

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

March 19, 2018

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

We write in opposition to the proposal to close the National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research in Peoria, Illinois, in the Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Request. Closing this important research facility would have devastating effects on agriculture research efforts, our modern farm economy, and on the local economy in Peoria, Illinois.

Since 1940, the National Center for Agriculture Utilization Research (NCAUR) has served a vital role in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) research efforts to create new industrial and food products from our agriculture commodities and develop new technologies to improve environmental quality. The advancements developed at NCAUR have ensured the safety of our food supply while promoting the growth in agriculture and biotechnology.

NCAUR is conducting vital research including efforts to advance biofuels, improve food safety, reduce or replace chemical pesticides, improve crop protection, and develop sustainable industrial and consumer products using agricultural feedstocks. These research efforts are vital in ensuring United States remains the leader in both agriculture technology and the global agricultural marketplace.

NCAUR has a strong history of providing scientific breakthroughs, including the 1941 development of a method to mass produce penicillin, an antibiotic that is considered one of the greatest advances in modern history. The lab also worked to advance innovations that have driven the farm economy, including shifting soybeans from a small forage and rotation crop to one of the most valuable row crops planted by U.S. farmers and developing the technique to create high fructose corn syrup. The research done at this facility has had far reaching impacts on our food supply and has resulted in a number of medical breakthroughs.

NCAUR supports a first-rate workforce of more than 80 scientists and a total of 200 employees at the Peoria lab. Closing this lab would not only hurt agricultural innovation, it would also cut American jobs that are vital to the local economy.

Despite NCAUR's many breakthroughs and strong history of success, the Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Request has, for the second straight year, proposed to close the lab. This proposal would hurt the nation's capacity to innovate, reduce our competitive edge in the global agricultural marketplace, cut jobs, and hurt farmers and rural America.

We strongly urge you to reconsider your recommendation to close NCAUR.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



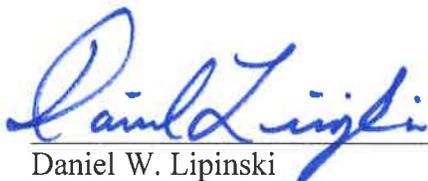
Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Darin LaHood
United States Representative



Cheri Bustos
United States Representative



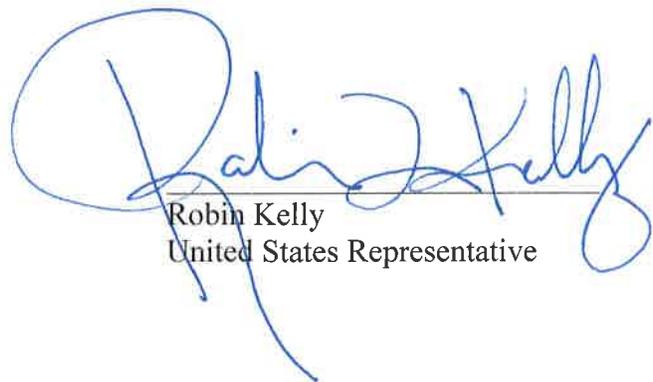
Daniel W. Lipinski
United States Representative



Danny K. Davis
United States Representative



Bobby L. Rush
United States Representative



Robin Kelly
United States Representative



Jan Schakowsky
United States Representative



Bill Foster
United States Representative



Raja Krishnamoorthi
United States Representative



Peter J. Roskam
United States Representative



Luis V. Gutiérrez
United States Representative



Randy Hultgren
United States Representative



Bradley S. Schneider
United States Representative

Cc: Honorable Sonny Perdue, Secretary of Agriculture