

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 10, 2021

The Honorable Matthew H. Tueller
U.S. Ambassador to Iraq
U.S. Embassy Baghdad
Al-Kindi Street
International Zone
Baghdad, Iraq

Ambassador Tueller:

Sir, thank you for your efforts to bolster access for U.S. grown rice into Iraq. Our past success has proven to be beneficial to both countries, and we hope to build upon this relationship going forward.

After more than a year without any government rice tenders, Iraq's Ministry of Trade held a 30,000 metric ton global tender in early February and ultimately purchased two vessels of Uruguayan rice over U.S. rice. The U.S. rice industry would benefit if the tender had been held under the terms of the U.S.-Iraq Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

The domestic availability of rice throughout Iraq has been strained because of a lack of oil revenues, but the government has provided a supplementary budget to aid in rice procurement. **We urge you to work with Iraq's Minister of Trade to swiftly announce and execute a U.S.-specific tender under the terms of the MOU.** This would provide an opportunity to provide a high-quality and nutritious U.S. grown agricultural product and spur much-needed local economic activity that has suffered since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, following through on a MOU tender would address one of the follow-up items from the U.S.-Iraq Strategic Dialogue held last August.

The last year has brought on many challenges for our farming and rural economy, but we are resilient and stand ready to satisfy this order. As always, our offices are available and willing to offer any assistance to ensure a successful tender for the U.S.

Respectfully,



Eric A. "Rick" Crawford
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



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MEMBER OF CONGRESS

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