

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 29, 2023

The Honorable Alina Romanowski
U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Iraq
2201 C St., NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Ambassador Romanowski,

As members of Congress with a deep interest in the economic future of the U.S. rice industry, we write to remind the Executive Branch that the Republic of Iraq has long been a top export market for our rice farmers, and high quality U.S. rice has been an integral part of the Iraqi food distribution system for many years.

Since 2021, the U.S. rice trade with Iraq has operated under an extremely successful and predictable framework bringing certainty to both the Iraqi food distribution system and U.S. farmers. Al Awees, the designated entity to manage rice imports by the Iraqi government, has committed to purchase 200,000 tons of U.S. rice annually and has met that commitment for the previous two years. Al Awees has been a responsive and fair business partner. Prior to Al Awees leading the responsibility for purchase, this was not always the case. We are concerned that a change in the rice import management entity might harm our current, positive rice trade relationship.

We thank you and your colleagues for your continued efforts to provide stability to the U.S. rice industry and encourage you to continue to work with Al Awees to maintain the strong and mutually beneficial relationship. Thousands of American farmers and rural communities rely on the income generated by U.S. rice exports to Iraq, and many more Iraqi families rely on our abundance of safe, nutritious, high-quality rice. Your strong and persistent advocacy for American farmers has yielded positive results, and we appreciate your engagement to maintain this vital market.

Respectfully,



Clay Higgins
Member of Congress



Eric A. "Rick" Crawford
Member of Congress



Julia Letlow, Ph.D.
Member of Congress