

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 19, 2019

The Honorable Sonny Perdue  
Secretary  
United States Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W. Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue,

We write to thank you for including the Greater Rochester area and the Finger Lakes region in the first round of sites for consideration as the new headquarters of the National Institute for Food and Agriculture and the Economic Research Service. We again applaud your desire to move these important USDA agencies closer to their rural constituents, and we believe Upstate New York is perfectly suited to meet your needs.

We reiterate that the Rochester and Finger Lakes region has many advantages to offer the USDA, including reliable transportation networks, the availability of broadband access, move-in and shovel-ready rural and urban site locations, and excellent academic institutions to support employee recruitment and training. The region encompasses a network of vibrant communities that are recognized as outstanding places to live and work. It is home to a robust and diverse agricultural industry, populated by a broad range of dairy farms, specialty crop growers, and value added producers, a wide array of food processors at all scales, and some of the country's leading food retailers.

During your visit to Upstate New York last year, you met with farmers throughout the region and saw first-hand how we are leveraging these significant assets to further accelerate growth and innovation within our agriculture sector. In fact, there has been nearly \$1.3 billion in new public-private partnership investments made in our region's agricultural ecosystem of the past five years and the Finger Lakes now boasts the highest agricultural output of any region in Upstate New York. In addition, our agriculture, food production, and beverage processing industry is supported by a highly skilled, educated and diverse workforce of nearly 19,000 workers who possess the expertise and vision needed to help the USDA advance its priorities.

We continue to welcome and encourage the USDA's exploration of New York State as a potential new home for these agencies. We fully support the efforts of the Greater Rochester

Enterprise and Finger Lakes Food & Beverage Consortium to identify and provide information to the USDA about our region as the new headquarters location of NIFA and ERS. We would be pleased to provide any additional information you require.

Sincerely,

A blue ink handwritten signature of Tom Reed, consisting of a stylized 'T' and 'R' followed by a horizontal line.

Tom Reed  
Member of Congress

A blue ink handwritten signature of Joseph D. Morelle, written in a cursive style.

Joseph D. Morelle  
Member of Congress