

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515
May 24, 2019

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

To relieve historic sustained flood stages on the Mississippi River, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is planning to open the Morganza Spillway in early June, marking only the third time that the spillway has been opened in its 46-year history. The opening of the Morganza Spillway is expected to flood up to 25,000 acres of farmland in Louisiana's Atchafalaya Basin, leading to total crop and aquaculture losses in one of the nation's most fertile regions.

Louisiana agriculture is still recoiling from the heavy hit provided by severe weather and tariffs imposed by China in the 2018 planting year. Tens of thousands of acres of soybeans and other commodities were left standing in fields unharvested, while others faced a severely depressed market. The opening of the Morganza Spillway will further devastate the lives and livelihoods of Louisiana Farmers.

As the Secretary of Agriculture, you stand in a unique position to understand the potential for severe destruction that many Louisiana farmers and producers face with the opening of the Morganza. Accordingly, we urge you to stand ready not only to provide all appropriate U.S. Department of Agriculture emergency and non-emergency resources available to those adversely impacted, but to assist eligible farmers and producers to access available aid across the federal government. As you know, the impact of these repeated hits will be felt not only for the season, but for years and generations beyond.

Sincerely,

 Bill Cassidy, M.D. 

Ralph Abraham, MD
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE

Bill Cassidy, MD
U.S. SENATOR

John Kennedy
U.S. SENATOR



Steve Scalise
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE



Cedric Richmond
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE



Garret Graves
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE



Clay Higgins
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE



Mike Johnson
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE