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U.S. SENATOR  
KENT CONRAD

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Washington, DC 20510-3403

U.S. SENATOR  
BYRON DORGAN

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U.S. REPRESENTATIVE  
EARL POMEROY

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N.D. AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER  
ROGER JOHNSON

600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept. 602  
Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0020

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April 13, 2004

Mr. Richard McKee  
Deputy Administrator  
USDA/AMS/Dairy Programs  
South Building Room 2968  
STOP 0225  
1400 Independence Avenue S.W.  
Washington, DC 20250-0225

Dear Mr. McKee:

On February 28, 2004, a request was submitted to you on behalf of producers of Cass Clay Dairy, Dairy Farmers of America, Foremost Farms USA, Land O'Lakes, Mid-West Dairy Co., Milwaukee Cooperative Milk Producers, Manitowoc Milk Producers Cooperative and Swiss Valley Farms asking USDA to schedule a hearing on an emergency basis. In their request is a proposal that addresses some of the inequities that they believe are occurring in Order 30.

Their proposal would set limits on the depooling / repooling of producers' milk and change pooling requirements for producer's milk originating outside of states where the upper Midwest Marketing Area is located. The proposal would also limit the transportation credit to no more than 400 miles.

These companies and their dairy men supply approximately 40 percent of the milk on Order 30 and over 59 percent delivered to Order 30 distribution plants. Several of these companies do business in North Dakota and are a vital link to a healthy dairy industry in our state. The North Dakota dairy industry has suffered a sharp decline in dairy numbers the last several years and many of our producers have quit because of low prices. The current price increase has slowed down this trend. However, if the current inequities in Milk Order 30 are not addressed immediately, this trend will further devastate the milk industry in our state.

Every month that these practices continue, thousands of dollars are leaving our state to other states' dairy industries. We believe this issue is important enough for you to schedule a hearing as soon as possible.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely

Kent Conrad  
U.S. Senator

Byron Dorgan  
U.S. Senator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger Johnson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "J".

Earl Pomeroy  
U.S. Representative

Roger Johnson  
North Dakota Agriculture Commissioner