

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 5, 2025

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

The Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20520

The Honorable Russell Vought
Acting Administrator
U.S. Agency for International Development
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Rubio, Secretary Rollins, and Acting Administrator Vought:

We write today to strongly oppose the planned transfer of Food for Peace (FFP) funding and responsibilities from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), via the Department of State, to the Department of Agriculture (USDA). At a time when the World Food Programme estimates that 319 million people in the world are facing acute hunger – including 1.9 million on the brink of or experiencing famine – we are greatly concerned that an interagency transfer of existing FFP funding to USDA will subvert congressional intent for the program and have the practical effect of denying much-needed assistance to food insecure populations abroad.

The *Food for Peace Act*, as amended, states that it is United States policy to “use its abundant agricultural productivity to promote the foreign policy of the United States by enhancing the food security of the developing world.”¹ This includes the use of U.S. agricultural commodities and other assistance to “combat world hunger and malnutrition and their causes” and “promote broad-based, equitable, and sustainable development, including agricultural development.” The legislation provides the USAID Administrator the authority to implement assistance programming under Title II, which allows USAID to take into account malnutrition rates, local communities’ agricultural and development needs, and local market dynamics when planning the distribution of agricultural commodities and programming decisions. The combination of USDA’s expertise in U.S. agricultural products grown by American farmers and USAID’s

¹ <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/COMPS-10303/pdf/COMPS-10303.pdf>

expertise in international development and humanitarian response is critical to the success of FFP, which has a long track record of delivering emergency food assistance and non-emergency programming designed to boost resilience so countries in need don't have to rely on food assistance in perpetuity.

While the Fiscal Year 2026 *Continuing Appropriations, Agriculture, Legislative Branch, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Extensions Act* contained language requiring a report on transferring FFP entirely to USDA, that assessment has not yet been completed and any de facto transfer of full FFP funding and responsibilities to USDA would be premature. Further, we believe that the best people to implement FFP abroad remain those with decades of experience in international humanitarian and development programming.

Following the Trump Administration's reckless dismantling of USAID earlier this year, the State Department hired many former Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance staff with expertise in food security and humanitarian logistics to work for the State Department's Office of Global Food Security, presumably in part to carry out continued implementation of FFP. We are alarmed by reports that these staff have not been consulted by the State and USDA leadership who are planning the transfer of remaining FFP funds to USDA. Nor has leadership consulted them regarding a substantial redesign of FFP to concentrate solely on the purchase and shipping of U.S. agricultural commodities abroad, with no funding to be provided to program that assistance once it reaches recipient countries. Without these programming resources, the FFP program is in danger of becoming a dumping program disconnected from the strategic objective of feeding those most food insecure.

The de facto transfer of FFP responsibilities to USDA weakens U.S. foreign policy tools. By separating emergency food assistance carried out with International Disaster Assistance funds now administrated by the State Department from FFP programming, the U.S. government will miss an opportunity to coordinate that assistance to achieve maximal impact. Further, USDA does not have staff experienced in responding to emergencies like the current famine in Sudan nor the monitoring and oversight of food assistance overseas, which is critical to guard against diversion of U.S. taxpayer-funded commodities and other resources. USAID maintained robust oversight teams in each country where it programmed food assistance; in contrast, USDA currently has eight agricultural attachés for the entire African continent.

American generosity, through Food for Peace, has helped feed people in need around the world for more than 70 years. This unique program has combined the success of American agriculture with the strategic objective of addressing instability abroad before it grows to reach our shores. We believe the law is clear, and we urge you to adhere to the statutory requirements for FFP and halt the wholesale transfer of the program to USDA.

Sincerely,



Gregory W. Meeks
Ranking Member
House Committee on Foreign
Affairs



Lois Frankel
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee
on
National Security,
Department of State,
and Related Programs



Gabe Amo
Member of Congress



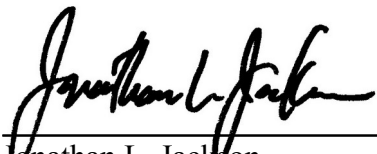
Grace Meng
Member of Congress



Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



Jonathan L. Jackson
Member of Congress



Norma J. Torres
Member of House
Appropriations Committee,
Subcommittee on National
Security, Department of
State, and Related Programs



Sarah McBride
Member of Congress



Greg Stanton
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



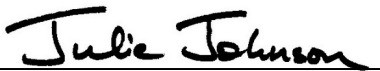
Bradley Scott Schneider
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



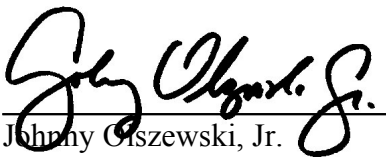
George Latimer
Member of Congress



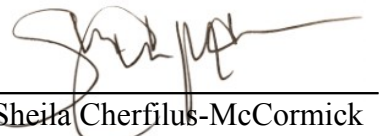
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Member of Congress



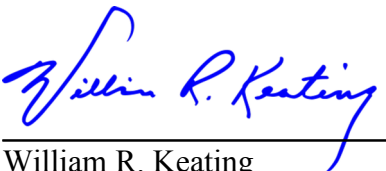
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Member of Congress



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Member of Congress



William R. Keating
Member of Congress



Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress



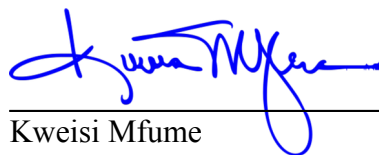
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