



October 31, 2021

US Department of Agriculture  
Secretary Thomas Vilsack  
1400 Independence Ave SW  
Washington, DC 20250

**Re: Support of Debt Relief for Black, Indigenous and Other farmers of Color**

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

As someone that believes that all people, no matter what we look like or where we come from, deserve a fair return on our labor and investment in our work, I am writing in support of debt relief for socially disadvantaged farmers. Section 1005 of the American Rescue Plan Act, stipulates that this debt relief is critical to Black, Indigenous, and other farmers and ranchers of color due to:

- decades of racial discrimination in USDA programs;
- the failure of the U.S. government to ensure adequate funding reached farmers of color in other relief efforts — even though billions reached White farmers; and
- disproportionate COVID-19 impacts on farmers of color.

Black, Indigenous, and farmers of color continue to experience discrimination with respect to the requirements, availability, and timing of loans, as well as denial of access to USDA resources based on race. As a result, many farmers of color still struggle to access and hold on to land, making it difficult for them to continue to get fair returns on their labor and investments.

Debt relief helps small and medium farmers stay in business, keep their land and continue to feed nutritious food to communities across the country as we recover from the pandemic. I urge you to continue your support of initiatives like debt relief that call for greater equity in agriculture for Black, Indigenous, and other farmers of color.

Sincerely,

(Print Name) \_\_\_\_\_

(Address) \_\_\_\_\_

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cc: President Joe Biden