

March 15, 2017

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

The Honorable Thad Cochran,
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,
Vice Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations,
Minority
The Capitol, Room S-146A
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairmen Frelinghuysen and Cochran, 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 2017 Agriculture/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 on track to implement the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) in a timely and efficient manner. As you know, FSMA encompasses sweeping reform of our nation's food safety laws and requires a new approach from FDA. The fundamental goal of FSMA – to implement modernized practices across the industry, and as a result, ensure a safer food supply – will inspire consumer confidence in our products and eliminate unnecessary risks that threaten the public's health.

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 2017 budget that reflects the funding levels provided for FSMA implementation by the Committees in 2016 (H.R. 5054, S. 2956). We look forward to working with you as the appropriations process moves forward.

Sincerely,

American Bakers Association (ABA)

American Frozen Food Institute (AFFI)

Campbell Soup Company

Cargill, Inc.

The Coca-Cola Company

Conagra Brands, Inc.

Costco Wholesale

Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA)

The International Bottled Water
Association (IBWA)

The Hershey Company

The Kellogg Company

Land O'Lakes, Inc.

Mars Incorporated

National Fisheries Institute (NFI)

Nestlé U.S.A.

The Peanut and Tree Nut Processors
Association (PTNPA)

PepsiCo, Inc.

Produce Marketing Association (PMA)

Unilever, Inc.

United Fresh Produce
Association (UFPA)

Walmart Stores, Inc.