

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

May 26, 2016

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan  
Speaker  
House of Representatives  
H-232, U.S Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
House of Representatives  
H-204, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan and Minority Leader Pelosi,

The Senate recently passed S.J. Res. 28, a Congressional Review Act resolution which overturns the USDA Catfish Inspection rule mandated by the 2008 and 2014 Farm Bills. We write to request the House not take up S.J. Res. 28.

The merits of the catfish inspection program have been debated at length in Congress during the deliberations of the last two Farm Bills. Overwhelming evidence suggests that imported catfish and catfish-like products represent a significant food safety threat to the American public, and accordingly Congress transferred inspection authority from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS).

Unfortunately, the FDA inspection regime was inadequate and conducted inspections on a mere 0.2 percent of imported catfish species. Since USDA already inspects farm-raised meats including foreign beef, pork and poultry, Congress decided to apply the same standards to farm-raised catfish so that these products receive comprehensive inspection.

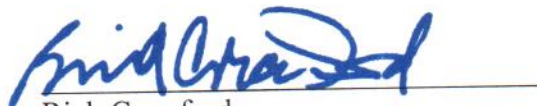
Arguments made by opponents are misguided and unfounded. First, USDA projects the program will cost only \$1.1 million annually to implement, a small price to pay to protect the food supply. Second, there is no duplication as FDA no longer inspects catfish, and all inspection activities have been transferred pursuant to provisions in the 2008 and 2014 Farm Bills. Finally, the rule simply requires foreign suppliers to meet an equivalent safety standard as our domestic producers, a policy that allows all marker participants to compete on a level playing field.

The catfish inspection program is critical to public health. In 2007, Congress acknowledged that an alarming amount of farm-raised seafood was entering the country containing banned substances and dangerous chemicals, but FDA was not appropriately inspecting to ensure the safety of U.S. consumers. The FDA's own data corroborated this finding – along with independent testing by research universities and institutions. Just recently, North Carolina State University found elevated levels of formaldehyde in pangasius imports they tested on grocery store shelves. Even more alarming, in mere days after USDA began inspecting imported shipments of catfish, FSIS found elevated amounts of Malachite Green and Crystal Violet, two banned dangerous carcinogens.

We believe that the Senate's action to nullify the catfish inspection program shortly after the program has been implemented is irresponsible and disregards overwhelming evidence proving that imported catfish represents a significant food safety threat to U.S. consumers.

We appreciate your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Rick Crawford  
Member of Congress



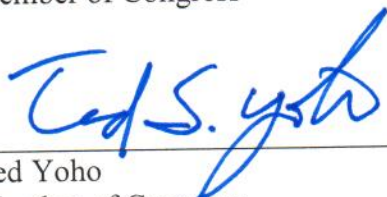
Charles Boustany  
Member of Congress



French Hill  
Member of Congress



Bennie G. Thompson  
Member of Congress



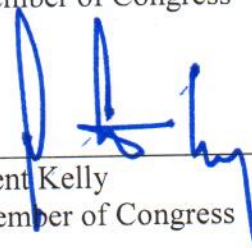
Ted Yoho  
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Ralph Abraham  
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Terri Sewell  
Member of Congress



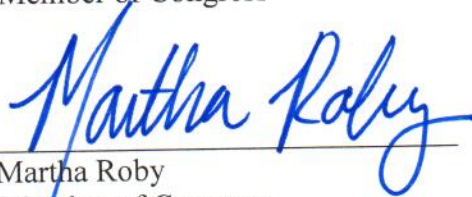
Trent Kelly  
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Steve Womack  
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Frank Lucas  
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Martha Roby  
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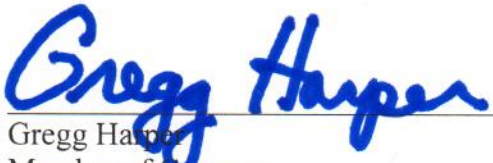




Steven Palazzo  
Member of Congress



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Rosa DeLauro  
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CC:

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
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The Honorable Pete Sessions  
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The Honorable Steve Scalise  
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The Honorable Louise Slaughter  
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The Honorable Steny Hoyer  
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