

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 23, 2019

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue,

We are writing to request that you expeditiously finalize the hemp rules required under Subtitle G, Section 297D of the *Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018*.

In our April 30, 2019 letter, we expressed our concerns that hemp farmers and businesses may suffer if the hemp rules are postponed or delayed. Unfortunately, the continued uncertainty around hemp regulations is indeed negatively impacting hemp farmers and businesses in Maine. For example, a Maine hemp farmer recently received notice of bank account closure as well as notice that the farm's insurance policy would not be renewed, because the farm is growing hemp.

During these difficult economic times for farmers, hemp provides a promising market for farmers in Maine and across the country. The Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry issued 167 hemp licenses this year, up from just two licenses when the program started in 2016. We are excited by the economic opportunities that the hemp industry can provide to farmers and businesses in our state.

We respectfully ask that you expedite the interim final rule on hemp so that this growing industry is not further stifled by regulatory uncertainty. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



CHELLIE PINGREE
Member of Congress



JARED GOLDEN
Member of Congress