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June 24, 2026

The Honorable Stephen Alexander Vaden
Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Deputy Secretary Vaden:

We write regarding your inadequate response¹ to our May 27, 2026 letter² (May 27th Letter) conveying our serious concerns over the decision to convert the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA or the Department) Food and Nutrition Serviceⁱ (FNS or Agency) into the "Food and Nutrition Administration" and relocate staff from Washington, DC, and regional offices to alternate locations across the country.³ The May 27th Letter requested your immediate response to a series of questions regarding the widespread relocation and restructuring of the Agency.

On June 3, 2026, we received a response⁴ (June 3rd Response) that not only wholly ignored the questions in our May 27th Letter,⁵ but was identical to a June 3, 2026, response letter⁶ sent to other Members of the House of Representatives in response to a related—but entirely distinct—inquiry.⁷

¹ Letter from the Hon. Stephen Alexander Vaden, Dep. Sec'y, U.S. Dep't of Agric., to Rep. Robert C. "Bobby" Scott, Ranking Member, U.S. House Comm. on Educ. and Wrkf. (June 3, 2026) (on file with Committee staff).

² Letter from Rep. Robert C. "Bobby" Scott, Ranking Member, U.S. House Comm. on Educ. and Wrkf., and Rep. Suzanne Bonamici, Ranking Member, Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Educ. Subcomm., to the Hon. Brooke L. Rollins, Sec'y, U.S. Dep't of Agric. (May. 27, 2026), https://democrats-edworkforce.house.gov/imo/media/doc/scott_bonamici_letter_to_usda_re_food_and_nutrition_service_reorganization.pdf

³ U.S. Dep't of Agric., Press Release No. 0062.26, USDA Announces Actions to Better Serve States, Nutrition Program Recipients, and the American Taxpayer (Apr. 30, 2026), <https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/press-releases/2026/04/30/usda-announces-actions-better-serve-states-nutrition-program-recipients-and-american-taxpayer>.

⁴ Letter from the Hon. Stephen Alexander Vaden, *supra note 1*.

⁵ Letter from Rep. Robert C. "Bobby" Scott, *supra note 2*.

⁶ Letter from the Hon. Stephen Alexander Vaden, Dep. Sec'y, U.S. Dep't of Agric., to Rep. Jahana Hayes, Ranking Member, Nutrition and Foreign Agric., Subcomm., (June 3, 2026).

⁷ On May 8, 2026, Members of the House of Representatives sent a letter to Secretary Brooke Rollins with a series of questions in response to the Department's intent to reorganize, relocate, and rename the Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services Mission area. Letter from Members of Congress to the Hon. Brooke L. Rollins, Sec'y, U.S. Dep't of Agric. (May. 8, 2026), [6696D42673C83FB2F158950DAF48A66777F4F5A4EC11864CD8558CA64A018F85.quill---letter-l36536---fns-reorganization-letter---version-1---05-11-2026-11-04-am.pdf](https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/press-releases/2026/05/08/usda-announces-actions-better-serve-states-nutrition-program-recipients-and-american-taxpayer).

Instead of answering our questions in the May 27th letter,⁸ the June 3rd Response⁹ insinuated that we failed to ask these questions in a recent roundtable held by an entirely different Committee: “On May 13, 2026, the House Committee on Agriculture held a roundtable where I discussed the reorganization and took questions from attending members. Noticeably absent were these questions raised in this public letter. However, I welcome a second opportunity to provide information.”¹⁰

While we do not serve on the House Committee on Agriculture, we do very much welcome the opportunity to hear from the Department to discuss matters within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Education and Workforce (Committee). While the House Committee on Agriculture had both a public hearing with the Secretary¹¹ and a roundtable where Members had the opportunity to ask you about the reorganization, Members of this Committee have not been afforded any such opportunity.¹² This is concerning as the Department administers federal nutrition assistance programs within the jurisdiction of this Committee, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), the Summer Electronic Benefits (EBT) Transfer program, and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).¹³

The bottom line is that the decision to restructure an agency that is critical to delivering nutrition assistance to the most vulnerable members of our society requires your full attention, especially as the Department’s latest household food security report revealed that 1 in 7 households experienced food insecurity in 2024.¹⁴ Nutrition programs are a fundamental lifeline for families across the country; more than 22 million children receive free and reduced price meals while in school and an expected 21 million children will receive grocery benefits this summer.¹⁵ These programs also invest in American agriculture and American farmers, which is especially important now when farmers are facing rising inflation and proposals from the Administration to scale back federal programs.¹⁶

⁸ Letter from Rep. Robert C. “Bobby” Scott, *supra note 2*.

⁹ Letter from the Hon. Stephen Alexander Vaden, *supra note 1*.

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ For the Purpose of Receiving Testimony from the Hon. Brooke L. Rollins, Sec’y, U.S. Dep’t of Agric.: Hearing Before Comm. on Agric., 119th Cong. (2026), <https://agriculture.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=8144>.

¹² Marcia Brown, *Vaden to Hold Roundtable with House Lawmakers on USDA Reorganization*, PoliticoPro (May 11, 2026), <https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/2026/05/vaden-to-hold-roundtable-with-house-lawmakers-on-usda-reorganization-00914090>; Letter from the Hon. Stephen Alexander Vaden, *supra note 1*.

¹³ Food & Nutrition Servs., FNS Nutrition Programs, U.S. Dep’t of Agric. (July 2025), <https://www.fns.usda.gov/programs>.

¹⁴ Matthew P. Rabbitt, Household Food Security in the United States in 2024, U.S. Dep’t of Agriculture Econ. Rsch. Serv. (Dec. 2025), https://ers.usda.gov/sites/default/files/laserfiche/publications/109896/ERR_337.pdf?v=40202.

¹⁵ National School Lunch Program: Participation And Lunches Served, U.S. Dep’t of Agric. (Apr. 10, 2026), <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/slsummar-4.pdf>; Press Release, Food Rsch. Action Ctr., More Than 21 Million Children in 38 States, District of Columbia, to Benefit from Summer EBT in 2026 (Jan. 9, 2026), <https://frac.org/news/summerebtjan2026>.

¹⁶ Farm Aid, Tracking the Farm Economy in Crisis (Apr. 27, 2026), <https://www.farmaid.org/blog/tracking-the-farm-economy-in-crisis/>; Food Rsch. & Action Ctr., FRAC Analysis of President Trump’s FY 27 Budget: Implications for Food Security and Economic Stability (Apr. 3, 2026), <https://frac.org/blog/frac-analysis-of-president-trumps-fy-27-budget-implications-for-food-security-and-economic-stability>; Nat’l Sustainable Agric. Coalition, USDA Programs Freeze: What We Know (Apr. 30, 2025), <https://sustainableagriculture.net/blog/usda-programs-freeze-what-we-know/>.

This is the second letter¹⁷ to the Administration in which our legitimate questions were largely unanswered.¹⁸ We previously sent a letter¹⁹ to the Department on August 21, 2025, that outlined a number of concerns and questions after the announcement of the Department-wide reorganization plan.²⁰

Since our previous questions were not answered in the June 3rd response,²¹ we have included them below. We request that you please respond fully and accurately to the following no later than July 7, 2026:

1. Provide the rationale for eliminating the Under Secretary's Office, including both the Under Secretary and Deputy Under Secretary positions.
2. Provide the rationale for converting the Food and Nutrition Service to the "Food and Nutrition Administration."
 - a. Explain how this change "reduces duplicative management and complexity within the agency" and "prioritizes State service and participant needs."²²
 - b. Provide the relevant stakeholders and officials who were consulted regarding the decision to convert FNS.
 - c. Provide an analysis of the estimated costs and savings, if any, associated with the conversion of FNS.
3. Provide which job and program functions, if any, currently performed by FNS staff, would be eliminated under the proposed "Food and Nutrition Administration."
4. Provide the rationale and criteria used for the relocation of current FNS staff.
 - a. What—if any—consideration has been given to the talent or institutional knowledge that will be lost from employees who are unable or unwilling to relocate?
 - b. What—if any—consideration has been made to the financial burden on employees who must now relocate themselves and their families to a different region of the country?
5. Provide an analysis of the number of FNS employees who will be impacted under this reorganization and the expected distribution of FNS employees across geographic regions.
 - a. Provide the number of employees who are expected to be reduced in cities and states with regional FNS offices.
 - b. Provide the number of employees who are expected to be increased in cities and states with new hubs.

¹⁷ Letter from Rep. Robert C. "Bobby" Scott, *supra* note 2.

¹⁸ Letter from the Hon. Stephen Alexander Vaden, Sec'y, U.S. Dep't of Agric., to Rep. Robert C. "Bobby" Scott, Ranking Member, U.S. House Comm. on Educ. and Wrkf. (Sept. 5, 2025) (on file with Committee staff).

¹⁹ Letter from Rep. Robert C. "Bobby" Scott, Ranking Member, U.S. House Comm. on Educ. and Wrkf., and Rep. Suzanne Bonamici, Ranking Member, Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Educ. Subcomm., to the Hon. Brooke L. Rollins, Sec'y, U.S. Dep't of Agric. (Aug. 21, 2025), https://democrats-edworkforce.house.gov/imo/media/doc/scott_bonamici_letter_to_rollins_re_usda_reorganization.pdf.

²⁰ Secretary Memorandum: SM 1078-015, U.S. Dep't of Agric. (July 24, 2025), <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/sm-1078-015.pdf>.

²¹ Letter from the Hon. Stephen Alexander Vaden, *supra* note 1.

²² U.S. Dep't of Agric., *supra* note 3.

6. Provide a detailed plan of how you intend to maintain and improve regional expertise, state-specific relationships, and technical assistance while restructuring FNS regional offices into new hubs, as well as the measures you will take to ensure that states in regions that no longer have a regional office can continue to receive timely technical assistance and support.
7. Provide the proactive steps the Department will take to mitigate any disruption in FNS program operations throughout the reorganization.
8. Provide a detailed analysis of the estimated annual costs and savings associated with the reorganization plan over the course of the next five years.
 - a. Provide estimates regarding any disruptions to Department-administered benefits and services.
 - b. Provide any estimates or projections of increases or decreases in transportation costs resulting from the relocation, including for purposes of program administration, enforcement, and oversight.
 - c. Provide information on any anticipated delays, disruptions, and cancellations for Department-issued data or research products.
9. Explain how the Department took into consideration public feedback on the proposed Department-wide reorganization considering that the majority of respondents expressed concern²³ with the Department-wide reorganization proposal.
10. Explain how the Department intends to comply with the statutory requirement²⁴ to notify Congress and receive approval prior to any staff relocation or office reorganization.

Please send all official correspondence and information related to these requests to the Committee's Democratic staff at EWDOversight@mail.house.gov. Thank you for your immediate attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Ranking Member



Suzanne Bonamici
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Early Childhood,
Elementary, and Secondary Education
Subcommittee

¹ U.S. Dep't of Agric., Press Release No. 0062.26, USDA Announces Actions to Better Serve States, Nutrition Program Recipients, and the American Taxpayer (Apr. 30, 2026), <https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/press-releases/2026/04/30/usda-announces-actions-better-serve-states-nutrition-program-recipients-and-american-taxpayer>.

²³ U.S. Dep't of Agric., USDA Reorganization: Summary and Analysis of Feedback (Dec. 8, 2025), <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/usda-reorg-comments-analysis-12082025.pdf?emci=02f7d369-0efe-f011-832f-000d3a1f0e4c&emdi=35b94a56-1ffe-f011-832f-000d3a1f0e4c&ceid=5017366>.

²⁴ Continuing Appropriations, Agriculture, Legislative Branch, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Extensions Act, 2026, Pub. Law No. 119-37, div. B, tit. VII, § 716, 139 Stat. 544 (2026).