

President Biden

Speaker Pelosi

Leader Schumer

CC: Chairman Scott, Chairman Stabenow

Dear President Biden, Speaker Pelosi, and Leader Schumer

First, we want to commend you on acting boldly to address the challenges presented by the COVID-19 health crisis. Unfortunately, the industrial agriculture production model is deepening our public health crisis, while degrading our environment, driving catastrophic climate change, impoverishing rural communities (particularly communities of color), driving independent farmers off the land, and exploiting workers. The pandemic shined a light on these serious weaknesses in our hyper-consolidated food system. Multinational agribusinesses failed workers, farmers, and consumers but still managed to earn significant profits.

As you consider the budget reconciliation package in the coming weeks, serious investment in a more equitable, decentralized, healthy, ecologically regenerative food system should be among the highest priorities. The undersigned organizations urge you to shift public support away from destructive industrial agriculture and instead make critical investments to transform the food system using the following guiding principles.

- Investments must be bold enough to transform a large and complex supply chain rapidly.
- Target investments to a new generation of farmers, ranchers, and small business owners, particularly those from communities historically underserved and keep investments out of the hands of transnational agrifood corporations.
- Reform USDA conservation, research and rural development programs in order to rapidly transition production to ecologically regenerative, resilient agriculture practices that benefit public health, local communities and the environment , including diversified organic farming, chemical-free cover cropping, and regenerative grazing.
- Industrial livestock production has proven to be harmful and unsustainable. We must not directly or indirectly continue to prop up factory farming through counterproductive technologies such as genetic engineering and methane digesters. As corporate agribusiness models hit bottlenecks during the pandemic, local and regional food systems proved they could adapt quickly and feed their communities. A serious investment must be made to grow resilient, equitable, local and regional food systems that prioritize food sovereignty, provide safe and good-paying jobs, and create new opportunities for new and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

- We are facing a nutrition security crisis. A recent study found that our unhealthy food system generates \$600 billion in additional health care costs. We must invest in equitable access to highly nutritious, climate-friendly, and sustainably produced foods, including with an investment into school kitchen infrastructure that supports scratch-cooking locally procured, healthy meals
- Rural communities continue to struggle economically. But with the right investments and policies, they can be the epicenter of many of the most critical climate-resilient jobs, including public land management, mine reclamation, and the development of regenerative agriculture systems. We must invest in a Civilian Climate Corps that includes good food system jobs.
- Research to support a just transition to a more equitable, regenerative and climate-friendly food system is too often deprioritized compared to investments in new technologies that can be sold to large agribusinesses and patented, creating ever-more complicated and consolidated platforms of technologies and costly inputs for farmers. Research should instead be kept in the public domain, with an emphasis on regionally appropriate seeds and ecologically regenerative growing practices that will make American agriculture more climate-resilient and introduce a number of environmental benefits, including increased carbon sequestration without the need for new patented technologies.

As Congress considers the many worthwhile investments in infrastructure, we urge the body to prioritize these principles to transform our food and agriculture system into one that is sustainable, equitable, resilient, and healthy before it is too late.

Sincerely,

350 Butte County
350 Seattle
ABC Earth Care Team
ActionAid USA
American Grassfed Associa
Applecroft Farm
Benedictine Sisters of Erie
Between the Waters
Beyond Pesticides
Bionutrient Food Association
Businesses for a Livable Climate
CA Businesses for a Livable Climate
Call to Action Colorado
Campaign for Family Farms and the Environment
Catholic Network US
Center for Food Safety
Central Maryland Beekeepers Association

Ceres Community Project
Climate Justice Alliance
CO Businesses for a Livable Climate
Coalition Against Pilgrim Pipeline
Colorbrightongreen
Cumberland County (ME) Food Security Council
DeepAgroecology.net
Del Norte and Tribal Lands Community Food Council
Earth Action, Inc.
Earthjustice
Eco-Poetry.org
Erie Benedictines for Peace
Experimental Farm Network
Fair World Project
Family Farm Defenders
Farm Worker Ministry Northwest
Farmworker Association of Florida
Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT)
Food Chain Workers Alliance
Food Revolution Network
Friends of the Earth
Gas Free Seneca
GBC Sustainability Team
Green America- Center for Sustainability Solutions
Green Education and Legal Fund
Green State Solutions
GreenFaith
Groundswell Center for Local Food & Farming
Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA)
Herbicide-Free Campus
I-70/Vasquez Blvd. Superfund CAG
Illinois Stewardship Alliance
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement
Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future
Kiss the Ground
LEAD for Pollinators, Inc.
Maryland Pesticide Education Network
Milwaukee Riverkeeper
MOM's Organic Market
Montbello Neighborhood Improvement Association
MoveOn.org Hoboken
Nassau Hiking & Outdoor Club
National Farm Worker Ministry

Nature Coast Conservation
Newark Science and Sustainability Inc
NOFA/Mass
North American Climate, Conservation and Environment(NACCE)
North Range Concerned Citizens
Northeast Organic Farming Association of New Hampshire (NOFA-NH)
Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides
PCUN, Oregon's Farmworker Union
People's Climate Movement
Pesticide Action Network
Princeton student climate initiative
Progressive Democrats of America, Tucson, AZ Chapter
Protect All Children's Environment
RapidShift Network
Reach Out America
Real Food Media
Regenerate Washignton
Regional Farm and Food Project
Santa Cruz Climate Action Network
Seneca Lake Guardian
Slow Food California
Slow Food USA
Small Business Alliance
Socially Responsible Agriculture Project
SOMA Action
Soul Fire Farm
South Shore Audubon Society
Spirit of the Sun
Steam Onward Inc
Sunrise Movement
Sustainable Finger Lakes
Sustainable Tompkins
The Climate Mobilization
The Green House Connection Center
The Land
The Oakland Institute
The Wei LLC
Toxic Free NC
Unite North Metro Denver
United Native Americans
Urban Tilth
Wall of Women