

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

September 12, 2008

The Honorable Ed Schafer  
Secretary of Agriculture  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Pennsylvania Ave, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We would like to express our appreciation for your August 6 action to make more supplies of refined sugar available to the U.S. market. At the same time, as the new sugar marketing year approaches, we urge you to modify your subsequent announcement of the tariff rate quotas (TRQs) for sugar during the upcoming year in order to provide additional supplies significantly above the minimum import amounts required under international law.

Your Department's latest supply-demand estimates point to an exceptionally tight supply situation for sugar during the marketing year that begins October 1. Reflecting these tight supplies, prices of both refined and raw sugar are near historic highs. Many smaller companies that use sugar, such as confectioners, bakers and ice cream makers, are experiencing difficulty in obtaining supplies at a reasonable cost. Adding to the current supply problems is the fact that a major cane sugar refinery continues to be idled as the result of a tragic industrial accident.

Sugar policies that artificially short our markets are not in the interest of small business operators, industrial workers or consumers. It is imperative that the Department operate sugar import policy to prevent the kinds of shortages that are projected. For that reason, your decision to increase the 2007/08 import quota for refined sugar was a wise one.

However, even after the refined quota increase for the current marketing year, it appears that sugar supplies for the coming 2008/09 marketing year – beginning in just a few days – will be inadequate. Therefore, we urge you to modify your initial announcement of TRQs for raw and refined sugar, in order to provide import access significantly above minimum levels, so that there will be enough sugar to serve the U.S. market. Economic analysts have estimated these additional needs at around 1 million tons, apportioned about evenly between raw and refined sugar, in addition to the normal minimum sugar import quota amounts.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

  
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Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress

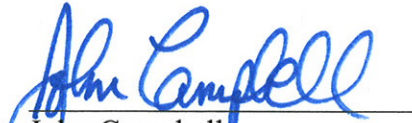
  
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Mark Kirk  
Member of Congress



Ellen Tauscher  
Member of Congress

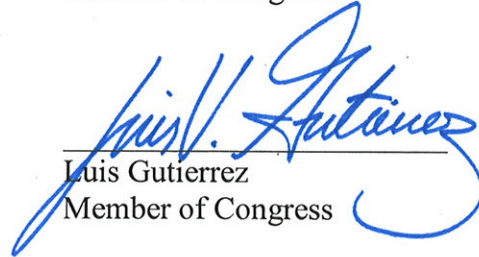


Zach Wamp  
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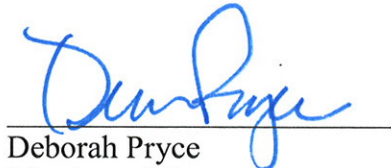


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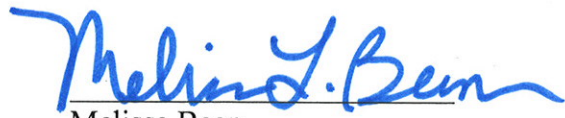
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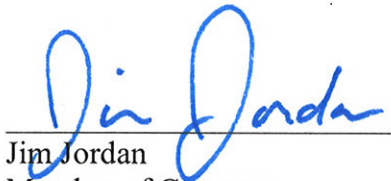
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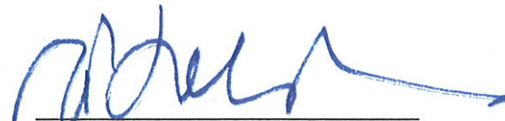
Marsha Blackburn  
Member of Congress



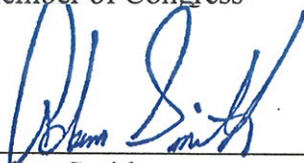
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