

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 15, 2016

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chairman
Subcommittee on Agriculture,
Rural Development, FDA and
Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sam Farr
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture,
Rural Development, FDA and
Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Aderholt and Ranking Member Farr:

As members representing citrus-producing districts, we appreciate the opportunity to express our support for program funding in the FY 2017 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies Appropriations bill to support the continued vitality of the \$11 billion US citrus industry. We respectfully request that you consider the following *programmatic requests*:

- 1. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service – Citrus Health Response Program**
\$58 million, \$17 million above the President’s FY17 request, \$10 million above FY16 enacted

This national program is critical for the pest and disease exclusion and eradication activities including those associated with Huanglongbing (HLB) and its vector the Asian Citrus Psyllid (ACP). The survival of the citrus industry in the U.S. is dependent on this funding, which supports efforts in citrus-producing states to research, survey and combat both the pest and the disease.

- 2. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service - Huanglongbing Multi-Agency Coordination Group**
\$7.5 million, \$5 million above the President’s FY17 request, equal to FY16 enacted

The Huanglongbing Multi-Agency Coordination (HLB-MAC) Group is focused on unique short-term solutions to help the citrus industry, and is the only dedicated funding source that, to-date, has developed successful pathways to provide immediate relief. Helping growers explore new possible solutions, the MAC has been incredibly popular and effective, in spite of its limited personnel. The agency should appropriately allocate resources based on critical need and maximum impact to the citrus industry.

Additionally, we respectfully ask for your consideration of the following *report language* requests:

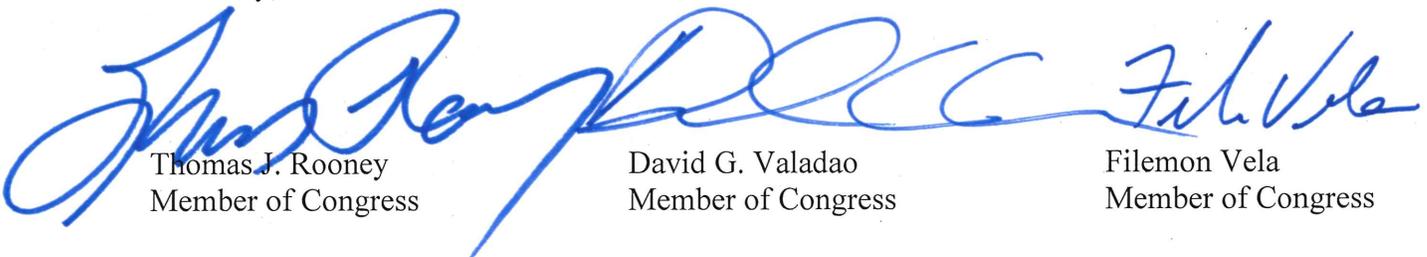
- Huanglongbing Emergency Response* - The Committee encourages APHIS to allocate sufficient resources in order to continue vital management, control, and associated activities to address citrus greening. The disease, for which there is no cure, has caused a

reduction in citrus production by over 60% since 2007 in Florida alone. All citrus producing counties in Texas are under quarantine, and California has found the Asian Citrus Psyllid, the vector of the disease, in some backyard trees. The spread of this disease has called the domestic citrus industry's future into question, costing thousands of jobs and millions in lost revenue. In addition, the agency is encouraged to support priorities and strategies identified by the Huanglongbing Multi-Agency Co-ordination group which will benefit the citrus industry. The agency should appropriately allocate resources based on critical need and maximum effect to the citrus industry.

2. *Citrus Health Response Program (CHRP)* - CHRP is a national effort to protect the U.S. industry from the ravages of invasive pests and diseases. These funds are designed to partner with state departments of agriculture and industry groups to address the challenges of citrus pests and diseases. In addition to the funds provided in this account, the Committee encourages APHIS to utilize the funds available in the Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention Programs account to the greatest extent possible in an attempt to sustain the economic viability of the citrus industry.
3. *Citrus Greening Disease Research* - The Committee commends the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) on its' research efforts on citrus greening disease and encourages the agency to continue working to develop methods to reduce transmission and enhance immunity in citrus trees and to work with industry, universities, growers, and other partners to develop effective control mechanisms. The Committee also encourages ARS to coordinate its efforts with the Multi-Agency Coordination group.
4. *Citrus Disease Research Program* - The 2014 farm bill established the Emergency Citrus Disease Research and Extension Program, which is intended to discover and develop tools for early detection, control, and eradication of diseases and pests that threaten domestic citrus production and processing, and provided \$25,000,000 per year in mandatory funding for the program through the Specialty Crop Research Initiative. The Committee believes research projects funded under this authority should be prioritized based on the critical threat of citrus greening and encourages National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), to the maximum extent practicable, to follow the recommendations of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Advisory Board's citrus disease subcommittee and to collaborate with the Huanglongbing Multi-Agency Coordination group.

Thank you for your support for these initiatives. If you have any questions or need any further information please do not hesitate to contact Congressman Rooney's Legislative Assistant, Clay Hollis, at 5-5792.

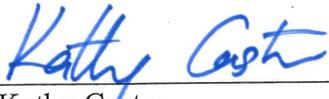
Sincerely,



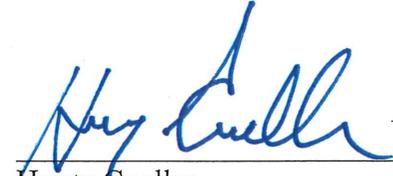
Thomas J. Rooney
Member of Congress

David G. Valadao
Member of Congress

Filemon Vela
Member of Congress



Kathy Castor
Member of Congress



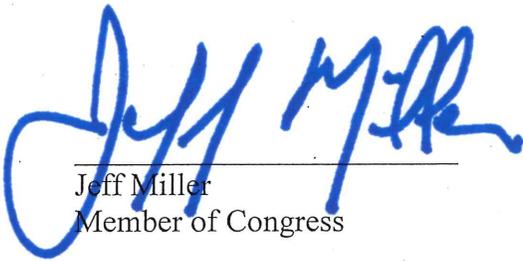
Henry Cuellar
Member of Congress



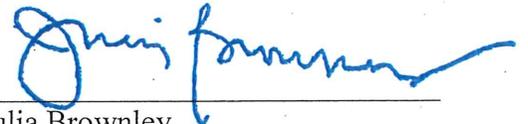
Lois Frankel
Member of Congress



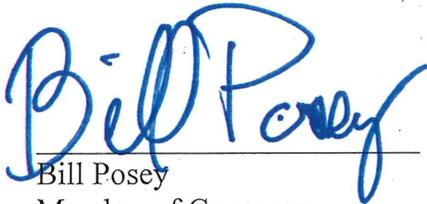
Mark Takano
Member of Congress



Jeff Miller
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Bill Posey
Member of Congress



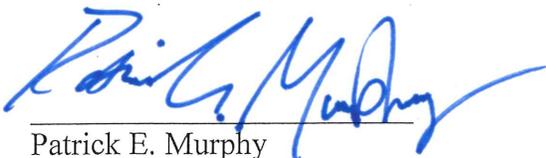
Rubén Hinojosa
Member of Congress



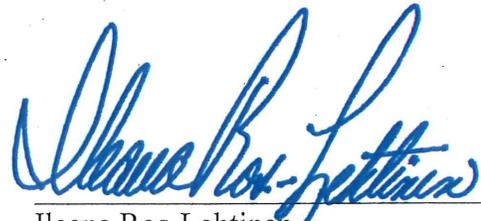
Dennis A. Ross
Member of Congress



Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



Patrick E. Murphy
Member of Congress



Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
Member of Congress



Carlos Curbelo
Member of Congress



Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



Ted Deutch
Member of Congress



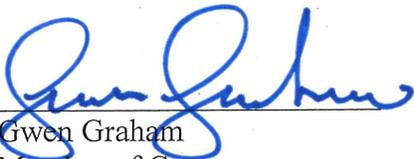
Curt Clawson
Member of Congress



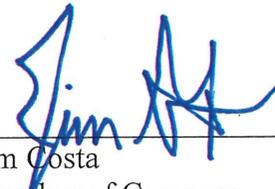
Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



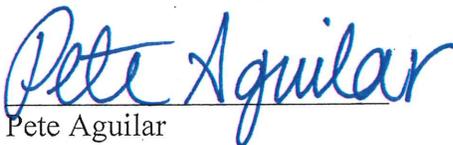
Paul Cook
Member of Congress



Gwen Graham
Member of Congress



Jim Costa
Member of Congress



Pete Aguilar
Member of Congress



Ted S. Yoho, DVM
Member of Congress