



June 07, 2017

The Honorable Ron Johnson  
328 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin  
709 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
1233 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mark Pocan  
1421 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Ron Kind  
1502 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Gwen Moore  
2252 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable James Sensenbrenner  
2449 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Glenn Grothman  
1217 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Sean Duffy  
2330 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mike Gallagher  
1007 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Wisconsin Delegation:

On Thursday, May 11, the Trump Administration significantly repositioned the Office of Rural Development within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), when Agriculture Secretary Sonny Purdue announced the creation of a Trade Undersecretary, and the elimination of the Undersecretary for Rural Development position. On Tuesday, May 23, the Trump Administration released its budget blueprint document, which calls for a \$4.7 billion cut, a 21% loss to the USDA. Agriculture Secretary Purdue was quoted as saying "I don't think there's any reason to try to sugarcoat this," when referring to the dramatic funding cuts being proposed to the USDA by the Trump Administration.

The 2014 Farm Bill contained a directive for the USDA to create a new Undersecretary of Trade. Although USDA is complying with that directive, USDA is under no obligation to eliminate any other mission area or Undersecretary to accomplish that directive. The elimination of the Undersecretary for Rural Development, paired with the significant cuts to the USDA, will have a negative impact on underserved, rural communities throughout Wisconsin.

Overall, USDA has invested \$121.9 million to help rural Wisconsin manufacturers, which support 128,814 jobs in Wisconsin. USDA has invested \$290.7 million to support new and improved broadband service for rural Wisconsin families. USDA has also invested \$239.3 million to support efficient water supplies, treatment and storage facilities, and wastewater treatment systems in rural areas. In 2016 alone, USDA invested \$556.2 million into 8,798 projects throughout Wisconsin. These investments have improved the lives of thousands of

rural Wisconsin families, and now these vital programs will be facing significant cuts or elimination under the Trump Administration's budget proposal.

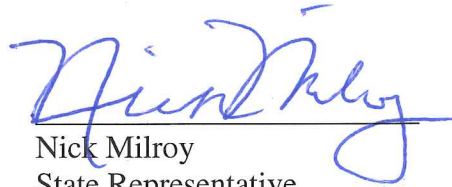
With many rural Wisconsin communities still recovering from the Great Recession, we cannot afford to lose critical rural development investments. Wisconsinites deserve core services and programs aimed directly at addressing the unique and diverse needs of rural communities. USDA's Rural Development Mission Area allows underserved rural communities in Wisconsin to be competitive in the national and global marketplace. Rural Wisconsin depends on a strong federal partner to help make essential investments in critical infrastructure and economic development efforts.

The undersigned members of the Wisconsin State Assembly and Wisconsin State Senate call on you to prevent any attempts to eliminate the Rural Development Mission Area, the Office of the Undersecretary for Rural Development, and other vital USDA programs that rural Wisconsin communities and families depend on. Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,



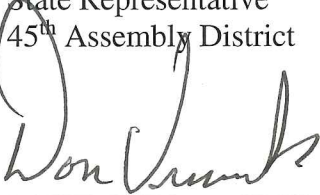
Mark Spreitzer  
State Representative  
45<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Nick Milroy  
State Representative  
73<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District



Katrina Shankland  
State Representative  
71<sup>st</sup> Assembly District



Don Vruwink  
State Representative  
43<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District



Jonathan Brostoff  
State Representative  
19<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Lena Taylor  
State Senator  
4<sup>th</sup> Senate District



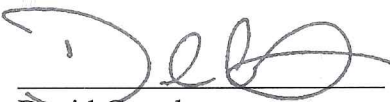
Tim Carpenter  
State Senator  
3<sup>rd</sup> Senate District



Debra Kolste  
State Representative  
44<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Dianne Hesselbein  
State Representative  
79<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



David Crowley  
State Representative  
17<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Sondy Pope  
State Representative  
80<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Lisa Subeck  
State Representative  
78<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Jimmy Anderson  
State Representative  
47<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Tod Ohnstad  
State Representative  
65<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Jill Billings  
State Representative  
95<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

*Dave Considine*

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Dave Considine  
State Representative  
81<sup>st</sup> Assembly District

*Janis Ringhand*

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Janis Ringhand  
State Senator  
15<sup>th</sup> Senate District

*JoCasta Zamarripa*

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JoCasta Zamarripa  
State Representative  
8<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

*Jennifer Shilling*

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Jennifer Shilling  
State Senator  
32<sup>nd</sup> Senate District

*Jon Erpenbach*

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Jon Erpenbach  
State Senator  
27<sup>th</sup> Senate District

*Josh Zepnick*

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Josh Zepnick  
State Representative  
9<sup>th</sup> Assembly District