United States Senate

April 21, 2022

Senator Chris Van Hollen
Chair
Appropriation Subcommittee on
Financial Services and General Government
Washington D.C., 20510

Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith
Ranking Member
Appropriation Subcommittee
Financial Services and General Government
Washington D.C., 20510

Dear Chairman Van Hollen and Ranking Member Hyde-Smith,

As the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Subcommittee considers its Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 priorities, **we ask you to provide $25 million for the Healthy Food Financing Initiative (HFFI) Financial Assistance Program at the U.S. Department of Treasury's Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) Fund.**

Nearly 40 million Americans live in low-income rural, urban, or tribal communities where they cannot readily access fresh, healthy and affordable food. These same communities often struggle with high rates of unemployment and poverty. HFFI provides a comprehensive model for addressing limited and inequitable access to affordable and nutritious food by providing one-time loan and grant financing to build grocery stores, mobile markets, food hubs, and other fresh food enterprises in underserved areas and enable existing stores to renovate and/or expand so they can stay open and provide the healthy foods communities want and need. In addition to improving access to healthy food, HFFI creates jobs, generates tax revenue, catalyzes economic activity and establishes new market opportunities for our nation's farmers.

The HFFI Financial Assistance Program at the CDFI Fund utilizes a public-private partnership model, fostering solutions that are locally determined, and encouraging strategies that build from the ground up. CDFIs have the expertise and capacity to leverage HFFI dollars with capital from public and private sources, including state and local government, banks, health care and philanthropic institutions. This enterprise level funding has enabled CDFIs to be at the forefront of efforts to bring greater access to healthy foods in low-income communities.

Since 2011, over $267 million in grants have been awarded from HFFI programming, which in turn have leveraged over $1 billion in heathy food investments. The funds have supported diverse projects in 35 states that have successfully created jobs, transformed communities and improved access to healthy food. Additionally, several states and metropolitan areas have launched financing programs to bring fresh and healthier foods to their communities, including

Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Illinois, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Virginia. Federal HFFI resources have been instrumental in launching many of these efforts and will play a critical role moving forward.
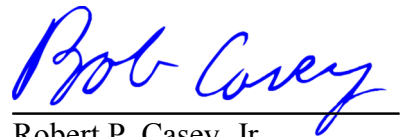
We appreciate your leadership in investing in equitable access to healthy food and community revitalization to date, and ask that you work to further ensure our nation's underserved rural, urban, and tribal communities have increased access to affordable, healthy food by providing robust funding in FY 2023 for HFFI at the CDFI Fund.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

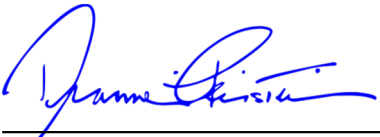Sincerely,
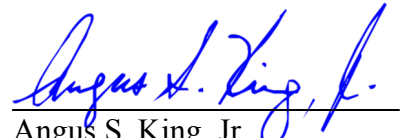
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

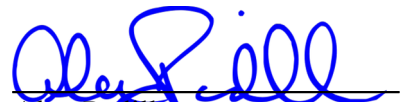Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator

Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator

Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator
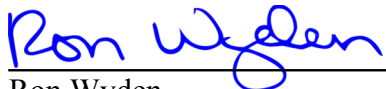

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

Alex Padilla
United States Senator

Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator
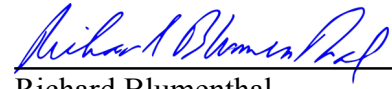
Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator

Ron Wyden
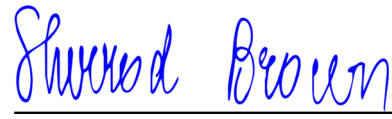United States Senator

Joe Manchin III
United States Senator

Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator
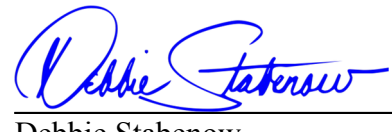
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

Robert Menendez
United States Senator

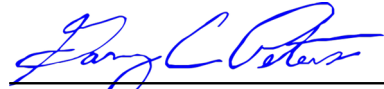Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator

Mark R. Warner
United States Senator

Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

Gary C. Peters
United States Senator

Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator