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U.S. House of Representatives

Committee on Agriculture

Room 1301, Longworth House Office Building

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April 23, 2020

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The Honorable Mike Pence
Vice President
The White House
Office of the Vice President
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Vice President Pence:

Because of COVID-19, many of America's pork producers have no access to processing and have no choice but to depopulate their herds. In your role as chair of the White House Coronavirus Task Force, I urge you to coordinate a robust Federal response to address this dire situation, including:

- Coordination between all involved Federal, state, and local governments to provide urgent assistance to impacted farmers.
- Standards for humane euthanasia and disposal of impacted animals as well as outreach on existing financial and technical assistance resources available to producers.
- Flexibility to use all available state and Federal processing capacity to the maximum extent possible to minimize supply chain disruption.
- Federal guidance on best practices to prevent COVID-19 transmission in plants.
- Access to adequate COVID-19 testing for plant workers and communities.
- Sufficient personal protective equipment for all plant workers and Federal meat inspectors.
- Resources and outreach to help farmers deal with added stress during this difficult time.
- Any other means at your disposal to support farmers, plant workers, and plant communities.

Without fast action and clear coordination, this situation will only get worse, not just for pork producers but for other livestock and poultry producers as well. I appreciate your commitment to addressing this issue and look forward to working with you to get these plants back up and running safely.

Sincerely,

Collin C. Peterson
Chairman

CC: The Honorable Chad Wolf, Acting Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
The Honorable Sonny Perdue, Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture
The Honorable Alex Azar, Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services