

February 19, 2015

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-305, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

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

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-146A, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairmen Rogers and Cochran and Ranking Members Lowey and Mikulski:

The below signed organizations thank you for your leadership in ensuring America's food supply remains the safest in the world. As you examine the President's fiscal year (FY) 2016 budget request, we respectfully ask that you make adequate congressional funding for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) food safety activities one of your highest priorities rather than supporting proposed new food taxes or regulatory fees on consumers and food makers.

We believe if FDA requires additional funds in FY 2016 to support food inspection activities and implementation of the *Food Safety Modernization Act* (FSMA), the administration should seek all such funding through the Congressional budget and appropriations process, rather than asking for authorization of new regulatory taxes that Congress has repeatedly rejected.

The administration's proposed FY 2016 budget for FDA again includes a proposal to impose a food facility registration and inspection fee to fund agency activities related to FSMA. The agency projects it will collect \$60 million in FY 2016 from food and feed producers, makers and distributors if Congress authorizes the requested fees. A food import fee is also proposed, with projected revenues of \$103 million in FY 2016. Congress has rightly rejected such fees each and every time they have been proposed by the administration.

In fact, FDA's budget request for FY 2015, FY 2014, FY 2013 and FY 2012 recommended raising revenue from new facility registration fees to help fund the agency's food safety activities. Congress rejected those proposals. Congress also considered and rejected such food facility registration fees during its consideration and passage of FSMA in 2011.

Maintaining the safety of the foods we produce and sell is the highest priority of the food makers and retailers we represent and should be considered a top national priority. Federal food safety programs and inspections conducted by FDA benefit all American consumers and should be funded through appropriated funds.

As consumers continue to cope with a period of prolonged economic recovery and food makers and retailers struggle with fluctuating commodity prices, the creation of new food taxes or regulatory fees would mean higher costs for food makers and lead to higher retail food prices for consumers. As such, we believe imposing new regulatory taxes on food makers is the wrong option for funding food safety programs.

As you consider FDA's funding needs for FY 2016, we urge you to provide sufficient funding for federal food safety programs under FDA's jurisdiction through appropriations rather than new taxes and regulatory fees on consumers and food makers.

We stand ready to work with you in support of efforts to ensure we maintain the safest food supply in the world.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

Agribusiness Council of Indiana
American Bakers Association
American Beekeeping Federation
American Council of Independent Laboratories
American Dairy Products Institute
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Feed Industry Association
American Frozen Food Institute
American Fruit and Vegetable Processors and Growers Coalition
American Honey Producers Association
Association of California Egg Farmers
California Grain and Feed Association
California League of Food Processors
Canned Food Alliance
Cheese Importers Association of America
Food Marketing Institute
Frozen Potato Products Institute
Global Cold Chain Alliance
Grain and Feed Association of Illinois
Independent Bakers Association
Institute of Shortening and Edible Oils
International Association of Refrigerated Warehouses
International Bottled Water Association
International Food Additives Council
Juice Products Association
Midwest Food Processors Association
Minnesota Grain and Feed Association
National Association of Manufacturers

National Association of Margarine Manufacturers
National Automatic Merchandising Association
National Confectioners Association
National Fisheries Institute
National Frozen Pizza Institute
National Grain and Feed Association
National Grocers Association
National Pasta Association
National Renderers Association
National Turkey Federation
North American Meat Institute
North American Millers' Association
Northwest Food Processors Association
Ohio AgriBusiness Association
Oklahoma Grain and Feed Association
Pacific Egg and Poultry Association
Pet Food Institute
Shelf-Stable Food Processors Association
Snack Food Association
Texas Grain and Feed Association
The Association for Dressings & Sauces
The Peanut and Tree Nut Processors Association
United Dairymen of Arizona
United Egg Producers
United Fresh Produce Association
USA Rice Federation
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Vinegar Institute

West Coast Seafood Processors
Association

Wisconsin Agri-Business Association

cc: Members of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee
Members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee