

COMMONWEALTH OF
PUERTO RICO
GOVERNOR

October 9, 2013

The Honorable Collin Peterson
Ranking Member
US House Committee on Agriculture
2109 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Ranking Member Peterson:

I write to convey my strong opposition to Section 125 of H.R. 3102, known as the Nutrition Reform and Work Opportunity Act of 2013. As you know, Section 125 eliminates the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico's (the "Commonwealth") 25% cash allotment for beneficiaries of the Nutritional Assistance Program ("NAP"), the Commonwealth's version of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP").

Customarily, NAP recipients employ such cash allotments to purchase groceries at small marketplaces that supply areas underserved by large grocers. These marketplaces generally lack electronic points-of-sale infrastructure due to its costs. The elimination of the 25% cash allotment would restrict the nutritional options of our rural population.

The limited distribution of a cash benefit allows beneficiaries the flexibility to acquire fresh produce at neighborhood grocers. As such, the current NAP structure is fundamental in ensuring the survival of a robust chain of small businesses in rural markets, where many of the Commonwealth's neediest residents live.

I thank you for your leadership in opposing H.R. 3102's misguided policies. As Congress moves forward with the conference process between the Senate's comprehensive farm bill and the House's separate nutrition and farm bills, I ask you to please strike Section 125. I look forward to working with you to ensure that NAP continues to be a valuable tool in the war against poverty.

Cordially,

The Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico,



Alejandro J. García-Padilla