

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

July 29, 2014

The Honorable Craig Fugate  
Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
500 C Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20472

Dear Administrator Fugate,

We write today to urge you to set a timeline to provide additional flexibilities for agricultural producers to comply with National Flood Insurance Program standards. We believe it is important that your agency provide this guidance within one year as the current program's lack of flexibility has forced some producers in our state to forego plans to construct important agricultural structures in floodplains currently used for producing crops or livestock.

Today, the Government Accountability Office released a report we requested entitled *National Flood Insurance Program: Additional Guidance on Building Requirements to Mitigate Agricultural Structures' Damage in High-Risk Floor Areas is Needed*. The report found that your agency's flood insurance program requires agricultural producers to either elevate structures or to create large openings in structures to allow water to flow through in the event of a flood. In deep floodplains in places like Yolo or Sutter County, these options are unworkable as they would require a producer to either elevate a structure as high as 15 feet off the ground or to create large openings in a structure that would expose agricultural products to pests and pathogens.

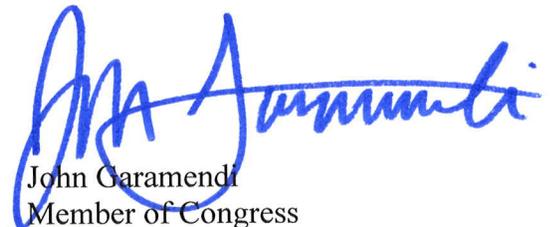
Given that agriculture is an effective use of deep floodplains and that agricultural structures serve very different purposes than residential structures, we hope your agency will quickly move to provide reasonable options for farmers to mitigate flood risk while building structures suitable for farming purposes. We also hope you will work with the Food & Drug Administration to ensure your policies for agricultural structures are compatible with any relevant food safety standards.

Thank you for your agency's work to ensure that our nation is prepared for natural disasters. We strongly believe that additional flexibility is required for agricultural producers and look forward to hearing when your agency plans to provide additional guidance for this industry.

Sincerely,



Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator



John Garamendi  
Member of Congress



Doug LaMalfa  
Member of Congress

DF/tc