

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 3, 2019

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue,

We were pleased to see the State of Indiana included in your latest shortlist to host the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Economic Research Service (ERS) and National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). We strongly endorse the Indiana State Department of Agriculture, AgriNovus Indiana, and Purdue University's proposal and urge you to give it careful consideration.

As one of the top agriculture producing states in the country, farming runs deep in Hoosier veins. The industry contributes an estimated \$31.2 billion to Indiana's economy each year with 56,800 farming operations with an average farm size of 259 acres. Ninety-seven percent of farms are family-owned or operated. Relocating ERS and NIFA to Indiana would give USDA a greater presence in the agriculture heartland of our country, ensuring that resources are never far from the farmers, growers, farm supply, and university researchers who can provide real-time feedback and assist in the policymaking process.

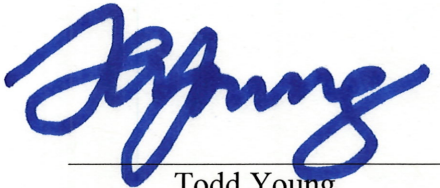
Indiana is also home to Purdue University and the nationally and internationally ranked College of Agriculture. Purdue boasts three World Food Prize laureates on the faculty, is the #1 Agriculture and Biological Engineering program in the country, and is the home to the only plant phenotyping facility at a U.S. university.

Holding the title the "Crossroads of America" is something we take seriously. Thanks to our proactive and innovative state leaders, Indiana has made unparalleled investments in infrastructure, elevating Indiana's economic competitiveness and quality of life. The Indianapolis International Airport, with direct flights to Washington, D.C., has been the top airport in North America for seven straight years.

USDA employees will be pleased with the affordable living costs and one percent capped residential property taxes. According to C2ER's Cost of Living Index, a person earning \$100,000 in Washington, D.C. would only need to earn \$60,253 in Indiana to enjoy the same level of living. Additionally, Indiana commuters spend 46 fewer hours per year in traffic congestion than in Washington D.C., per INRIX Global Traffic Scorecard. Indiana has spent years adopting sound fiscal policies, and today Indiana is one of only a handful of U.S. states with a AAA credit rating and an annual budget surplus.

We hope you will visit Indiana once again as part of the deliberative process and see for yourself why moving NIFA and ERS to Indiana is the right choice. We stand ready to assist you as you consider your options to ensure the USDA is the most effective, most efficient, and most customer-focused agency in the federal government.

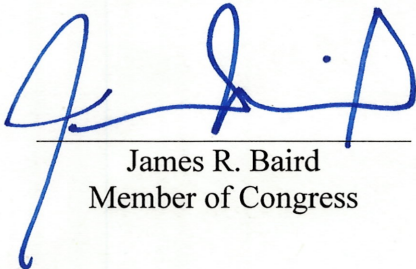
Sincerely,



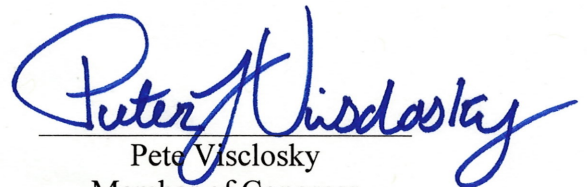
Todd Young
United States Senator



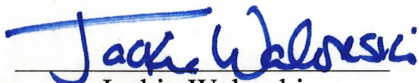
Mike Braun
United States Senator



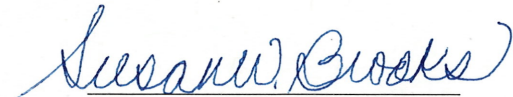
James R. Baird
Member of Congress



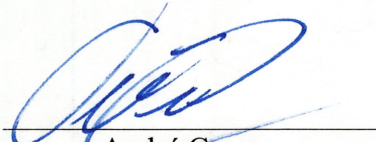
Pete Visclosky
Member of Congress



Jackie Walorski
Member of Congress



Susan W. Brooks
Member of Congress



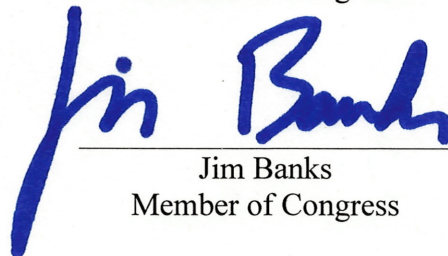
André Carson
Member of Congress



Larry Bucshon, M.D.
Member of Congress



Trey Hollingsworth
Member of Congress



Jim Banks
Member of Congress



Greg Pence
Member of Congress