

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 25, 2023

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250

The Honorable Katherine Tai
Ambassador
Office of the United State Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Secretary Vilsack and Ambassador Tai:

On March 23, 2020, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the General Administration of Customs China (GACC) adopted a policy of regionalization in the event of a highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) outbreak. This agreement allows states unaffected by HPAI to remain eligible for international trade during an outbreak while outlining conditions affected states must meet to regain eligibility to export products. Specifically, if HPAI was detected in poultry, a statewide ban would be enforced for all products exported from the state of detection and the resumption of imports and exports would be approved no sooner than 90 days post-virus elimination, disinfection and cleaning at all impacted sites in a state.

To illustrate the volume of imports into the Chinese market, a resumption of trade in late 2019 following the 2014-2015 HPAI outbreak restored China's position as a second-largest importer of U.S. poultry. Poultry product exports in 2022 totaled a record of more than \$1.055 billion. This figure likely would have been even larger had GACC moved quickly to lift restrictions and resume the importation of poultry products from APHIS-approved states.

Notably, the Chinese market is a primary destination for U.S. chicken feet, known as "paws," which are a byproduct in the U.S. In 2022, paw exports to China accounted for over \$880 million alone. In addition, China is a top five market for U.S. turkey products. Maintaining this access is critical to a thriving U.S. poultry industry.

Throughout the early stages of the recent HPAI outbreak that began in February 2022, GACC

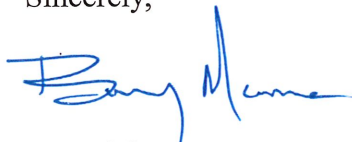
followed these conditions to resume trade. Restrictions for the states of Kentucky and Texas were lifted in July following outbreaks in February and April. In these instances, GACC lifted restrictions on trade exactly 90 days post-virus elimination, in accordance with the agreement. However, in early August GACC reversed its position and reinstated bans for those states.

Since that time, GACC has not responded to further requests from APHIS to lift the restrictions for affected states, nor has GACC responded to similar requests from the states of Kentucky, Oklahoma, Delaware, North Carolina, New Jersey, Arkansas, Maine, Maryland and Texas – all of whom met conditions to resume trade per the agreement. These states include 158 poultry processing and cold storage facilities as well as representing 43 percent of broiler production in the U.S., representing tremendous sums of revenue lost due to GACC’s inaction. Additionally, this is a concerning precedent for other states that may experience an HPAI outbreak in the future.

We respectfully request that you engage with your Chinese counterparts and encourage them to quickly honor the regionalization agreement both countries signed in 2020, including immediately restoring market access to those states meeting all conditions set out in the agreement. My colleagues and I look forward to working together in reopening this critical market for U.S. poultry exports.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Barry Moore
Member of Congress



Abigail Spanberger
Member of Congress



Glenn "GT" Thompson
Member of Congress



David Scott
Member of Congress



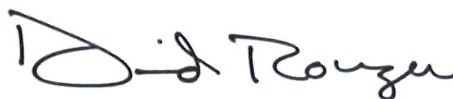
Trent Kelly
Member of Congress



Donald G. Davis
Member of Congress



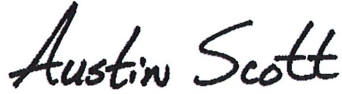
Lori Chavez-DeRemer
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David Rouzer
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Mark Alford
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Austin Scott
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Chellie Pingree
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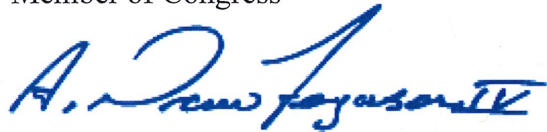
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Wiley Nickel
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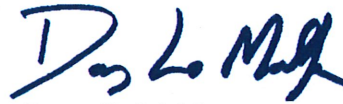
Elissa Slotkin
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A. Drew Ferguson IV
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Robert J. Wittman
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Doug LaMalfa
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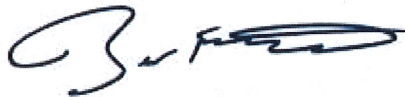
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Angie Craig
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Randy Feenstra
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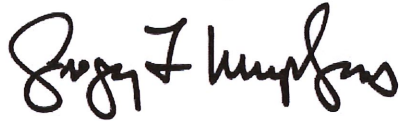
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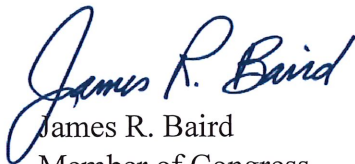
Frank Lucas
Member of Congress



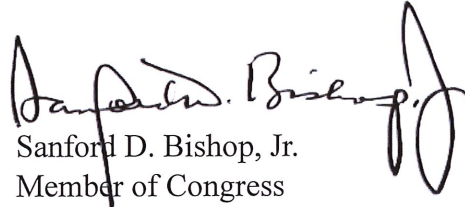
Zach Nunn
Member of Congress



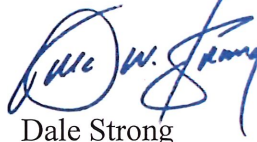
Jasmine Crockett
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James R. Baird
Member of Congress



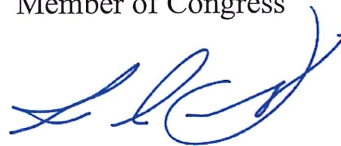
Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
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Dale Strong
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Andy Harris, M.D.
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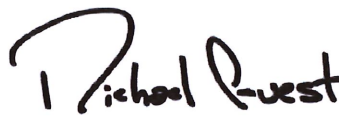
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Jen Kiggans
Member of Congress



Michelle Fischbach
Member of Congress



Michael Guest
Member of Congress



Bruce Westerman
Member of Congress



Greg Pence
Member of Congress



Dusty Johnson
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable Alexis Taylor
Under Secretary of Agriculture for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs

The Honorable Doug McKalip
Chief Agricultural Negotiator, Office of the United States Trade Representative

