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Secretary Russell Redding
Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture
2301 N. Cameron St
Harrisburg, PA 17110

March 18, 2016

Dear Secretary Redding,

The Pennsylvania State University (Penn State) College of Agricultural Sciences' research and Penn State Extension programs are currently at serious risk of receiving no funding. The Philadelphia Food Policy Advisory Council (FPAC) is asking for your support of the restoration of funding to the Land Scrip Fund to ensure Penn State Extension programs continue into the future.

The Philadelphia Food Policy Advisory Council (FPAC) facilitates the development of responsible policies that improve access for all Philadelphia residents to culturally appropriate, nutritionally sound, and affordable food that is grown locally through environmentally sustainable practices. FPAC has identified urban agriculture as an important tool to support the conversion of Philadelphia's vacant and underutilized lands into sustainable community assets that increase food security and sovereignty for all residents. Losing Penn State Center Philadelphia and the College's related programs would represent a critical loss to urban agriculture and food access in Philadelphia. This loss will be felt by many of the city's gardeners who have been working with Penn State Extension for decades.

Our local Extension arm, Penn State Center Philadelphia, provides valuable research and resources that are critical to our city. The Penn State Master Gardener program offers outstanding educational gardening services across the city. Extension programming in horticulture supports urban agriculture, landscape contractors, and nurseries across our region. Programming in urban forestry identifies and resolves issues that could negatively affect our street trees, parks, and community green spaces. The work has helped to shape decision-making in FPAC and for City policy on food, health, and the environment.

Penn State Extension programs are funded through the Land Scrip Fund located in the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's budget, and cannot be supported through tuition dollars. This budget line represents the Commonwealth's commitment to the 150 year-old land-grant partnership among Penn State University and federal, state, and county governments. Although Penn State Extension programs enjoy strong support from all levels of government, the Governor included the Land Scrip Fund in his line-item veto and its funding currently stands at zero. With no funding, Penn State Extension offices in all sixty-seven counties and the College's agricultural research stations across the state will cease operations. This will have devastating impact on Philadelphia where residents regularly rely on Extension programming for support and resources.

FPAC applauds your ongoing commitment to public service. Please ensure Penn State Extension continues by supporting the restoration of funding to the Land Scrip Fund.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amy Laura Cahn".

Amy Laura Cahn, *FPAC Co-Chair*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy Kohn".

Nancy Kohn, *FPAC Urban Agriculture Subcommittee Chair*