

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

January 20, 2006

Mr. Joshua B. Bolten  
Director  
Office of Management and Budget  
Eisenhower Executive Office Building  
1650 Pennsylvania Ave, NW  
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Mr. Bolten:

The United States Department of Agriculture has requested \$7.5 million in emergency Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) funds for the continued battle to eradicate the invasive emerald ash borer (EAB) in Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana. The EAB funding is part of a redirection package to target remaining CCC funds to current projects. It is our understanding that your approval is needed before this emergency funding can be dispersed to the states.

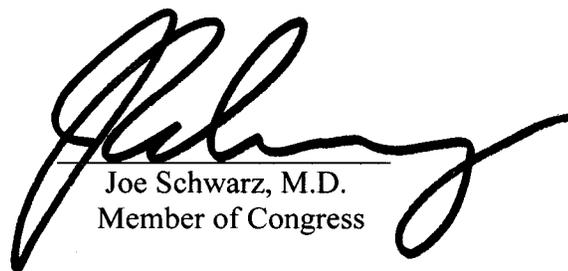
We respectfully request that you expedite the release of the emergency funds so that the State of Michigan can continue the important work of detecting and preventing the spread of emerald ash borer. The Michigan Department of Agriculture estimates that our state has lost \$30-\$50 million in revenue and jobs statewide as a result of the EAB infestation. Commercial nurseries in the state have lost approximately \$11 million. To date, we have been forced to destroy approximately 16 million ash trees. For these reasons, the eradication of EAB in Michigan is one of our top priorities.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of our request. We look forward to our continued work together to rid Michigan and the region of this harmful invasive beetle before it causes further economic and ecological losses. Please inform our offices as to the date we can expect the emergency funding to be released.

Sincerely,

  
Senator Debbie Stabenow

  
Senator Carl Levin

  
Joe Schwarz, M.D.  
Member of Congress

Cc: Honorable Mike Johanns, Secretary  
United States Department of Agriculture