

April 13, 2018

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen,
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
The Capitol, Room H-305
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby,
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
The Capitol, Room S-128
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey,
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations,
Minority
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patrick Leahy,
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations,
Minority
The Capitol, Room S-146A
Washington, DC 2051

Dear Chairmen Frelinghuysen and Shelby, Ranking Member Lowey and Vice Chairman Leahy:

We write to ask for your continued support for appropriate funding for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) food safety budget in the Fiscal Year 2019 Agriculture, Rural Development, and FDA Appropriations legislation.

For all our companies and associations, food safety is our number one priority and represents a critical standard we work hard to meet every day. Consumer confidence in our companies and associations and in our brands is the foundation of everything we do and the reason we invest our reputations and resources in producing safe products.

We recognize and appreciate the substantial investments Congress has already made to ensure that FDA is implementing the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). As you know, FSMA encompasses sweeping reform of our nation's food safety laws in more than 70 years and requires a new approach from FDA. The fundamental goal of FSMA – to apply modernized food safety practices across the industry to ensure a safer food supply – will inspire greater consumer confidence in our products and eliminate unnecessary risks that threaten the public's health.

We applaud consistent bipartisan efforts by your Committees to increase food safety funding levels at the FDA. Yet additional funding is still needed to ensure that FDA is fully able to meet the added responsibilities Congress established when it enacted FSMA in 2011, and to ensure that states have the resources they need to partner effectively with the Agency.

FSMA places prevention as the cornerstone of our nation's food safety strategy. It includes new requirements for manufacturers and provides the FDA with the authorities it needs to adequately fulfill its food safety mission. This new focus on prevention and expanded authority as granted by Congress necessitates an update and increase to FDA's food safety tools, from regulations to infrastructure.

In order to maintain consumer confidence in the safety and integrity of America's food supply and to reduce the number of foodborne illnesses, it is important that FDA also has the training, technical assistance and infrastructure in place to implement FSMA effectively.

Our commitment to food safety is steadfast and we need a strong FDA as our partner to fully implement FSMA and to play its proper role in ensuring the safety of the nation's food supply. We also welcome congressional oversight; not only to ensure these investments are implemented effectively, but also to make certain that the agency's regulatory implementation of FSMA is consistent with what the law requires, and what Congress intended in adopting the law.

That is why we urge you to support an increase in FDA food safety funding in the FY 2019 budget that fully supports FDA's efforts to implement FSMA. We look forward to working with you as the appropriations process moves forward.

Sincerely,

Amazon

The Hain Celestial Group

American Bakers Association

The Hershey Company

American Frozen Food Institute (AFFI)

The Kraft Heinz Company

American Farm Bureau Federation

Mars Incorporated

Cargill, Inc.

National Confectioners Association

Conagra Brands, Inc.

Nestlé U.S.A.

Costco Wholesale

PepsiCo, Inc.

Danone

Produce Marketing Association (PMA)

General Mills, Inc.

Tyson Foods, Inc.

Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA)

Unilever, Inc.

International Dairy Foods Association
(IDFA)

United Fresh Produce Association (UFPA)

Kellogg Company

Walmart, Inc.