



County of Monterey

Board of Supervisors

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April 14, 2025

The Honorable Alex Padilla
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: S. 984, the Fair Access to Agriculture Disaster Programs Act – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Padilla:

On behalf of the County of Monterey Board of Supervisors, I am writing to express our support for S. 984, the *Fair Access to Agriculture Disaster Programs Act*.

This bill would reduce barriers that producers face in accessing agriculture disaster assistance. The legislation aims to ensure that basic safety net programs for producers are readily available to full-time farmers to get back on their feet following natural disasters.

Current adjusted gross income (AGI) limitations disproportionately prohibit producers with high input costs from participating in certain USDA disaster programs in a meaningful way. These limitations have not kept pace with inflation. Specialty crop producers across the country have acutely experienced this issue and have been denied access to USDA standing disaster programs, most recently in California during this year's winter storms and resulting flooding – which was particularly devastating in Pajaro in the County of Monterey.

We support the approach of your legislation that would exempt the AGI limitation for farms that get 75% of their income from farming or related farming practices (agri-tourism, direct-to-consumer marketing of agricultural products, sale of agricultural equipment owned by person or entity, and other agriculture-related activities, as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture). We also appreciate the applicability to the disaster programs for Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP); Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP); Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP); Tree Assistance Program (TAP); and, the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP).

We are pleased to offer our support for the *Fair Access to Agriculture Disaster Programs Act*, and we thank you for your leadership on this important issue facing the County of Monterey and other communities across California.

Sincerely,

DRAFT

Chris M. Lopez, Chair
Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Adam Schiff, U.S. Senator for California
The Honorable Zoe Lofgren, 18th Congressional District
The Honorable Jimmy Panetta, 19th Congressional District



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