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CHIEF DEPUTY WHIP
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STEERING & POLICY COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4500

COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE

COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT
REFORM

December 7, 2016

President-Elect Donald J. Trump
C/O Trump Tower
725 5th Avenue
New York, NY 10022

Dear President-Elect Trump:

Dairy farms large and small are economic drivers in the American economy providing good jobs and producing quality products, especially in rural America. As you assemble your Cabinet and outline your priorities, I hope you will focus on to the steep challenges facing hard working dairy farmers across this country. We in Congress are ready to work with you to ensure the industry's success.

Dairy farmers are imperiled by wildly fluctuating milk prices that threaten the very existence of many farms. Just in the last two years, producers have experienced a 40 percent drop in milk prices. Many dairy farms are selling milk below the cost of production and are on the brink of selling their herds. This boom and bust cycle has taken a substantial toll on Vermont farmers. Five years ago there were 1,025 dairy farms in my state. Today there are about 800.

Working with Congress, there are a number of practical steps you can take that will help stabilize this situation, including:

- Implement a supply management tool to help prevent volatility in milk prices;
- Reform the Margin Protection Program, which has failed to provide dairy farmers with sufficient support in the face of steep milk price declines;
- Increase demand for dairy products by opening new markets abroad and encouraging domestic consumption; and
- Ensure a reliable labor supply.

As a founding member of the House Dairy Caucus, I know I speak for my colleagues in saying that we look forward to working with you and your Administration on stabilizing this vital industry.

Sincerely,



PETER WELCH
Member of Congress