United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 20, 2013

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to request that you maintain funding for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food for Peace Program, also known as Public Law 480, in your Fiscal Year 2014 budget request to Congress. As you know, Title II of Public Law 480 provides for the donation of U.S. agricultural commodities by the U.S. government to meet humanitarian food needs in foreign countries. We are supportive of USDA's work in this area.

Food for Peace has been our nation's flagship international food assistance program since its establishment in 1954. When President Eisenhower signed into law legislation authorizing the program, he explained that the purpose was to "lay the basis for a permanent expansion of our exports of agricultural products with lasting benefits to ourselves and peoples of other lands." This program has been instrumental in linking rural America and the U.S. agriculture and transportation industries to communities in the developing world while building greater awareness and support at home for the needs of the poor, hungry and disenfranchised around the world.

Food for Peace provides economic benefits at home, stimulating our farm and transportation industries. American agriculture is one of the few U.S. business sectors to produce a trade surplus, exporting $108 billion in farm goods in 2010. During this time of economic distress, we should maintain support for the areas of our economy that are growing. In addition to providing American commodities directly to those without access to food, Food for Peace supports a variety of developmental programs implemented by U.S. faith-based organizations, designed to help end the cycle of poverty.

Again, we ask that you maintain funding in your Fiscal Year 2014 budget request to Congress for USDA's Food for Peace Program. This program is important to American farmers and shippers and developing nations around the world. We look forward to working with you on this issue.

Sincerely,

Mark Pryor

Roy Blunt

Debbie Stabenow

Mark Udall

Sherrod Brown

Mary L. Landrieu

Tom Harkin

Dianne Feinstein

Barbara Mikulski

John Boozman

Al Franken

Tom Udall

Jim Johnson

Roger Wicker

Jerry Moran

John Hoeven

Brian Schatz

Charles Schumer

Mike Johanns

Frank R. Lautenberg