



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

July 13, 2009

The Honorable Janice K. Brewer
Governor
State of Arizona
1700 West Washington-101A
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Dear Governor Brewer:

A few short months ago, President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act) to help stimulate the economy and provide Americans with good quality jobs. The Department of Agriculture (USDA) received \$28 billion through the Recovery Act and has a duty to the American people to deliver on the promise of economic recovery with these funds.

Arizona Senator Jon Kyl recently questioned the success of the Recovery Act and suggested we terminate any projects not yet underway or under contract. Only four months after the legislation was passed, we have obligated approximately 20 percent of the funds appropriated to USDA. Funds have been allocated and disbursed to the States quickly and efficiently, with the requisite planning and oversight to ensure only the most worthy and effective projects are funded.

It is critically important that we see this stimulus plan through. The Recovery Act was designed to provide economic stimulus over two years, not just a few short months. Americans will not experience the full benefit of the stimulus unless we continue along the planned course.

To date, USDA has announced over \$230 million in funding for Recovery Act projects in Arizona. These projects in Arizona, and similar ones across America, are creating well-paying jobs and building America's infrastructure for the future. If we cancel projects that are not currently underway, here are a few examples of Arizona projects that would not be funded:

- ⇒ \$45 million to provide approximately 500 single-family housing loans.
- ⇒ \$1.4 million to develop systems for converting wood to energy.
- ⇒ \$17.6 million in Forest Service funding benefiting Apache County.
- ⇒ Five years of increased Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits for Arizona.

Thank you for all you have done to implement the Recovery Act. With your help, we are off to a good start—providing economic stimulus and good jobs to those who need it most. USDA is committed to seeing this important work through, and I hope we have your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thomas J. Vilsack". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary