

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 13, 2014

The Honorable Tom Vilsack  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
14<sup>th</sup> and Independence, NW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (Public Law 113-76), which became law on January 17th, was accompanied by an unambiguous statement that it is the expectation of Congress that the Department include all varieties of fresh vegetables, as long as they do not contain added sugars, fats, or oils, in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). Congress provided this directive in response to the unwarranted exclusion of fresh white potatoes from the WIC program. We were disappointed then to see your Department blatantly disregard the very clear direction by Congress in continuing to exclude fresh white potatoes from WIC food packages.

Division A of the joint explanatory statement accompanying the Act provides the expectations of Congress as they relate to the implementation of the appropriated funds for the United States Department of Agriculture for fiscal year 2014. The directive pertaining to fresh vegetables in WIC is found on pages 26-27 of the joint explanatory statement. It reads as follows:

The agreement expects the Secretary to amend 7 CFR 246.10 in order for state agencies to include all varieties of fresh, whole, or cut vegetables, except for vegetables with added sugars, fats, oils; provided that inclusion of such vegetables contributes towards meeting the special nutritional needs of program participants and increases the availability of low-cost, high nutrient alternatives for participants throughout the year.

We believe you have failed to follow the direction Congress provided you in excluding fresh white potatoes.

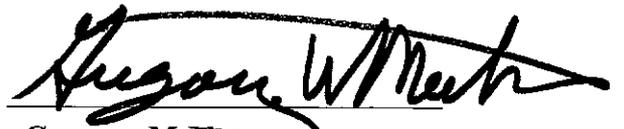
We are committed to a science-based review process for the food package provided by WIC and believe that the program should reflect the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA). In the introduction to the 2010 DGA, you and Secretary Sebelius write that “Based on the most recent scientific evidence review, this document provides information and advice for choosing a healthy eating pattern—namely, one that focuses on nutrient-dense foods . . .” We believe that is exactly what the DGA is supposed to do and expect that the information and advice contained therein to be incorporated into the WIC program. The 2010 DGA recommends that people increase their consumption of a category of vegetables that includes fresh white potatoes. Additionally, the DGA recommends that individuals “Choose foods that provide more potassium, [and] dietary fiber . . .”, both of which are readily available in fresh white potatoes. Potatoes are cholesterol-free, fat-free, and sodium-free, and can be served in countless healthy ways. A medium baked potato contains 15 percent of the daily recommended value of dietary fiber, 27 percent of the daily recommended value for vitamin B6, and 28 percent of the daily recommended value of Vitamin C.

We urge you to revisit your decision based on this information and the clear direction of Congress.

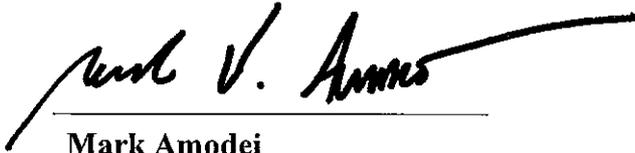
Best Regards,



**Mike Simpson**  
Member of Congress



**Gregory Meeks**  
Member of Congress



**Mark Amodei**  
Member of Congress



**Dan Benishek**  
Member of Congress



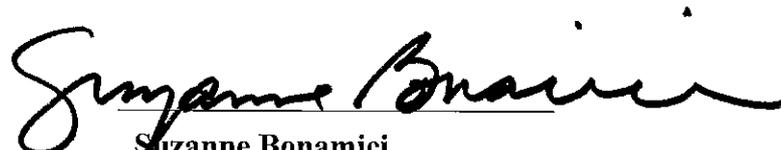
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**Tim Bishop**  
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**Earl Blumenauer**  
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**Suzanne Bonamici**  
Member of Congress



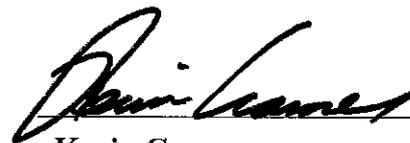
**Corrine Brown**  
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**Chris Collins**  
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**Gerry Connolly**  
Member of Congress



**Kevin Cramer**  
Member of Congress



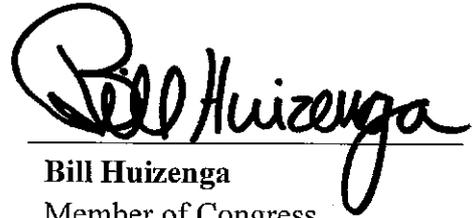
**Steve Daines**  
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**Peter DeFazio**  
Member of Congress



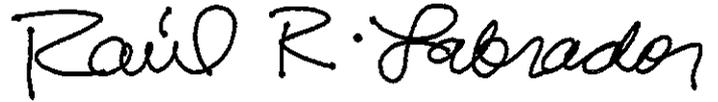
**Jaime Herrera Beutler**  
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**Bill Huizenga**  
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**Walter B. Jones**  
Member of Congress



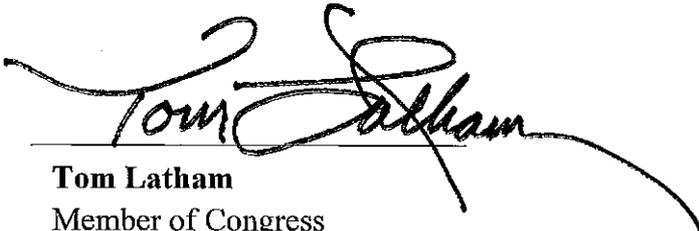
**Raul Labrador**  
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**Doug Lamborn**  
Member of Congress



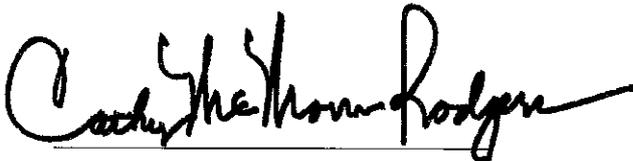
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**Frank LoBiondo**  
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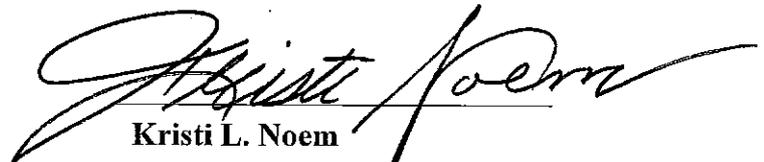
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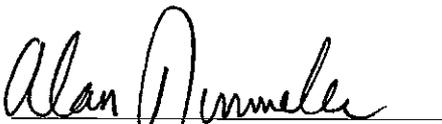
**Candice Miller**  
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**Alan Nunnelee**  
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**Bill Owens**  
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**Diana DeGette**  
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**Ron Desantis**  
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**Sean Duffy**  
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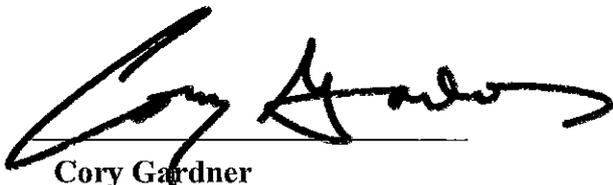
**Suzan DelBene**  
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**Renee Ellmers**  
Member of Congress



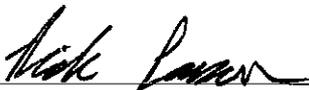
**Ron Kind**  
Member of Congress



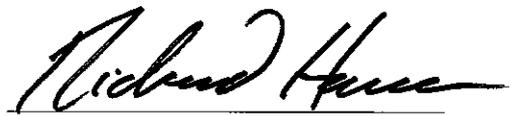
**Cory Gardner**  
Member of Congress



**Chris Gibson**  
Member of Congress



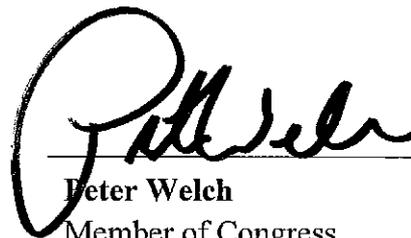
**Rick Larsen**  
Member of Congress



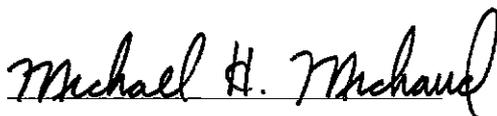
**Richard L. Hanna**  
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**Mike McIntyre**  
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**Peter Welch**  
Member of Congress



**Mike Michaud**  
Member of Congress



**Doc Hastings**  
Member of Congress



**Collin Peterson**  
Member of Congress



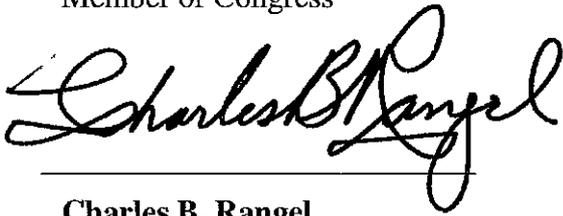
**Chellie Pingree**  
Member of Congress



**Mark Pocan**  
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**Thomas Petri**  
Member of Congress



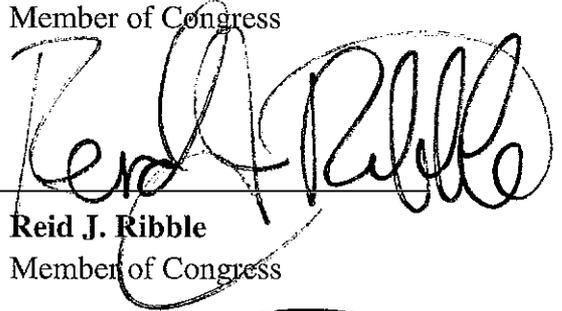
**Charles B. Rangel**  
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**Tom Reed**  
Member of Congress



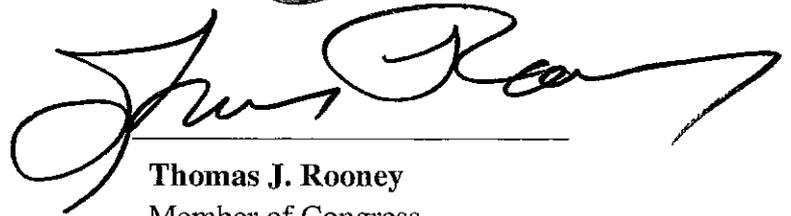
**David G Reichert**  
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**Reid J. Ribble**  
Member of Congress



**David P. Roe**  
Member of Congress



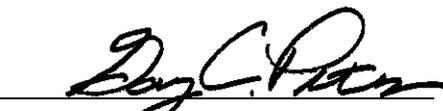
**Thomas J. Rooney**  
Member of Congress



**Aaron Schock**  
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**Mike Conaway**  
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**Gary Peters**  
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**Bill Johnson**  
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**Kurt Schrader**  
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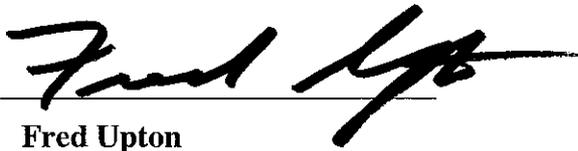
**Steve Stivers**  
Member of Congress



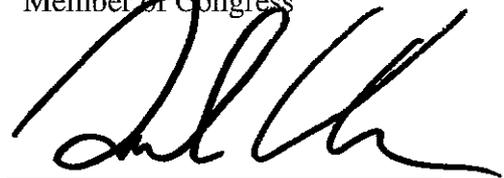
**Scott R. Tipton**  
Member of Congress



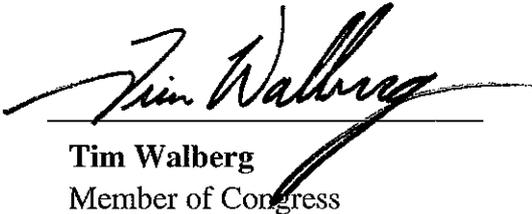
**Austin Scott**  
Member of Congress



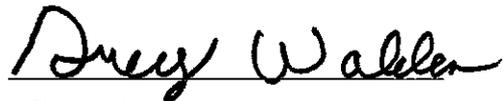
**Fred Upton**  
Member of Congress



**David G. Valadao**  
Member of Congress



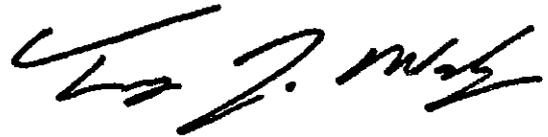
**Tim Walberg**  
Member of Congress



**Greg Walden**  
Member of Congress



**Frank R. Wolf**  
Member of Congress



**Tim Walz**  
Member of Congress



**Ted Poe**  
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