

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 5, 2026

The Honorable Brooke L. Rollins
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Rollins:

We write to renew and emphasize our request that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) allow turkey growers to utilize the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) to recover a portion of the devastating losses caused by avian metapneumovirus (aMPV). We further ask USDA to provide a process for growers to submit applications retroactively for eligible losses incurred in 2024 and 2025.

Based on the merits of turkey grower claims, veterinary expert opinions, and the program's eligibility standards, it is unclear why the USDA has deemed aMPV as ineligible under LIP. Avian metapneumovirus is transmitted via vectors, and growers had no commercially available vaccine to protect their flocks during the years in question. Due to this, producers could not reasonably prevent these losses despite following recommended biosecurity practices and working closely with their veterinarians.

The rapid spread of aMPV hit small and independent growers especially hard, with some sustaining repeated losses before an effective vaccine became commercially available. These losses were beyond normal mortality and were caused by circumstances outside the growers' control.

USDA's National Appeals Division has issued decisions establishing significant administrative precedent regarding the eligibility of aMPV-related losses under LIP. These decisions recognize that aMPV can and should qualify as an eligible disease when producers provide sufficient evidence demonstrating that the disease directly caused mortality beyond normal levels. USDA should apply that reasoning consistently and fairly to similarly situated growers rather than requiring each producer to pursue a lengthy and costly individual appeal.

Accordingly, we respectfully request that USDA:

- Formally recognize qualifying aMPV-related turkey mortality as eligible for assistance through LIP;
- Direct the Farm Service Agency to apply the precedent established through the National Appeals Division consistently across aMPV claims;
- Establish a retroactive application or reconsideration process for qualifying losses sustained in 2024 and 2025; and
- Provide clear guidance to county FSA offices and turkey growers regarding the documentation needed to support these applications.

This relief would not make producers whole, but it could provide a critical lifeline to Minnesota farm families who have endured losses beyond normal mortality through no fault of their own. For some small and independent growers, this assistance may determine whether their operations, and the opportunity for the next generation to continue farming, survive.

Providing this assistance also aligns with the administration's priority of reducing food costs for American families. Disease-related losses reduce domestic production, increase costs throughout the supply chain, and threaten the long-term availability of an affordable source of protein. Helping growers remain in business through programs designed to provide this type of assistance strengthens our domestic food supply and protects consumers from further price pressures.

Minnesota is the nation's leading turkey-producing state, and its family farms are an important part of our rural communities and agricultural economy. We urge USDA to act quickly and use every available administrative authority to ensure these growers are treated fairly and have meaningful access to the assistance Congress intended LIP to provide.

Thank you for your consideration. We stand ready to work with you, the Farm Service Agency and Minnesota's turkey industry to develop a fair and workable process.

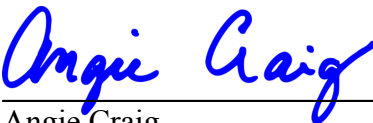
Sincerely,



Brad Finstad
Member of Congress



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Angie Craig
Member of Congress
Ranking Member, Committee
on Agriculture



Michelle Fischbach
Member of Congress



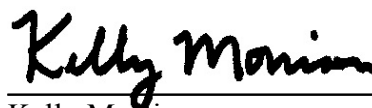
Tina Smith
United States Senator



Pete Stauber
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



Kelly Morrison
Member of Congress

CC: Kurt Blomgren, Minnesota FSA Executive Director