



Shaun Donovan
 Director
 Office of Management and Budget
 725 17th Street, NW
 Washington, DC 20503

December 8, 2015

Dear Mr. Donovan,

As organizations that represent millions of taxpayers across the country, it is with great concern we write to you regarding the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) newly minted catfish inspection rule. The new and unnecessary bureaucracy created by the rule is one of the most demonstrably wasteful and duplicative programs ever enacted.

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) has targeted USDA catfish inspection as part of its effort to get rid of wasteful government programs a total of *nine times*: [February 2011](#), [March 2011](#), [May 2012](#), [February 2013](#), [April 2013](#), [April 2014](#), [December 2014](#), [February 2015](#), and [April 2015](#). We can find no single program targeted by GAO as many times as this one.

After USDA spent \$19.9 million to develop and study the catfish inspection program, it then told GAO it would cost the federal government an additional “\$14 million annually” to run the program. This after GAO found FDA currently spends “less than \$700,000 annually to inspect catfish.”

The GAO also notes that it not only wastes taxpayer dollars and duplicates work already being done by the FDA, it actually weakens, rather than strengthens, our food safety systems;

“...the agency’s proposed catfish inspection program further fragments the federal oversight system for food safety without demonstrating that there is a problem with catfish or a need for a new federal program.”

Despite the fact that USDA has published its rule and has begun moving forward with this program a strong,

bipartisan coalition of government waste watchdogs continues to oppose the new regulation.

The USDA catfish work is an embarrassing waste of tax dollars and so overtly duplicative a program it belongs in the annals of Washington waste history.

Sincerely,

David Williams, President
Taxpayers Protection Alliance

Norm Singleton, President
Campaign for Liberty

Jeff Mazzella, President
Center for Individual Freedom

Tom Schatz, President
Council for Citizens Against Government Waste

Sabrina Schaffer, Executive Director
Independent Women's Forum

Heather R. Higgins, President & CEO
Independent Women's Voice

Andrew Langer, President
Institute for Liberty

Seton Motley, President
Less Government

Brandon Arnold, Executive Vice President
National Taxpayers Union

Andrew Moylan, Executive Director & Senior Fellow
R Street Institute

Karen Kerrigan, President & CEO
Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council

Steve Ellis, Vice President
Taxpayers for Common Sense

cc:
Sen. Michael Enzi
Senate Budget Chair

Rep. Tom Price
House Budget Chair