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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4602

November 23, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
1236 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Leader McConnell, and Leader Schumer:

I deeply appreciate your work to provide relief to the American people during the COVID-19 pandemic. While the CARES Act was a lifeline for many in the agriculture industry, contract poultry growers were left behind. I urge you to include this important industry in any upcoming relief package to fix this oversight.

Contract poultry growers on the Eastern Shore of Virginia are ineligible for federal aid, despite being adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Large poultry companies often contract with local farmers to grow thousands of birds in houses before processing them. From March to May, 2.2 million fewer chickens were placed with Virginia growers. As a result, each Virginia chicken grower lost on average approximately \$15,000.

Unfortunately, contract growers are excluded from the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program established by the CARES Act and many growers are ineligible for small business relief programs. Growers are left without their budgeted source of revenue during a period of economic uncertainty or access to federal relief. We must do more to help these growers.

As you continue to negotiate, I urge you to ensure that contract poultry growers are eligible for aid in future COVID-19 relief legislation. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Elaine G. Luria
Member of Congress