



OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

December 4, 2025

THE HONORABLE MAXINE DEXTER
United States House of Representatives
1207 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Dexter,

Thank you for your September 2, 2025, letter to Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins, cosigned by your colleagues, regarding the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) planned reorganization efforts, including for the USDA's Forest Service.

The Department is dedicated to refocusing its core operations to better align with its founding mission of supporting American farming, ranching, and forestry. I appreciate your feedback during this process.

Secretary Brooke Rollins made it clear the Department will be transparent and use a common-sense process in this effort. The Secretary also directed me in Secretarial Memorandum SM 1078-015¹ ("Secretary's Memorandum") to lead the implementation of the USDA Reorganization Plan, along with making changes or adjustments to the Plan, as needed.

As I testified before the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry at the end of July, the Secretary's Memorandum is the first step, not the final step in this process. On August 1, USDA announced a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders to provide feedback on the Department's planned reorganization efforts, which was extended to September 30. All stakeholders – including Capitol Hill offices, USDA employees, and members of the agricultural community – were encouraged to share their input during the open comment period.

Many of your questions have been addressed by my responses back to the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry's "Questions for the Record." A copy is attached for your convenience. Meanwhile, I continue to meet and consult with Members of Congress on the Department's planned reorganization efforts. I have also been traveling and meeting with stakeholders around the country.

¹ Secretarial Memorandum SM 1078-015 (July 24, 2025), available here:
<https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/sm-1078-015.pdf>.

Thank you, again, for your letter and commitment to agricultural stakeholders. Please note this letter was included as an official comment in the public record. If you have any further questions, please contact USDA's Office of Congressional Relations at (202) 720-7095 or ocr@usda.gov. We sent a copy of this letter to your colleagues.

Sincerely,



Stephen Alexander Vaden
Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Enclosure

CC: The Honorable Jeffrey Merkley
The Honorable Janelle Bynum
The Honorable Andrea Salinas
The Honorable Val Hoyle
The Honorable Ron Wyden
The Honorable Suzanne Bonamici