

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

June 9, 2026

The Honorable Brooke L. Rollins
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Rollins:

We write in support of Virginia Governor Abigail Spanberger's May 27 request for a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretarial Disaster Designation for all counties in the Commonwealth of Virginia, due to the significant damage caused by below-freezing temperatures that impacted numerous crops across the Commonwealth during the months of March and April 2026.

Agriculture is the largest private sector industry in Virginia, and forestry is third. Together these industries represent a significant portion of the Virginia economy, particularly in rural areas. These low temperature events happened at a time when many crops were developing sensitive shoots, buds, and blossoms, and resulted in significant damage and losses on farms. The weather resulted in substantial losses across a wide range of Virginia commodities, including peaches, apples, wine grapes, early-season vegetables, wheat, and newly emerged corn.

According to reports provided by Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE), losses are well above the 30 percent disaster trigger as a result of these freezing temperatures, with some growers anticipating a 100 percent loss. Preliminary VCE direct loss estimates for commodities impacted by the March and April 2026 freeze events are in the range of \$32.4M to \$105.3M pending further developments. When future income and ripple effect losses are eventually incorporated, we expect the total estimates, all inclusive, will be magnitudes higher, and compounded by developing drought conditions.

We appreciate your dedication to American agriculture and encourage USDA to declare a Secretarial Disaster Designation for the entirety of the Commonwealth of Virginia. A Secretarial Designation will open the availability of USDA assistance for growers as they also prepare for the 2027 growing season and beyond.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued leadership in supporting American agriculture.

Sincerely,



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



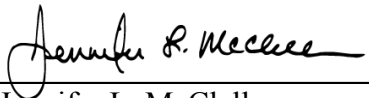
Tim Kaine
United States Senator



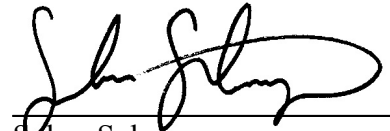
Robert J. Wittman
Member of Congress



H. Morgan Griffith
Member of Congress



Jennifer L. McClellan
Member of Congress



Suhas Subramanyam
Member of Congress

Cc: Governor Abigail Spanberger
Katie K. Frazier, Secretary of Agriculture & Forestry
Charles Green, Commissioner of Agriculture
Wilmer S. Stoneman, USDA FSA Virginia State Director