

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

August 9, 2012

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

We strongly support Governor Martin O'Malley's request for a Secretarial Disaster Designation for thirteen Maryland counties. We urge you to act quickly to examine the losses in our state and provide relief to Maryland farmers.

A combination of excessive drought and extreme heat has delivered a one-two punch to many farmers on the Eastern Shore and in Southern Maryland. The drought conditions have had a devastating impact on Maryland's corn and vegetable crops. For example, in Caroline County, as much as seventy percent of a farmer's crop has been ruined by the drought.

According to data collected by the Maryland Farm Service Agency, the following counties have experienced more than thirty percent crop loss: Anne Arundel, Calvert, Caroline, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Kent, Prince George's, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, Somerset, Talbot, and Wicomico. In addition to these counties, we request that you continue to monitor crop data from across our entire state and issue a disaster designation to any that qualify in the coming weeks.

Thank you very much for your prompt attention to our request. We look forward to working with you to provide additional relief to farmers across the country when Congress returns from the August work period.

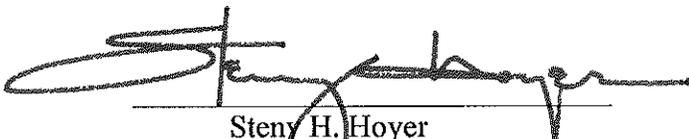
Sincerely,



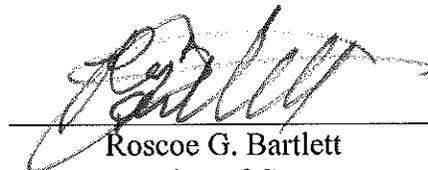
Barbara A. Mikulski
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Steny H. Hoyer
Member of Congress



Roscoe G. Bartlett
Member of Congress

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August 9, 2012

Page 2



Elijah E. Cummings
Member of Congress



C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger
Member of Congress



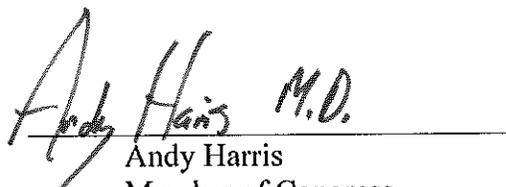
Chris Van Hollen
Member of Congress



John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress



Donna F. Edwards
Member of Congress



Andy Harris M.D.
Member of Congress