

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Agriculture
Washington, DC 20515

November 15, 2013

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
United State Department of Agriculture
14th and Independence
Washington, DC 20000

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

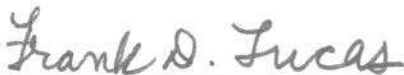
We are writing you about the future of the proposed rule, Modernization of Poultry Slaughter Inspection. We know that USDA is very supportive of the proposed rule and are inquiring as to when you plan to move this rule forward.

According to the January 27, 2012, proposed rule, the effectiveness of this new inspection system has been demonstrated through a pilot program which was run in 25 poultry plants for over 14 years. The proposed rule included data that compared performance measures at the pilot plants and traditional plants, and found that the pilot plants performed as well as or better than traditional plants on key standards.

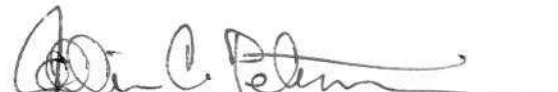
Most importantly, the peer-reviewed risk assessment included in the proposed rule demonstrates that at least 5,000 foodborne illnesses would be prevented if the poultry inspection system was modernized. Additionally, FSIS projects that almost \$80 million in health care costs would be saved on an annual basis based off these prevented foodborne illnesses. Furthermore, based on FSIS projections of its budget cost-savings analysis, the expected reduction in government spending would be approximately \$14.6 million in the first year and would average about \$39.6 million in subsequent years.

We are interested to know when you plan to send the proposed rule to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and your timeline for implementation of the rule, once finalized.

Sincerely,



Frank D. Lucas
Chairman,
House Committee on Agriculture



Collin C. Peterson
Ranking Member,
House Committee on Agriculture

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Rick Crawford
Chairman,
Subcommittee on Livestock, Rural
Development and Credit



Jim Costa
Ranking Member,
Subcommittee on Livestock, Rural
Development and Credit