



**THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,**

**THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,**

**&**

**THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE**

The Honorable Jimmy Panetta  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Panetta:

On behalf of the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), we thank you for your letter of March 19, 2021. We appreciate the concerns you expressed that the World Health Organization (WHO), at China's urging, may modify its assumptions regarding transmission of coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) via food and food packaging.

Our agencies share your concerns with China's claims that viral transmission of SARS-CoV-2 could take place via food and food packaging. As USDA and FDA emphasized in the February 18, 2021 joint statement<sup>1</sup> you mention in your letter, claims about transmission of COVID-19 via food and food packaging are not supported by scientific evidence. We will continue to engage with Members of the WTO's Sanitary and Phytosanitary Committee to represent the views of the United States Government regarding the science of SARS-CoV-2 transmission as it may relate to exports of food and food packaging and provide any relevant recommendations.

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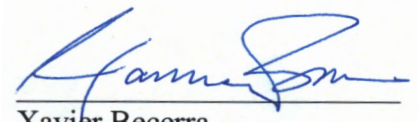
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A copy of this response will be sent to co-signers of your letter. We thank you for your attention to this important matter, and we will continue to work with you to keep America safe and prosperous. If you or your staff have any further questions, please contact Anne Tatem, Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislation for HHS, at (202) 690-7627, Anne Knapke, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations for USDA, at (202) 941-4685, or Jan Beukelman, Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Congressional Affairs, at (202) 881-8392.

Sincerely,



Xavier Becerra  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health  
& Human Services



Tom Vilsack  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture



Katherine Tai  
U.S. Trade Representative  
The Office of the U.S. Trade  
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**THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,**

**THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,**

**&**

**THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE**

The Honorable Dan Newhouse  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Newhouse:

On behalf of the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), we thank you for your letter of March 19, 2021. We appreciate the concerns you expressed that the World Health Organization (WHO), at China's urging, may modify its assumptions regarding transmission of coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) via food and food packaging.

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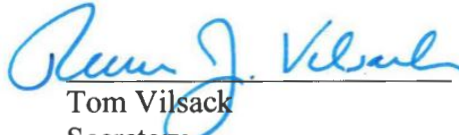
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**THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,**

**THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,**

**&**

**THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE**

The Honorable Stephanie Murphy  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Murphy:

On behalf of the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), we thank you for your letter of March 19, 2021. We appreciate the concerns you expressed that the World Health Organization (WHO), at China's urging, may modify its assumptions regarding transmission of coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) via food and food packaging.

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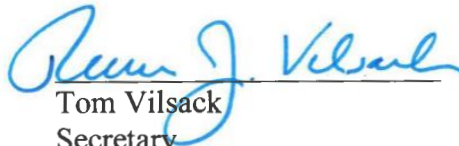
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**THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE**

The Honorable Eric A. Crawford  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Crawford:

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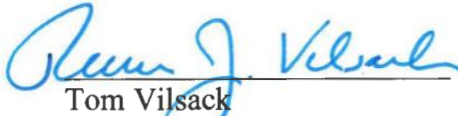
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**THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,**

**THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,**

**&**

**THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE**

The Honorable Salud Carbajal  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Carbajal:

On behalf of the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), we thank you for your letter of March 19, 2021. We appreciate the concerns you expressed that the World Health Organization (WHO), at China's urging, may modify its assumptions regarding transmission of coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) via food and food packaging.

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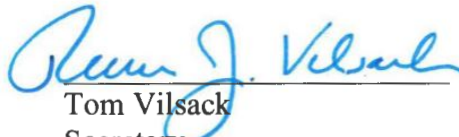
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The Honorable Tom Reed  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Reed:

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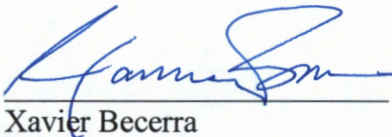
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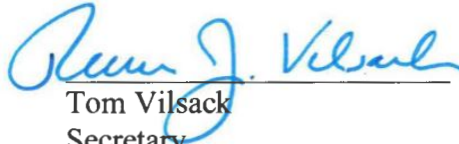
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**THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,**

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**THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE**

The Honorable Thomas R. Suozzi  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Suozzi:

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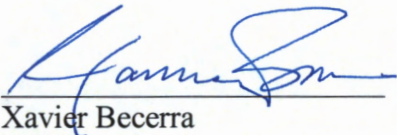
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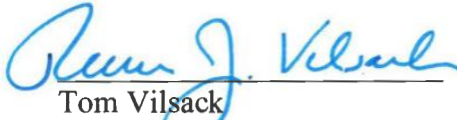
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The Honorable Adrian Smith  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Smith:

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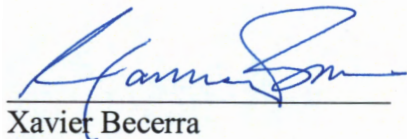
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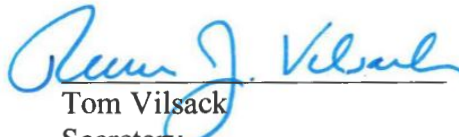
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The Honorable Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
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Dear Representative Beyer:

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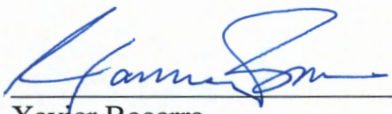
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Sincerely,



Xavier Becerra  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health  
& Human Services



Tom Vilsack  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture



Katherine Tai  
U.S. Trade Representative  
The Office of the U.S. Trade  
Representative



**THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,**

**THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,**

**&**

**THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE**

The Honorable Rodney Davis  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Davis:

On behalf of the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), we thank you for your letter of March 19, 2021. We appreciate the concerns you expressed that the World Health Organization (WHO), at China's urging, may modify its assumptions regarding transmission of coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) via food and food packaging.

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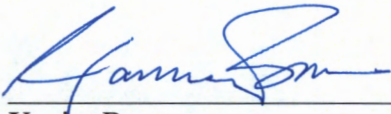
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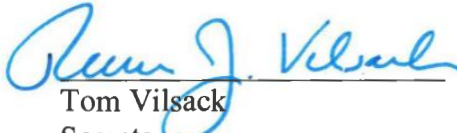
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U.S. Department of Health  
& Human Services



Tom Vilsack  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture



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The Office of the U.S. Trade  
Representative



**THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,**

**THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,**

**&**

**THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE**

The Honorable Suzan K. DelBene  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative DelBene:

On behalf of the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), we thank you for your letter of March 19, 2021. We appreciate the concerns you expressed that the World Health Organization (WHO), at China's urging, may modify its assumptions regarding transmission of coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) via food and food packaging.

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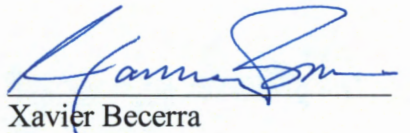
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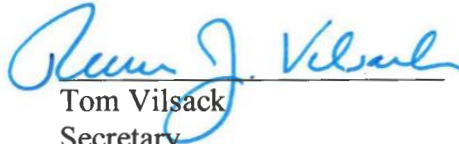
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Sincerely,



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U.S. Trade Representative  
The Office of the U.S. Trade  
Representative



**THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,**

**THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,**

**&**

**THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE**

The Honorable Brad R. Wenstrup  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Wenstrup:

On behalf of the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), we thank you for your letter of March 19, 2021. We appreciate the concerns you expressed that the World Health Organization (WHO), at China's urging, may modify its assumptions regarding transmission of coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) via food and food packaging.

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**THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,**

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**THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE**

The Honorable Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Panetta:

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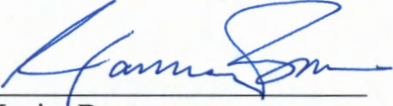
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**&**

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The Honorable Tom Rice  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Rice:

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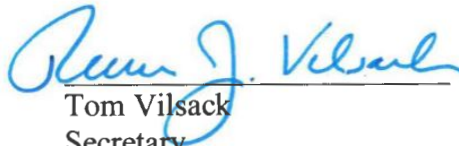
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**THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,**

**&**

**THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE**

The Honorable Michelle Fischbach  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Fischbach:

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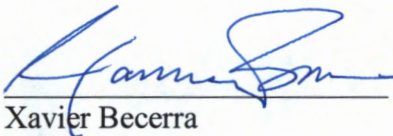
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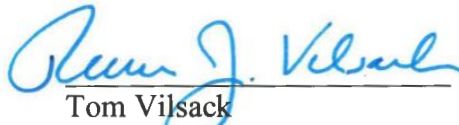
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