



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

JUL 22 2019

Mr. James L. Caswell
Chair
National Association of
Forest Service Retirees
Post Office Box 273362
Fort Collins, Colorado 80527

Dear Mr. Caswell:

Thank you for your letter of May 31, 2019, concerning the transfer of operations and oversight of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Forest Service Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers (CCC) to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). I apologize for the delayed response.

USDA, through the Forest Service, operates CCCs under an interagency agreement with DOL. As with other Job Corps Centers, these facilities are designed to provide skills training for young adults to aid their entry into the American workforce.

In an effort to deliver the best possible results for Job Corps students and taxpayers, on May 24, 2019, I sent a letter to Secretary Acosta, indicating our intent to put into place plans to return management operations of Forest Service-managed CCCs to DOL. Following the decision, USDA received Congressional input and expressions of support for the CCCs to remain under Forest Service management. Listening carefully to the desire of Congress and stakeholders, I have decided to withdraw my initial request to Labor Secretary Acosta.

As we move ahead, working with DOL, USDA will undertake a comprehensive organizational review to ensure we are best serving students at the CCCs, better connecting CCCs with the Forest Service's core mission, and holding ourselves accountable to the American taxpayer. We will establish clear metrics and collect the data necessary to measure successes and the areas where we fall short with our CCCs. While each location is unique, we recognize that the CCCs have room for improvement, including improving access for students, enhancing graduation rates and job placement for students, and minimizing student misconduct to promote a healthy and safe learning environment. Centers will continue to be held to high standards and will be expected to improve their operations as needed to better serve students.

We look forward to working with stakeholders on the key steps ahead. Thank you for your interest in this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Sonny Perdue", is written over a light blue circular background.

Sonny Perdue
Secretary