

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

Cosponsor the Cuba Agricultural Exports Act (H.R. 3687)

Dear Colleague:

As Congress responds to recent changes to the U.S.'s diplomatic posture towards Cuba, it is also important to evaluate the efficacy of our current trade policies. It is clear that the longstanding embargo has done little to weaken the Castro regime, so we think it is time to try something different. While the Administration has called on Congress to repeal the embargo entirely, we think the correct approach is to make cautious and incremental changes to current Cuba policies. That is why we introduced H.R. 3687, the Cuba Agricultural Exports Act. This legislation permits the marketing and exporting of U.S. agriculture products to Cuba, while allowing for limited private investment opportunities.

Under current law, U.S. producers are permitted to export agricultural commodities to Cuba. However, restrictions on financing and marketing harm U.S. competitiveness in the Cuban market and limits export potential. If U.S. producers could compete on a level playing field, the Cuban market would represent a significant opportunity to American farmers and ranchers. Not only is it estimated that Cuba imports around 80 percent of its food supply, but the U.S. enjoys an inherent advantage due to our close geographic proximity and state of the art production and food distribution infrastructure. The Cuba Agricultural Exports Act would also give agricultural producers and businesses access to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) marketing programs—such as the Market Access Program (MAP) and Foreign Market Development (FMD) Program—that help the U.S. compete in foreign markets. Under the Act, federal agricultural checkoff programs funded by producers can also be used to expand agricultural markets in Cuba. Safeguard provisions are included to ensure that no taxpayer funds can end up in the hands of the Cuban government. Further, H.R. 3687 enables limited American investment in private Cuban agri-business.

The Cuba Agricultural Exports Act would provide new economic opportunities and jobs for America's agriculture industry by providing access to a market that is valued at over \$1 billion per year. Additionally, agriculture trading partnerships help build a foundation of goodwill and cooperation that will open the door to long-sought reforms the way American influence has brought them to other communist states. For additional information or to cosponsor this legislation, please contact Chris Jones with Congressman Crawford at chris.jones@mail.house.gov, or 6-7629.

Sincerely,



RICK CRAWFORD
Member of Congress



TED POE
Member of Congress