March 31, 2020

Secretary Sonny Perdue

U.S. Department of Agriculture

1400 Independence Ave., S.W.

Washington, DC 20250

Secretary Perdue:

Thank you for your commitment to U.S. Agriculture and your recent video recognizing the essential services all people from our farmers to grocers play in securing our nation’s food supply.

In Wisconsin, agriculture is critical to our state’s overall economy. It is our second largest industry, providing more than $104.8 billion in economic activity and employing over 437,000 people. I do not have to elaborate on the pure catastrophic devastation that will be caused by $11 milk and $2 something corn the market is currently facing due to COVID-19.

In the past, the USDA has based a number of its dairy support programs off of 2011-2013 production history. While it makes perfect sense to NOT offer price supports for increased production moving forward, using 2011-2013 production history now makes these programs ridiculously insufficient. Production history should be based off of January 2020 levels or at the very least 2019 production levels.

I cannot over emphasis this point enough. Obviously, our entire economy is in need of a significant stimulus package. Can you imagine if we said to the airline or hotel industry that the amount of dollars they receive will be based off of the amount of business they did in 2011-2013? They would view that as unrealistic and insufficient.

**To be crystal clear, I implore the USDA to adjust any support programs that are currently in place, or will be created due to COVID-19, to be reflective of actual production up until the virus hit. Anything short of this will be grossly inadequate and is an insult to the men and women who produce our nation’s food.**

If the last month has taught us anything, it is the importance of having a safe, secure, and healthy food supply. Thanks to the efficiency and productivity of U.S. Agriculture, this is one thing our country is fortune to not have to worry about. Our nation’s farmers have taken care of us. We need to fully support them during this difficult time!

I would be happy to discuss this pressing issue with you further at any time.

God Bless,



Travis Tranel

State Representative

49th Assembly District

CC: President Donald Trump, U.S. Senator Ron Johnson, U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin, U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan, U.S. Rep. Ron Kind, U.S. Rep. Bryan Steil, U.S. Rep. Glenn Grothman, U.S. Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner, U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher, U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore