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ON LIVESTOCK, DAIRY, AND POULTRY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FORESTRY

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE



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Dear Democratic Colleagues,

As we prepare for the 120th Congress, **I respectfully ask for your support to lead Democrats on the Committee on Agriculture.**

The communities I represent in California's San Joaquin Valley help feed the country. They are at the heart of the nation's leading agricultural state and the world's fourth-largest economy. Yet my district also ranks fourth in the nation for the share of households that rely on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), with more than three in ten depending on it to feed their families. That contrast has shaped my work and my belief that we must support both the people who produce our food and the families working to afford it.

My agenda is simple: **keep farmers farming, keep families fed, and make this Committee work for every member of our Caucus.** The Farm Bill extension has lapsed. President Trump's tariffs have raised costs and threatened markets for our farmers, while his war in Iran has driven up diesel and fertilizer prices. Meanwhile, Republican SNAP cuts are making it harder for families to put food on the table. Reversing those cuts will require working with members from farm country on both sides of the aisle. I have spent two decades building those relationships, and I will put them to work whether we hold the gavel or serve in the minority.

Ready on day one. I helped write three Farm Bills that became law. I established the first horticulture and organic agriculture title and served on the conference committee that completed the 2018 Farm Bill. Today, I serve as Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry. This Congress, I helped secure specialty crop research, precision agriculture, dairy nutrition, and watershed protection provisions in the House-passed Farm Bill.

Before Congress, I served as Chair of the California Assembly Democratic Caucus, Chair of the State Senate Committee on Agriculture and Water Resources, and President of the National Conference of State Legislatures. I know the policy and the process, but experience has taught me that neither is enough without trust.

Keep farmers farming. Food security is national security. I will fight for a strong farm safety net, crop insurance, disaster assistance, credit, and economic relief so that one difficult year does not become a farm's last. Our policies must work for producers of every size and background, including small, beginning, and historically underserved farmers.

Farmworkers, many of them immigrants, help feed our country and strengthen our communities. I will ensure their voices are heard in our hearings and policy discussions. Within the Committee's jurisdiction, I will fight for legislation that supports them and their families. I will also work across committees to advance bipartisan immigration reform that protects workers, keeps families together, and gives farmers a reliable workforce.

Keeping farms viable also means investing in research, extension, biotechnology, conservation, and rural development. We must improve forest and watershed health and reduce the risks posed by drought, wildfire, pests, and disease. Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and other Minority-Serving Institutions must be full partners in that work.

As co-chair of the bipartisan Congressional Agricultural Trade Caucus, I fight to expand markets, hold the Trump Administration accountable when its trade policies raise farmers' costs and put export markets at risk, and sustain international food assistance that puts American-grown food to work fighting hunger abroad.

As a farmer, I understand the challenges producers face firsthand. Through my relationships with farmers and agricultural leaders across the country, I know that a successful Farm Bill must reflect the needs of every region and the diversity of American agriculture. All deserve a seat at the table. I will use those relationships to find common ground and build support for a Farm Bill that delivers for both agriculture and nutrition. Nutrition, at the end of the day, is America's safety net.

Keep families fed. SNAP is our nation's most important anti-hunger program. I voted against Republicans' Big Ugly Bill, which made the largest cut to SNAP in the program's history, and supported an amendment to repeal those cuts through the Farm Bill. When I voted to move the House Farm Bill forward after three years of delays, I pledged to keep working across the aisle to reverse the cuts. As your leader, I will make restoring and strengthening SNAP a central priority of the Committee's work. I will keep fighting to reverse the cost shift to states, oppose new barriers to assistance, and improve access to healthy, affordable food.

The Big Ugly Bill split the coalition that has passed Farm Bills for generations, cutting SNAP while boosting farm programs. We must rebuild that coalition. Supporting farmers and fighting hunger are not competing priorities. We should never force a choice between the people who produce our food and the families working to put food on the table. **We must do both.**

Make government and markets deliver. I will hold the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) accountable for delivering the resources Congress provides to farmers, families, and rural communities. I will make the Trump Administration answer for its disastrous attempt to reorganize the USDA.

I will bring the same rigor to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission and the markets farmers use to manage risk. I will work toward clear rules for digital assets and prediction markets, rules that protect consumers, allow responsible innovation, and respect state authority and Tribal sovereignty.

A Committee that works for every member. Whether you represent farm country, Tribal communities, suburbs, small towns, or a major city, this Committee's work reaches your district. Leadership is not only about delivering results. It is about building other leaders. As your leader on the Committee, I will:

- Ask for your district's priorities before every major negotiation and carry them into the room.
- Provide timely Farm Bill briefings open to every Democratic office while negotiations are underway.
- Give subcommittee leaders and newer members opportunities to shape hearings, develop legislation, and participate in negotiations.
- Bring roundtables and listening sessions to your district to hear directly from the people you represent.
- Build a Democratic staff that reflects the diversity of our Caucus and the communities we serve.

My grandparents came to the San Joaquin Valley from the Azores as dairy hands and built a dairy of their own. I grew up working on that dairy and I still farm some of the same land as my grandparents farmed. In the Valley, the fields and the food bank lines are never far apart, and I have spent my career refusing to choose between them. I am ready to put my experience to work for every member of our Caucus.

I know this Committee and believe deeply in its mission. I respectfully ask for your support.

Sincerely,



JIM COSTA
Member of Congress