

KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND
NEW YORK
SENATOR
RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
SUITE 478
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3205
202-224-4451

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3205

COMMITTEES:
ARMED SERVICES
ENVIRONMENTAL AND PUBLIC WORKS
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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

December 11, 2020

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
S-128, United States Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
H-307, United States Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
S-128, United States Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
H-307, United States Capitol
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Shelby, Vice Chairman Leahy, Chairwoman Lowey, and Ranking Member Granger:

I respectfully ask that you fully fund the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Specialty Crop Pest program in the final Fiscal Year 2021 Agriculture Appropriations bill, and within that funding provide \$16.066 million for the spotted lanternfly, which is consistent with the House funding level for Fiscal Year 2021. Fully funding this pest initiative will help contain this invasive species that is devastating northeastern crops and has the potential to spread to further states.

Spotted lanternfly, *Lycorma delicatula*, is an invasive species that is thought to have arrived in the United States in 2012. According to Cornell University, the first infestation was found in Berks County, Pennsylvania in 2014. Although quarantine measures were taken in the infested townships and efforts were taken to eradicate this pest, spotted lanternfly has proved difficult to contain. Currently there are infestations of spotted lantern fly in nine states, including in my home state of New York.

It is imperative that this pest is contained before it further invades the Eastern Seaboard and eventually makes its spread across the United States. This would have devastating effects on agriculture, tourism, and residential homes. Through their research, Cornell University has highlighted that the spotted lanternfly has a strong preference for specialty crops such as grapes, decimating entire vineyards in Pennsylvania. If this pest is able to migrate out of its current location, it could prove to be devastating for all states with a strong specialty crop sector.

ALBANY/CAPITAL DISTRICT OFFICE
LEO W. O'BRIEN
FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
1 CLINTON SQUARE, ROOM 821
ALBANY, NY 12207
TEL: (518) 431-0129
FAX: (518) 431-0128

BUFFALO OFFICE
LARKIN AT EXCHANGE
726 EXCHANGE STREET, SUITE 511
BUFFALO, NY 14210
TEL: (716) 854-6725
FAX: (716) 854-6731

LONG ISLAND OFFICE
155 PINELAWN ROAD
SUITE 250 NORTH
MELVILLE, NY 11747
TEL: (811) 248-2825
FAX: (811) 248-2847

NORTH COUNTRY OFFICE
PO BOX 273
LOWVILLE, NY 13367
TEL: (315) 376-6118
FAX: (315) 376-6118

ROCHESTER OFFICE
KENNETH B. KEATING
FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
105 STATE STREET
ROOM 4198
ROCHESTER, NY 14614
TEL: (585) 283-6250
FAX: (585) 283-6247

SYRACUSE/CENTRAL NY OFFICE
JAMES M. HANLEY FEDERAL BUILDING
100 SOUTH CLINTON STREET
ROOM 4175
PO BOX 7375
SYRACUSE, NY 13201
TEL: (315) 448-0470
FAX: (315) 448-0476

NEW YORK CITY OFFICE
780 THIRD AVENUE
SUITE 2001
NEW YORK, NY 10017
TEL: (212) 698-6282

HUDSON VALLEY OFFICE
PO BOX 893
MARSHAC, NY 10841
TEL: (845) 875-4555
FAX: (845) 875-0606

In order to further manage the spread of this invasive species. I strongly urge you to include \$16.066 million for the spotted lanternfly, within the APHIS Specialty Crop Pest program, in the final Fiscal Year 2021 Agriculture Appropriations bill. Thank you for consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kirsten Gillibrand". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator