

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 21, 2025

The Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Rollins:

We write to share our serious concerns regarding the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) decision to cancel the Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program (LFPA) and the Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program (LFS), both vital programs intended to support Virginia's food systems by expanding purchases from local producers and distributing that fresh food to underserved communities. We strongly urge you to reverse this decision and continue these programs of great importance to Virginia's local communities.

LFPA and LFS allow Virginia to procure local food and distribute to providers such as food banks and schools, benefitting producers, those experiencing food insecurity, and local economies. In Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25), Virginia was eligible to receive nearly \$21 million through LFPA and LFS – including \$10.1 million for schools and \$3.4 million for childcare facilities – to support 183 farmers in providing fresh produce and other healthy foods to food-insecure households across the Commonwealth. With USDA's decision to cancel these funds, Virginia farmers are deprived of a crucial market for this season and low-income communities face even greater barriers to access fresh, healthy foods.

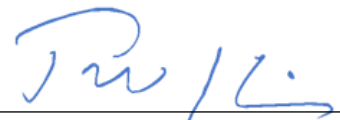
Communities across the Commonwealth work with USDA and the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to ensure LFPA and LFS funding has the maximum impact among families, farmers, and local economies. In the first year of LFPA, for example, over 100 local producers were supported, providing over 100,000 Virginians with fresh, healthy food. This is fresh, nutritious produce for food-insecure families that often cannot afford healthy food, all while providing local farmers a dependable market for their products. Cancelling LFPA and LFS, with the ~\$21 million Virginia was to receive in FY25, hurts Virginia farmers, food providers, families, and those working tirelessly to support them.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator