

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1013

November 5, 2020

Dear Colleague,

I am proud to announce that I am seeking the Chairmanship of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture. Today our nation faces perhaps the most significant struggles any of us have seen in our lifetime. Across rural and urban communities and from young to old, the threats posed by global illness, hunger, financial insecurity, climate change, and natural disasters are significant. As our nation's legislative body, it is the duty of Congress to address, through this Committee, the insecurities plaguing our citizens and provide the means for a more fruitful existence.

I was born on a farm in rural South Carolina during segregation. After my parents moved north to find work, I spent my childhood years living and working on my grandparents' farm. The core lessons I brought from these experiences still resonate throughout farming communities today, and I have drawn upon them as I have fought to support the needs of rural and urban America. But, our farm systems have evolved and our policies must reflect and urge forward these changes. And I believe that the progress of our nation cannot be true progress if it leaves behind the most vulnerable among us. Since my election to the U.S. House of Representatives in 2002, I have served continuously as an active member of the Agriculture Committee, representing a state whose leading industry is agriculture. I have fought hard to elevate the needs of our vulnerable communities, ensure a stable and skilled farm workforce, and invest in programs that will serve to strengthen our agriculture industry for future generations.

However, the work of our Agriculture Committee in many ways reflects the most basic needs of our nation--food, nutrition, and financial resources--but also mirrors the greater movements of our time. And, amid a global pandemic, many fault lines already present in rural America have deepened. Even during years of growth, rural economies have lagged behind urban development, and the only pathway to prosperity for many of our young people drew them to seek opportunities beyond the borders of their rural towns. And now, the heavy weight of the virus has fallen on these struggling communities, as access to reliable broadband, education, childcare, and medicine are just out of reach. Rebuilding our economy must be inclusive and equitable, incorporating job growth and revitalization to strengthen our nation as a whole.

As our nation grapples with a racial reckoning, we must ensure that racial justice and economic equality is brought forth in our farming industry. With the passage of the 2018 Farm Bill, I was proud to secure \$80 million in funding for a new scholarship program that provides educational opportunities to 1890s students and will ensure a highly-skilled food and agricultural systems workforce to the ranks alongside this generation's leaders. Building on this progress through supportive financing and opportunities for young and beginning farmers, as well as farmers of color, can strengthen our foothold toward a more equitable agricultural America. If elected, I would approach my role as the first African

American to chair the Agriculture Committee, and the first African American from Georgia to chair any Committee, with a principled focus on addressing inequities in Agriculture and advancing racial progress for all.

With each wildfire, hurricane, or flood more devastating than the last, it is incumbent upon us to ensure food security for future generations. The threat of climate change is a present and growing danger, and we must promote sustainable agriculture solutions that are economically viable, ecologically just, and support the social fabric of our rural communities. Transitioning away from fossil fuels toward ethanol and biofuels can create jobs and foster economic opportunities in our rural communities. And as trade wars and the global pandemic have fractured our supply chains, small and mid-size farmers can partner with local organizations to open new markets and provide fresh produce at fair prices.

Economic pressures, lost wages, and financial insecurity have brought hunger to the kitchen tables of Americans in nearly every city and state across our nation. While millions of Americans are one financial setback – a cut in their hours or an emergency room visit – away from food insecurity, it is the duty of Congress to set forth programs that provide a safety net for our most vulnerable citizens. Food and nutrition programs like SNAP, the National School Lunch Program, and WIC ensure infants and mothers get the nutrients they need, children eat a healthy lunch at school, and parents can put food on the table every night. We are among the most wealthy countries on this planet and it is imperative that we use our resources to ensure all Americans can meet their most basic needs so they can rise up, fulfill their American dream, and make this great nation better for the next generation.

The challenges before us go beyond simply fixing the mistakes of past administrations. The lessons of the past can inform our growth as we respond to the demands of the future. Each hearing, markup, and legislative action must take a step forward toward building a more equitable, dynamic, and resilient agriculture industry that lays forth a new path for future generations. I have cultivated years of expertise and strong partnerships throughout my years of work on these issues, and I believe that I am well suited to take on these challenges. I humbly ask for your support and faith in me to fully utilize the strength of this Committee in the new Congress as we confront this new frontier with strength and perseverance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Scott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

David Scott
Member of Congress
