

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4604

March 15, 2017

USDA/Agricultural Marketing Service
Transportation and Marketing Program
Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program

To whom it concerns:

I am writing in support of the Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP) grant application submitted by Surry County, Virginia.

I represent the Fourth Congressional District of Virginia, an area that comprises Surry County in Southeast Virginia. Surry County is a rural community that lacks access to local retail supermarkets and shopping resources. Located in what is known as a Strike Force Zone with a total population of 7,058 and an unemployment rate of 5.2%, Surry County is a food desert with many of its residents lacking access to fresh produce or grocery stores. Therefore, there is a great need for local farmers and agricultural producers to provide fresh produce for their community.

The funding awarded from the FMPP grant will help Surry County expand much-needed access to fresh produce. The funds awarded under the FMPP grant application will help increase participation in the purchasing and selling of fresh produce by increasing awareness and visitation to the farmers market, increasing vendor participation, and increasing the number of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) transactions. Improving and increasing access to healthy, fresh, and local produce will significantly improve the health and quality of life for my constituents in Surry County.

I encourage you to support Surry County's application for the FMPP grant. If you have any questions, please contact my Grant Coordinator, Blair Wriston, at (202) 225-6365.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "A. Donald McEachin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

A. Donald McEachin
United States Member of Congress