

# United States Senate

September 26, 2023

The Honorable Tom Vilsack  
Secretary  
United States Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington DC, 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

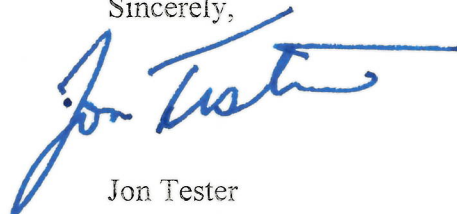
I write to request an update on your Department's efforts to deliver 2022 Emergency Relief Program (ERP) and Emergency Livestock Relief Program (ELRP) payments to farmers and ranchers in Montana and around the country.

I am hearing from a large number of agricultural producers in my state who are frustrated that they have not received their 2022 payments. These payments provide critical assistance to farmers and ranchers who are working to recover from historic droughts and other disasters.

Last year, I heard mostly positive feedback from Montana's agricultural community about the rollout of ELP and ELRP payments. Compared to past disaster programs, Montana farmers and ranchers were largely pleased by USDA's work to get payments out as quickly as possible and to clearly communicate a timeline to give folks certainty as they work to balance their books. I am concerned that USDA has been unable to process this year's payments with the same speed and clarity.

I know that you share my commitment to supporting producers who are working to recover from drought, floods, storms, and other disasters. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



Jon Tester