

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 7, 2019

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

With the passage and signing into law of the *Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, 2019*, Congress has provided the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) with more than three billion dollars to compensate growers, harvesters, and other agricultural producers whose operations were impacted by natural disasters in 2018 and 2019. This long-awaited aid will greatly benefit rural communities in Florida and Georgia that continue to recover from Hurricane Michael. We urge you to implement this disaster relief as quickly as possible.

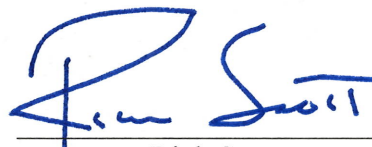
We also request that you work with state officials in Florida and Georgia to craft effective forest restoration block grants. In addition to covering a large portion of debris removal, site preparation, and replanting costs, such block grants should also appropriately compensate landowners for the value of trees lost as a direct consequence of Hurricane Michael's fury. By accounting for timber losses in the determination of forest restoration block grant payments, USDA can advance the recovery of our states' working forests and working families so that they may continue contributing to the future vitality and character of their communities.

We look forward to working with you to ensure the timely and effective disbursement of disaster recovery aid to Floridians and Georgians suffering from Hurricane Michael's devastation. Thank you for your consideration this important matter.

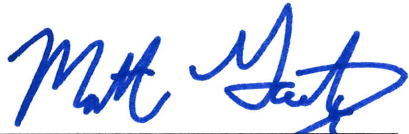
Sincerely,



Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator



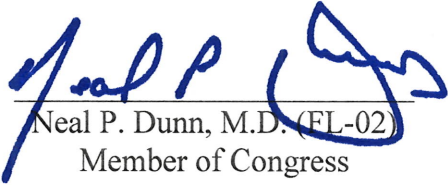
Rick Scott
U.S. Senator



Matt Gaetz (FL-01)
Member of Congress



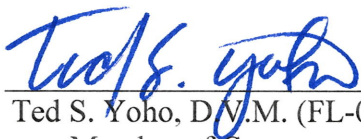
Earl L. 'Buddy' Carter (GA-01)
Member of Congress



Neal P. Dunn, M.D. (FL-02)
Member of Congress



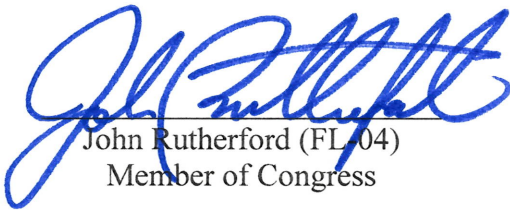
Sanford D. Bishop, Jr. (GA-02)
Member of Congress



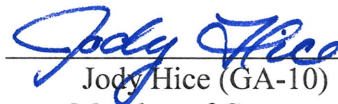
Ted S. Yoho, D.V.M. (FL-03)
Member of Congress



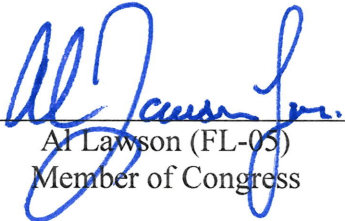
Austin Scott (GA-08)
Member of Congress



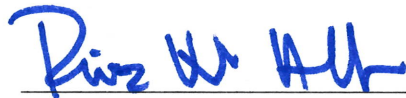
John Rutherford (FL-04)
Member of Congress



Jody Hice (GA-10)
Member of Congress



Al Lawson (FL-05)
Member of Congress



Rick W. Allen (GA-12)
Member of Congress