

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 11, 2023

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chair
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairs Murray and Granger, Vice Chair Collins, and Ranking Member DeLauro,

We write to request that you include funding to assist New England farmers affected by severe flooding in either a fiscal year 2024 spending bill or fiscal year 2023 emergency spending legislation.

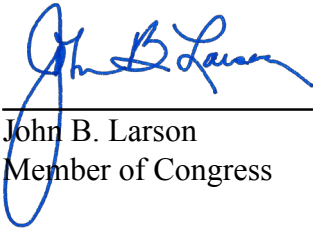
July's historic flooding in the Northeast caused widespread damage across the region. The significant wind and rainfall from the heavy storms caused substantial harm to the region's agricultural industry, destroying over 3,000 acres and causing sales losses of over \$26 million in Connecticut and more than 2,700 acres and \$15 million in Massachusetts. In Vermont, farmers have reported at least \$16 million in damage and losses. For many farmers, the entirety of their crops will be lost this season.

To make matters worse, many of the farmers affected are poorly protected by existing USDA programs risk management programs. The small- and mid- size nature of many of these businesses make them a poor fit for the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) or Federal Crop Insurance. Beyond program design, these farms do not have the resources to dedicate towards the often-burdensome requirements to maintain enrollment, especially with a uniquely diverse crop production.

Beginning with disasters occurring in 2017 and continuing through calendar year 2022, Congress has authorized and allocated ad hoc funding to offset damage to uninsured crops caused by extreme weather. It is clear that there is a need for this authority to be authorized for the current calendar year and for funds to be appropriated to adequately respond to the needs of Northeastern farmers. Additionally, Congress should once again explicitly authorize state block grant authority for these funds, allowing the USDA to most efficiently get relief funding out the door.

There is precedent for Congress providing increased disaster assistance to farmers through annual spending bills or supplemental disaster appropriations and we believe such aid is again warranted. We strongly urge the committee to include funding to provide direct relief to Northeast farmers impacted by flooding.

Sincerely,



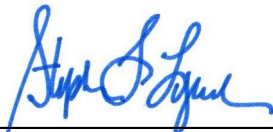
John B. Larson
Member of Congress



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



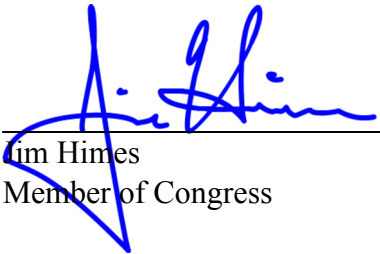
Patrick K. Ryan
Member of Congress



Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



Richard E. Neal
Member of Congress



Jim Himes
Member of Congress



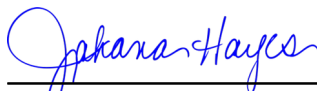
Lori Trahan
Member of Congress



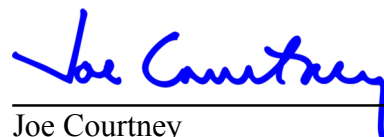
Chris Pappas
Member of Congress



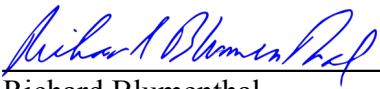
James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



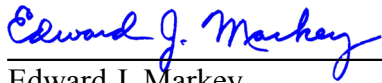
Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress



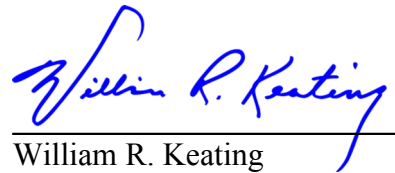
Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



William R. Keating
Member of Congress



Becca Balint
Member of Congress



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Peter Welch
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator