November 18, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol H-232
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Madam Speaker:

The undersigned organizations write in strong support for California Representative Jim Costa, D-16, to serve as Chair of the United States House Agriculture Committee during the 117th Congress. We have had the opportunity to work with Representative Costa at the state and federal level for decades on a wide range of agricultural policies and programs. He has a deep understanding of the challenges that farmers and ranchers throughout the state and nation face today and how to improve the outlook.

Throughout his long tenure as an elected state and federal lawmaker, Rep. Costa has been a steadfast supporter of policies and programs that will benefit family farmers and ranchers during his work in the California State Legislature and US Congress. Rep. Costa has extensive experience working collaboratively with a wide range of stakeholders to formulate farm and agricultural legislation, including dairy policy and many other complex federal policies and programs.

Farmers and ranchers face incredible challenges today, given the high level of consolidation and vertical integration in the food and agricultural sector. Rep. Costa understands the importance of passage of legislation to address increased concentration in the marketplace to restore competition so that farmers earn a fair price from the market. He has authored legislation to provide incentives for farmers to balance supply with changing market demand. He also recognizes the great potential to improve farm profitability by fostering resilient local and regional food systems that enable farmers to sell directly to consumers. When farmers achieve profitability, they serve as strong economic engines for the local, regional, and national economy.

Again, we applaud the leadership that Representative Jim Costa has demonstrated on a wide range of farm, food, nutrition, immigration, water, environmental, conservation, and many other critical issues. We consider Rep. Costa to be the ideal candidate to serve as chair of the US House Agriculture Committee and we much appreciate the opportunity to provide our recommendation. We look forward to continuing to work with you and your staff to shape future agricultural and farm policy to foster a thriving agricultural economy now and in the future.

Sincerely,

Joaquin Contente       Joe Augusto
President        President
California Farmers Union      California Dairy Campaign

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