

February 14, 2011

The Honorable Herb Kohl  
Chairman  
Senate Agricultural Appropriations Subcommittee  
Dirksen Senate Office Building, SD-129

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Ranking Member  
Senate Agricultural Appropriations Subcommittee  
Dirksen Senate Office Building, SD-190

The Honorable Jack Kingston  
Chairman  
House Agricultural Appropriations Subcommittee  
Rayburn House Office Building, 2362-A

The Honorable Sam Farr  
Ranking Member  
House Agricultural Appropriations Subcommittee  
Longworth House Office Building, 1016

Dear Chairmen Kohl and Kingston and Ranking Members Blunt and Farr:

We are writing to urge you to maintain longstanding U.S. support for international food aid programs, including P.L. 480 Title II (Title II) and the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program (McGovern-Dole). Current proposals to return federal funding to FY 2008 levels would result in dramatic reductions to our global food aid programs, which save and improve the lives of millions of the world's poorest people each year.

U.S. food aid has enjoyed decades of bipartisan support, from the Marshall Plan and the creation of the McGovern-Dole Program to U.S. leadership in providing emergency food to populations devastated by the 2008 global food price crisis. The U.S. provides critical leadership on this issue not only because it is the right thing to do – it is in our national security and economic interest.

We live in a world where hunger, poverty and instability are inextricably linked. As we watch food prices rise sharply around the world, already exceeding 2008 levels and helping to spur riots in multiple countries, it is critical to global stability that the U.S. lead in addressing short-term emergencies while also working to eradicate hunger in the long-run. Last month leading U.S. economist Nouriel Roubini cautioned that rapidly rising food prices pose a significant threat to global stability. Scaling back funding for Title II and McGovern-Dole limits our ability to respond to current emergencies while undermining vital efforts to address hunger's root causes.

Likewise, the positive economic impacts of our food aid investments are clear. In recent years, U.S. food aid programs have distributed more than 2.5 million tons of U.S. commodities, including wheat, corn, corn soy blend, dry beans, rice, vegetable oil, yellow peas, lentils and sorghum. U.S. farmers take great pride in their support for the world's most vulnerable people through food aid programs. In addition to farmers, these programs benefit a range of related domestic industries, such as processors, millers, packagers, freight forwarders, port facilities, and the U.S.-flag Merchant Marine.

Now is not the time to roll back progress. Emergency hunger needs in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sudan and many other countries are high and expected to rise as food prices increase and new emergencies occur. Even though Congress will face many contentious issues and difficult budgetary decisions in the weeks and months ahead, it is essential to maintain our support for international food aid programs. Please ensure that funding for P.L. 480 Title II and McGovern-Dole is maintained and not cut in the final FY 2011 Appropriations Bill.

February 14, 2011  
Page 2

Sincerely,

America Cargo Transport Corp.  
American Maritime Congress  
American Maritime Officers  
American Maritime Officers' Service  
American Peanut Council  
APL Ltd.  
DSM North America  
Global Food & Nutrition Inc.  
GrainPro, Inc.  
International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots  
Kraft Foods  
Liberty Maritime Corporation  
Maersk Line, Limited  
Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association  
Maritime Institute for Research and Industrial Development  
Monsanto  
National Farmers Union  
National Sorghum Producers  
North American Millers' Association  
Sailors' Union of the Pacific  
Seafarers International Union  
Transportation Institute  
United Maritime Group LLC  
United States Dry Bean Council  
USA Dry Pea and Lentil Council  
USA Maritime  
USA Rice Federation