JOHN R. "RANDY" KUHL, JR.
29TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK

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February 16, 2006

The Honorable Mike Johanns
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
200-A Whitten Building
Washington, D.C. 20250

05-012P
05-012P-37
John R Kuhl Jr

Dear Secretary Johanns:

I am concerned about the Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) proposed rule which would allow China to export processed poultry to the United States. I understand the proposal would continue the ban on live poultry imports; however, I believe it is imprudent to allow China to process poultry slaughtered in the United States or other countries from which the United States allows imports.

Recently, three people in Hong Kong, who came into contact with an avian flu-infected chicken smuggled from China, were hospitalized and quarantined. While initial tests results were negative, this incident poignantly demonstrates the growing avian flu problem abroad. I am not convinced that adequate safety measures are in place to guarantee that poultry sent to China for processing under the proposed rule would be returned to the United States in a manner safe for consumption.

Very little is known about the origins of avian influenza and the way in which it spreads and I urge you to use every precaution to protect American consumers. Many of my constituents have contacted me to express their concerns on this issue. I agree with them that we must protect our food supply and take strident measures to prevent an avian flu epidemic in this country. I respectfully request that you reconsider this proposal and avoid enacting any rule that would allow processed poultry imports from China.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John R. Kuhl, Jr.

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
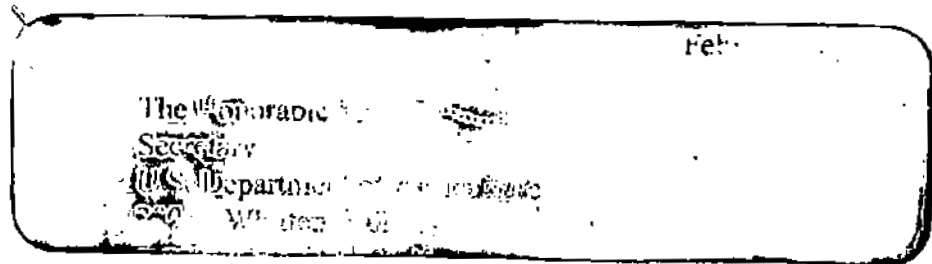
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Randy Kuhl

M.C.

The Honorable
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture

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