. House of Representatives**  
**Committee on Agriculture**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 24, 2022

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20250

The Honorable Samantha Power  
Administrator  
U.S. Agency for International Development  
1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20523

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Administrator Power,

We write to urge you to leverage the resources available in the Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust (BEHT), an emergency international food aid program administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the United States Administration for International Development (USAID), to help address ongoing humanitarian food crises. The deteriorating state of global food security and the ongoing pressures on availability of commodity food assistance resources warrant the dispersion of those funds.

Over the past year we have seen the emergency food and nutrition needs of hungry citizens around the world intensify, resulting from events such as the COVID-19 Pandemic, conflicts, and natural disasters. The USDA estimates that around 1.2 billion people were food-insecure in 2021, a 32 percent increase from 2020, and recent trends indicate that the number is on the rise. In countries such as Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, South Sudan, Syria, and Yemen, we have seen a dire need for food assistance.

The immediate need for aid, particularly commodities, will likely increase in light of Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine. Ukraine is a large producer of wheat and grain, and if production levels drop it is likely that we will see corresponding pressure in the global grain markets. This may be compounded by further shocks to global grain, energy, and fertilizer supply, as Russia is rightfully sanctioned for its actions. Together, Russia and Ukraine supply 26 percent of global wheat exports and Ukraine supplies 13 percent of the world's corn. Supply shortages or increased prices will disproportionately impact developing and middle-income countries that rely heavily on imports of food.

In light of these complex and disturbing circumstances, we request that you use the BEHT to bolster American assistance to hungry people around the world. The trust was created for use during times of exceptional need, and the acute hunger crises that too many people are experiencing justifies the use of these funds.

Sincerely,



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David Scott  
Chairman



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Glenn 'GT' Thompson  
Ranking Member



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Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.  
Member of Congress



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Cynthia Axne  
Member of Congress



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Troy Balderson  
Member of Congress



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Cheri Bustos  
Member of Congress



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Angie Craig  
Member of Congress



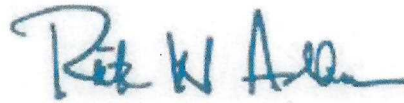
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Randy Feenstra  
Member of Congress



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Josh Harder  
Member of Congress



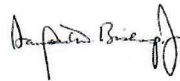
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Rick W. Allen  
Member of Congress



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James R. Baird  
Member of Congress



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Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
Member of Congress



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Jim Costa  
Member of Congress



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Eric A. "Rick" Crawford  
Member of Congress



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Michelle Fischbach  
Member of Congress



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Jahana Hayes  
Member of Congress

Dusty Johnson

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Dusty Johnson  
Member of Congress

Ro Khanna

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Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress

Doug LaMalfa

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Doug LaMalfa  
Member of Congress

Julia Letlow

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Julia Letlow  
Member of Congress

Tracey Mann

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Tracey Mann  
Member of Congress

Barry Moore

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Barry Moore  
Member of Congress

Jimmy Panetta

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Jimmy Panetta  
Member of Congress

Trent Kelly

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Trent Kelly  
Member of Congress

Ann McLane Kuster

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Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress

Al Lawson

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Al Lawson  
Member of Congress

Sean Patrick Maloney

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James P. McGovern

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Member of Congress

Tom O'Halleran

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Member of Congress

Chellie Pingree

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Member of Congress



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David Rouzer  
Member of Congress



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Kim Schrier  
Member of Congress



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Abigail Davis Spanberger  
Member of Congress



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Bobby L. Rush  
Member of Congress



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Austin Scott  
Member of Congress



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Filemon Vela  
Member of Congress