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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

April 1, 2009

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

On behalf of the many Concord grape growers in Washington state, I am writing to urge you to direct the Agriculture Marketing Service to increase Concord grape purchases for federal nutrition programs.

In past years of record harvest, the Department of Agriculture has made significant Concord grape juice purchases. In addition to helping the market absorb these surpluses, the recipients of this federal food aid have enjoyed the benefits of this juice.

Concord grape growers in Washington and throughout the nation are again experiencing record high production. I urge the Department to take advantage of this opportunity to purchase this high quality juice for the federal nutrition programs, including the school lunch program and senior meal initiatives.

If you have any questions, please contact Kate Woods of my Washington, DC office. Thank you for your assistance and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Doc Hastings".

Doc Hastings
Member of Congress