

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 21, 2016

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Chairman, House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chairman, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture

The Honorable Sam Farr
Ranking Member, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture

Dear Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Lowey, Chairman Aderholt, and Ranking Member Farr:

On August 26, 2015, several Oriental Fruit Flies were found in South Miami-Dade County, Florida. The discovery of this pest was cause for serious concern, as the very destructive Fly has been known to infest over 430 kinds of fruits and vegetables, including many crops grown in Florida like avocado, mango, tomato, squash, and peppers. Unlike other states, Florida's farm production provides essential produce during, and immediately following, each winter season. The spread of this pest would have had a devastating impact on our nation's food supply.

As determined by federal and state officials, on October 1, 2015, a quarantine was established to cover 98 square-miles in South Miami-Dade County, which lasted until February 13, 2016. There have been no new discoveries of the Fly since October 10, 2015, and the quarantine has been lifted.

While the quarantine was absolutely necessary to complete eradication of the Fly, it has had a devastating effect on the farmers located in the designated areas. They were no longer able to bring their crops to market or refrained from planting all together last season. To address this issue, several Florida Members submitted language to be included in the FY17 House Agriculture Appropriations Committee Report. We greatly appreciate the Committee's inclusion of our requested language to "strongly urge the FSA to make funds available to those farmers who were negatively impacted by an Oriental Fruit Fly quarantine from October 2015 through February 2016".

As you work towards crafting a long-term spending resolution to fund the government through September 30, 2017, we respectfully request your continued support for this Oriental Fruit Fly Committee Report language. In addition, we also request that any available funds be directed to those farmers impacted by the Oriental Fruit Fly quarantine. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,



Carlos Curbelo (FL-26)
Member of Congress

Tom Rooney (FL-17)
Member of Congress

Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (FL-27)
Member of Congress

Mario Diaz-Balart (FL-25)
Member of Congress