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**COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA**

April 8, 2019

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

I am writing on behalf of the County of Santa Barbara in support of agricultural pest detection and response programs through USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service in the *FY 2020 Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations* bill.

The County supports full implementation of the Section 10007 program, which was reauthorized in the 2018 Farm Bill. This program provides funding to State and local agencies to prevent the introduction or spread of plant pests and diseases. For 2018, USDA allocated \$14.8 million to California from Section 10007 to strengthen pest detection and surveillance, identification, and threat mitigation, and to safeguard the nursery production system. California's agricultural losses from exotic pests exceed \$3 billion annually.

In addition, the County supports funding through APHIS' Tree and Wood Pest Program to respond to invasive species being introduced and detected in California. The Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer, Kuroshio Shot Hole Borer and Fusarium Dieback Disease, as well as the Gold Spotted Oak Borer, all threaten Santa Barbara County and will have severe impacts in the future. Continued funding of research under the Specialty Crop Research Initiative for biological control methods and for outreach activities is critical for protecting the region's agriculture and the environment.

Thank you for your support for these programs through APHIS and your attention to these requests as Congress drafts the *FY 2020 Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations* bill.

Sincerely yours,

Don Gilchrest  
Washington Representative

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