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June 13, 2005

The Honorable Mike Johanns
Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

35-4282934
AMS

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I have been informed that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced a decision that recommends amendments to the Pacific Northwest and Arizona-Las Vegas federal milk marketing orders. Specifically, the recommended amendments include a cap of three million pounds on milk that is placed on the market by producer-handlers located in both milk marketing orders. Under the recommended amendments, if that cap is exceeded, it would subject a producer-handler to the pooling and pricing provisions of the appropriate milk marketing order noted above.

I understand that there are those who feel that producer-handlers located in either milk marketing order have a competitive advantage over other dairy producers. However, I strongly urge you to consider the effect such a change would have on milk deficit states, such as Alaska. It is very possible that this change could increase the price of dairy products in such states.

Sincerely,



Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator

cc: Hearing Clerk, United States Department of Agriculture