Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

November 12, 2026

The Honorable Dr. Andy Harris
Chair
Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sanford Bishop, Jr.
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Harris and Ranking Member Bishop:

As Members of Congress representing districts impacted by the devastating freeze event in April 2026 in the Mid-Atlantic region, we respectfully submit an appropriations request for emergency agricultural disaster funding to provide relief to farmers facing losses from the recent freeze in either the Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies appropriations bill or as part of a supplemental funding bill this year.

In the early morning hours of April 21, 2026, the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States experienced a severe temperature drop, resulting in a freeze that devastated specialty crops across seven states including Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Delaware, New York, New Jersey, and West Virginia. This region, which is among the top areas of the country for specialty crop production, experienced devastating and historic losses, including hundreds of millions of dollars in damage with some farmers and companies experiencing complete loss of their crop. In addition to crop loss, some growers are facing permanent damage to their trees and grapevines compounded by ongoing drought conditions throughout the region which will have lasting implications beyond this season.

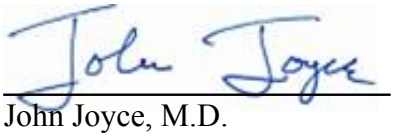
For example, preliminary estimates from Pennsylvania's Department of Agriculture indicate that specialty crop farmers are facing $150-$200 million in damages from the freeze. The most recent survey in Maryland puts value-added losses from grape crop damage alone at $30.4 million, with a preliminary survey from the Maryland Farm Bureau indicating that almost all impacted growers sustained major losses, with the average estimated crop loss at 67.5% and the hardest hit areas facing near-total losses of 90% or higher across surveyed crops. And in New Jersey, preliminary estimates point to at least $135-$170 million of damage from the freeze, with significant additional losses expected to be reported in the coming months.

Producers across the Mid-Atlantic continue to face the challenges of labor and maintenance for their farms, despite the absence of a harvestable crop to offset the costs. This has resulted in significant economic hardship for the industry.

Further exacerbating the challenges are the gaps in specialty crop qualification for key Federal emergency relief programs. While USDA continues to work towards a long-term solution to improve these programs for specialty crop farmers, Mid-Atlantic farmers facing losses from the freeze need immediate relief. It is imperative that Congress provide emergency funding for impacted Mid-Atlantic farmers as soon as possible, and that the funding be accessible to specialty crop farmers and made available to adequately address the range of losses they are experiencing as a result of the freeze.

Congress has consistently demonstrated support of specialty crop growers through policy and appropriations. While this freeze event has informed meaningful conversations on improving existing emergency relief programs long-term, the urgency of the immediate need for relief for specialty crop producers in the Mid-Atlantic cannot wait. We appreciate your support for specialty crops in the Mid-Atlantic and look forward to your partnership in providing critical relief for producers.

Sincerely,



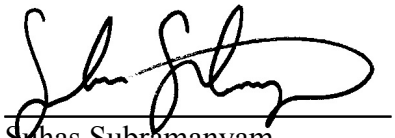
John Joyce, M.D.
Member of Congress



Rob Bresnahan, Jr.
Member of Congress



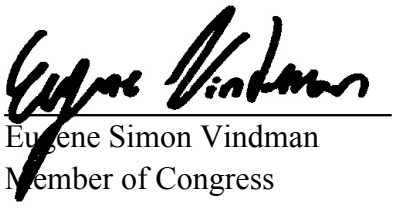
Brian K. Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress



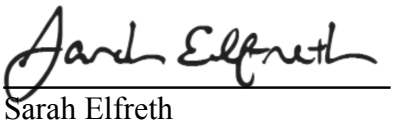
Suhas Subramanyam
Member of Congress



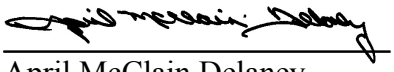
Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress



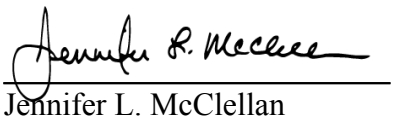
Eugene Simon Vindman
Member of Congress



Sarah Elfreth
Member of Congress



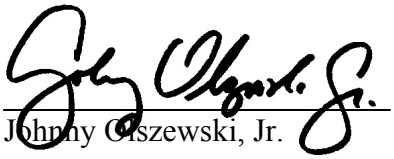
April McClain Delaney
Member of Congress



Jennifer L. McClellan
Member of Congress



Mike Kelly
Member of Congress



Johnny Olszewski, Jr.
Member of Congress



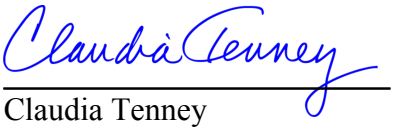
Ben Cline
Member of Congress



Patrick Ryan
Member of Congress



Robert J. Wittman
Member of Congress



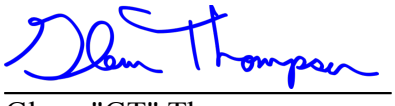
Claudia Tenney
Member of Congress



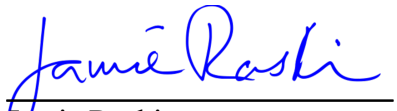
Summer L. Lee
Member of Congress



Sarah McBride
Member of Congress



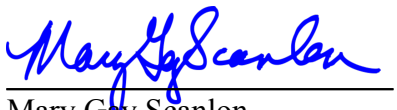
Glenn "GT" Thompson
Member of Congress



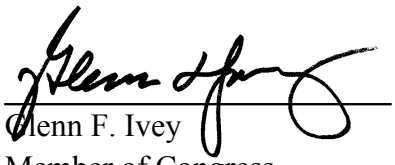
Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



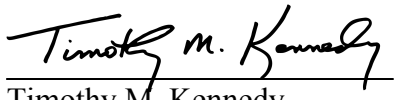
Chrissy Houlahan
Member of Congress



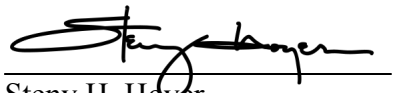
Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress



Glenn F. Ivey
Member of Congress



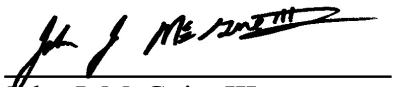
Timothy M. Kennedy
Member of Congress



Steny H. Hoyer
Member of Congress



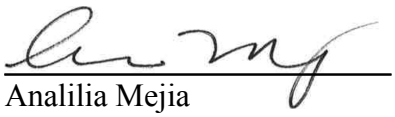
Josh Riley
Member of Congress



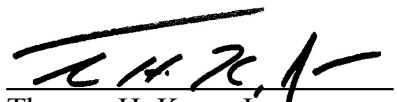
John J. McGuire III
Member of Congress



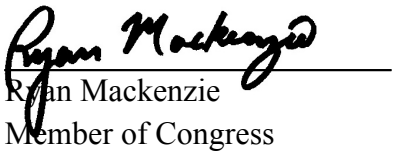
Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress



Analilia Mejia
Member of Congress



Thomas H. Kean, Jr.
Member of Congress



Ryan Mackenzie
Member of Congress



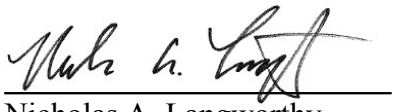
Nellie Pou
Member of Congress



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress



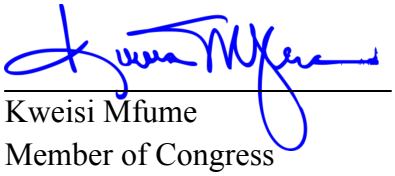
Jen A. Kiggans
Member of Congress



Nicholas A. Langworthy
Member of Congress



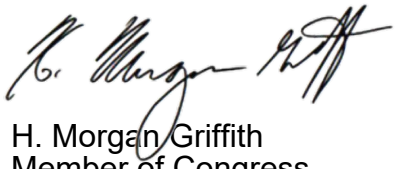
Paul D. Tonko
Member of Congress



Kweisi Mfume
Member of Congress



Chris Deluzio
Member of Congress



H. Morgan Griffith
Member of Congress