

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2402

October 26, 2023

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

RE: Implementation of the Discrimination Provision in Section 22007e of the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA)

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

We are writing to urge you to *modify the process being used to implement the discrimination provision in section 22007e of the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022, as noted in the seven items below*. We are concerned that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is designing an implementation process that will not ensure farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners, who have experienced the highest level of discrimination by USDA for the longest period, will receive most of the \$2.2 billion allocated for those that have been discriminated against.

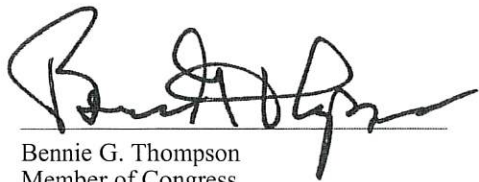
Section 22007e of IRA appropriated \$2.2 billion to provide financial assistance to farmers, ranchers, or forest landowners determined that they have experienced discrimination prior to January 1, 2021, in USDA farm lending programs. The amount of financial assistance provided to a recipient may not exceed \$500,000, based on any consequence experienced as a result of discrimination. The program shall be administered through one or more qualified nongovernmental entities selected by the Secretary and subject to the standards set by the Secretary.

Therefore, we are requesting that you submit the following information in writing to the Office of Congressman Bennie G. Thompson by **Wednesday, November 8, 2023**, located at 2466 Rayburn Building, Washington, DC, 20515:

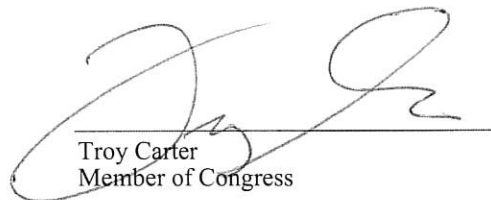
1. A copy of the Standards developed by the Secretary to be used to implement section 22007e of IRA.
2. A copy of a redesigned application form that is 10 pages or less.
3. Outline measures to be taken by USDA to ensure there will be transparency in implementing section 22007e of IRA, and how the demographic information on those receiving benefits will be provided to the public.

4. Outline how section 22007e will be administered through one or more qualified nongovernmental entities.
5. Provide the names of the nongovernmental entities who are administering the 22007e section of IRA.
6. Outline the measures to be taken that will ensure payments will only be made to persons who are or have been active farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners, including those persons who were left with debt (both USDA and private) from their family members who were active farmers, ranchers or forest landowners, and were subject to discrimination by USDA.
7. Outline how USDA will ensure that the level of payments to applicants will be based on any consequences experienced from the discrimination.
8. Provide a schedule for implementation of section 22007e.

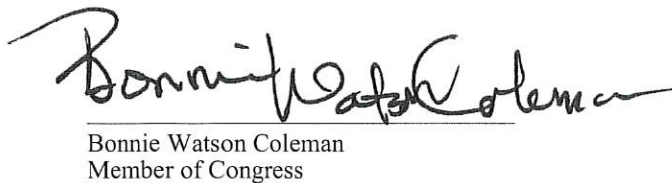
Sincerely,



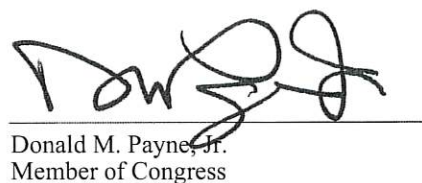
Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



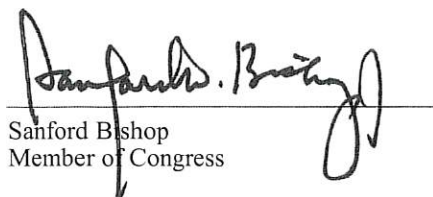
Troy Carter
Member of Congress



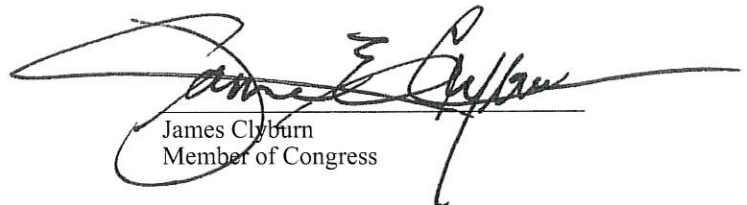
Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



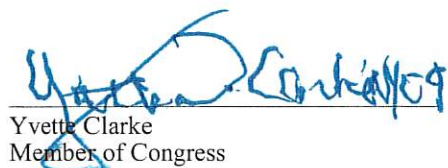
Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress



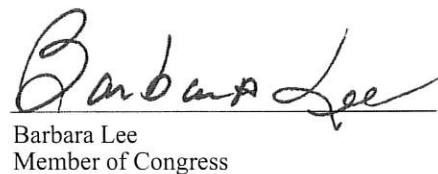
Sanford Bishop
Member of Congress



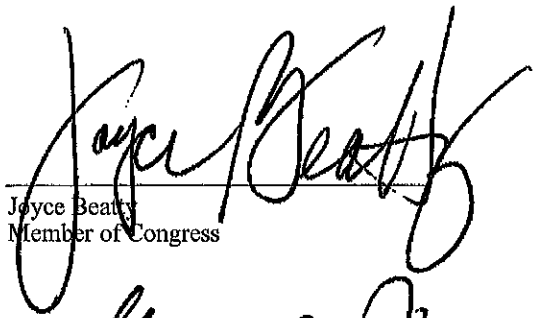
James Clyburn
Member of Congress



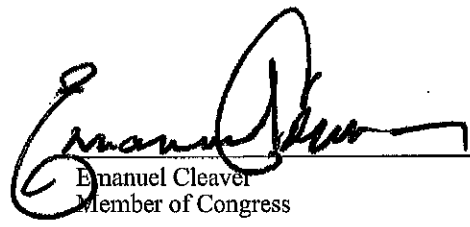
Yvette Clarke
Member of Congress



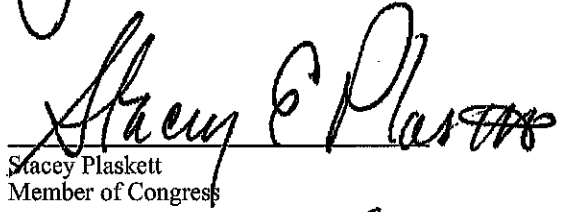
Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



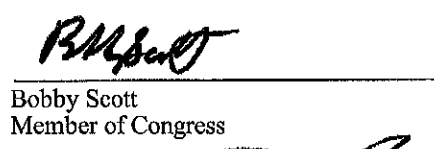
Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress



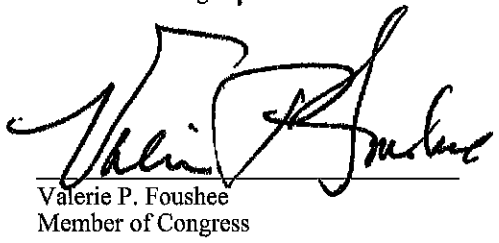
Emanuel Cleaver
Member of Congress



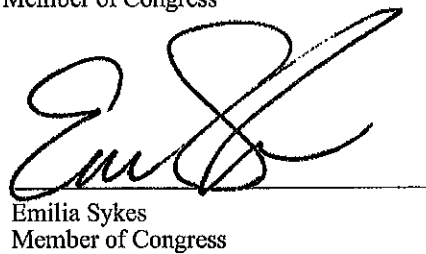
Stacey Plaskett
Member of Congress



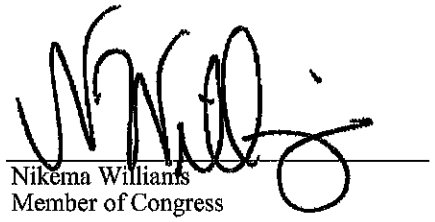
Bobby Scott
Member of Congress



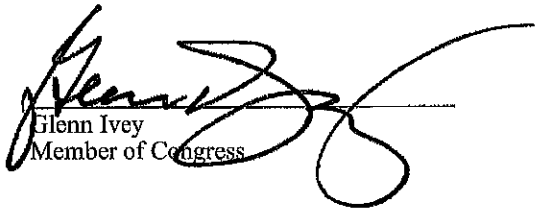
Valerie P. Foushee
Member of Congress



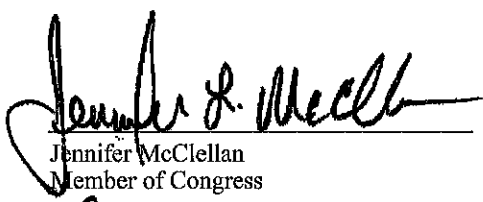
Emilia Sykes
Member of Congress



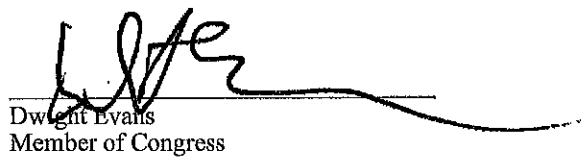
Nikema Williams
Member of Congress



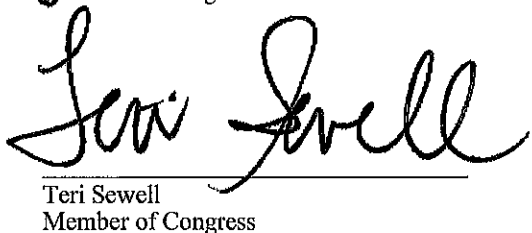
Glenn Ivey
Member of Congress



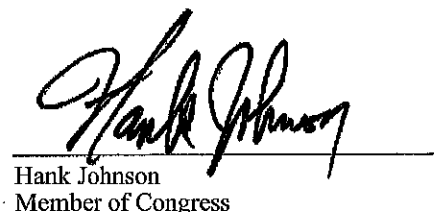
Jennifer McClellan
Member of Congress



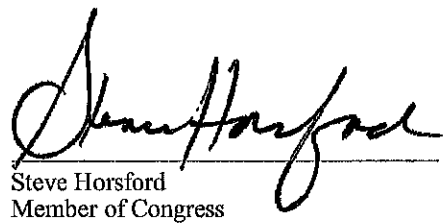
Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



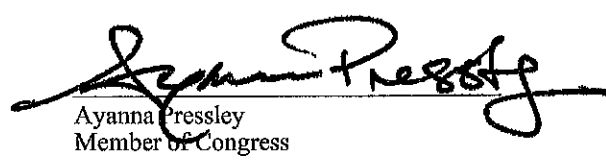
Teri Sewell
Member of Congress



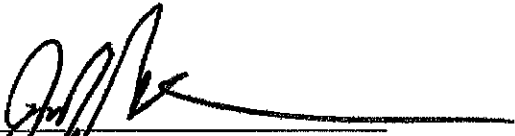
Hank Johnson
Member of Congress



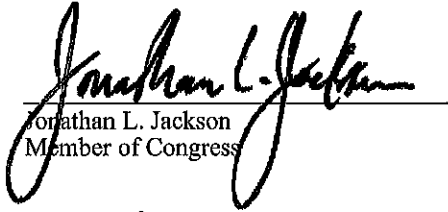
Steve Horsford
Member of Congress



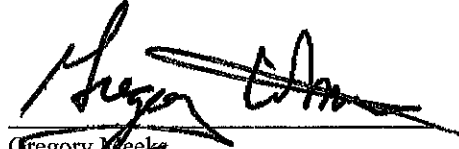
Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress



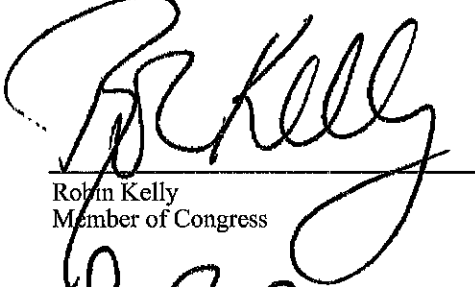
Joe Neguse
Member of Congress



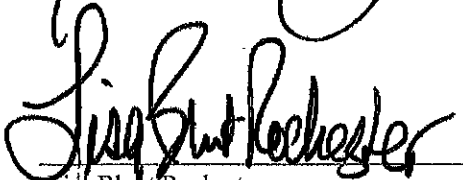
Jonathan L. Jackson
Member of Congress



Gregory Meeks
Member of Congress



Robin Kelly
Member of Congress



Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress