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UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

April 2, 2020

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

Thank you for your work supporting American farmers as our nation grapples with the COVID-19 outbreak. As you are aware, the pandemic and resulting economic fallout has put tremendous strain on agricultural producers. I am particularly concerned about the impact of this outbreak on Wisconsin dairy producers, some of whom have already been forced to dispose of milk because of reduced demand. I urge you to take the following steps to help shore up this critical industry and ensure Americans have continued access to dairy products:

Reopen Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) Signups

Outlook for dairy prices has changed significantly since producers last had the opportunity to sign up for DMC. Giving producers the opportunity to sign up now would allow more producers to enroll in the program and allow currently enrolled producers to select coverage that better suits their needs.

Purchase Dairy Products

The recently enacted CARES Act significantly expanded USDA's ability to purchase agricultural products. It is critical that you use this power to purchase dairy products and support producers so they can weather this difficult time.

Taking these steps would be a critical first step towards stabilizing the dairy economy. Thank you again for your work to address this pandemic. I look forward to continuing to work with you to support agricultural producers during this challenging time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark Pocan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mark Pocan
Member of Congress