

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

April 23, 2015

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

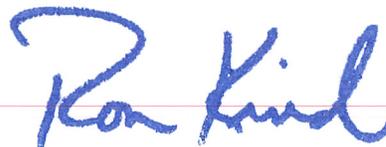
I write to you today with concerns regarding the recent outbreak of highly pathogenic H5N2 avian influenza in Juneau, Chippewa, Jefferson, and Barron counties in Wisconsin and throughout the Midwest. Hundreds of thousands of birds in the state have already been affected, and it is imperative that all necessary steps are being taken to prevent the spread of this infectious disease.

According to the 2012 U.S. Census of Agriculture, farms in Wisconsin's Third Congressional District contain nearly 800,000 turkeys that account for \$193 million in sales. Not only does the avian influenza affect the district's agricultural economy, but it has the potential of also becoming a public health concern. Therefore, I ask for a prompt response to the following questions:

- What steps has the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) taken in response to this outbreak? What further actions does the USDA plan to take to prevent further spread of the disease?
- What is the USDA's process for developing a vaccine for the H5N2 avian influenza, and what is the expected timeline from inception to commercial distribution of a vaccine?
- Are there any trade implications with other countries with the use of a vaccine to prevent the spread of the disease?
- What steps has the USDA taken to raise awareness of this disease?
- What kind of outreach are the USDA and its state partners doing to farmers and communities to prevent further spread of the disease?

Due to the severe infectiousness of this strain of avian flu, I request an expeditious response to my inquiries. Thank you for your attention to this very critical matter.

Sincerely,



Ron Kind
Member of Congress