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COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1502

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May 28, 2015

Chairman Michael Conaway
House Committee on Agriculture
1301 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Collin Peterson
House Committee on Agriculture
1301 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Conaway and Ranking Member Peterson:

I write today to draw the Committee's attention to the very important and timely issue of establishing a federal poultry insurance program. Given the recent highly pathogenic H5N2 avian influenza (HPAI) catastrophe in my home state of Iowa along with outbreaks being discovered in Arkansas, Idaho, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington, and Wisconsin it is important for the House Committee on Agriculture to examine the need for such a program.

Iowa leads the nation in egg production, producing approximately 16.5 billion eggs annually, and is ninth in turkey production. Within the past month, the HAPI H5N2 virus has impacted one-sixth of Iowa's 59.5 million egg laying chickens and over 100,000 turkeys. This outbreak has devastated Iowa egg producers and turkey farmers who have had to destroy their flocks. In addition, the entire Iowa poultry industry has been negatively impacted by the countries that have established restrictions and bans on poultry from Iowa.

The men and women who put food on our tables deserve a discussion by lawmakers to decide if a federal poultry insurance program is warranted to assist when unforeseen events out of the control of our farmers happen. I don't have to tell you how important the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation programs have been to the producers that battle weather, disease, and other natural disasters to feed the nation. It's time we examine other ways to help protect producers who place their livelihood on the line every day.

Thank you for your consideration of a hearing to make sure our producers and farmers are getting the aid they need when disasters occur.

Sincerely,



Dave Loeb sack