

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 24, 2025

The Honorable Russell Vought  
Director  
Office of Management and Budget  
725 17th Street NW  
Washington, DC 20503

Director Vought:

We write to you today to request that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) release the funds designated for Level 1 laboratories within the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) that are currently being withheld. These funds are dedicated for early detection, response and control of animal diseases and outbreaks. Withholding these funds threatens the safety of our domestic food supply chains, restricts American farmers access to international markets, and could cause a rapid increase in food costs for Americans.

As Senators representing states that host Level 1 NAHLN laboratories, we have seen firsthand the vital role these facilities play in safeguarding farmers, workers and agricultural operations. The laboratories are on the frontlines of identifying and containing highly contagious and economically devastating animal diseases, including highly pathogenic avian influenza, foot and mouth disease, African swine fever, and the New World screwworm. These diseases pose enormous risks, but the longstanding funding of NAHLN labs, and their coordination with farmers and ranchers, has successfully mitigated the impact of many disease outbreaks thus far.

Each Level 1 laboratory, spread across 17 states, relies on \$250,000 in annual infrastructure funding to support personnel and operations. By withholding over half of these funds, approximately \$2.65 million in total, OMB is putting these laboratories in a grave position. If OMB fails to immediately release funding, operations at these facilities will be severely impaired, or even halted entirely, when their current funding expires at the end of July 2025.

NAHLN funds are a key component to our ability to rapidly detect and respond to animal disease outbreaks, maintain international trade, and conduct biosecurity measures. Barring the labs from doing their jobs risks a major disease outbreak which would exacerbate the stress on our nation's farmers and food supply, ultimately driving up food costs for American consumers. Now is not the time for confusion and uncertainty; OMB must allow the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to expend these funds and protect the American agricultural sector from disease spread.

We strongly urge OMB and USDA to work together to immediately release the remaining 58% of funding before the July 31 deadline to ensure operational continuity of Level 1 NAHLN laboratories. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



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Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator



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Tina Smith  
United States Senator



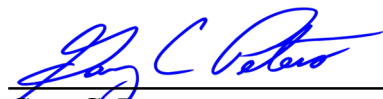
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Elissa Slotkin  
United States Senator



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Alex Padilla  
United States Senator



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Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator

CC: Brooke Rollins, Secretary, United States Department of Agriculture