ILLINOIS INTERNATIONAL PORT DISTRICT

3600 E. 95th Street
95th and the Lakefront
Chicago, IL 60617-5193
773-646-4400
773-221-7678 (FAX)

January 10, 2006

BY OVERNIGHT DELIVERY

Director
Commodity Procurement Policy &
Analysis Division
Farm Service Agency
United States Department of Agriculture
Room 5755-S
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-0512

BY FAX AND E-MAIL

Mr. Richard Chavez
United States Department of Agriculture
Fax: (202) 690-2221
E-mail: Richard.Chavez@USDA.gov

Re: Procurement of Commodities for Foreign Donation
7 CFR Part 1496, RIN 0560-AH39

Gentlemen:

The Illinois International Port District in Chicago, IL is a significant participant in U.S. Government humanitarian food aid programs. Large volumes of commodities purchased by the Commodity Credit Corporation ("CCC") are handled at our facilities in support of the food aid programs. On behalf of The Illinois International Port District, I am writing to request a 45-day extension of the January 17, 2006 date established by CCC's notice (70 *Fed. Reg.* 74717) of a proposed rule to adopt new procedures to be used by CCC in evaluation of bids in connection with the procurement of commodities for donation overseas. That notice was published in the *Federal Register* of December 16, 2005, immediately prior to the holidays. I have only just become aware of the notice. Although I am sure that the timing of the publication was not intended to cut short the comment period, it certainly has had that effect for me and for other interested organizations in my industry with whom I have been in communication.

As the *Federal Register* notice identifies, the existing procurement procedures have been in effect "for many years." And while the notice states that the proposed rule has been determined to be "not significant," the background discussion identifies important potential impacts anticipated to result from the adoption of the proposed new procedures, including changes in port allocations and carrier selection. The notice also includes an unexplained reference to the "use of different types of ocean services."

The Illinois International Port District believes that the revised procedures contemplated by the proposed rule have wide-ranging implications that require careful evaluation and informed comment, not a hasty response such as that which would be required by the date currently established in the *Federal Register* notice. We accordingly request that that date be extended for 45 days.

Respectfully,

Anthony G. Ianello, Jr.
Executive Director

AGI:slk