

THE CONGRESSIONAL CO-OP BUSINESS CAUCUS

As part of our **POLICY ADVOCACY INITIATIVE** for 2024, the **Neighboring Food Co-op Association** (NFCA) and the **New England Farmers Union** (NEFU) are working to recruit Representatives to National Cooperative Business Association (NCBA CLUSA) **Congressional Cooperative Business Caucus** from the districts where our members are located — and to strengthen relationships with those who are already involved. This is an opportunity for us to increase awareness of the co-operative business model, advocate for legislation supporting co-op development, and build support for the second International Year of Co-ops coming up in 2025.

The bipartisan Congressional Cooperative Business Caucus helps advance the advocacy efforts of NCBA CLUSA at the federal level, providing greater visibility of co-operative economic impact before Congress and the Administration and driving a co-op-friendly legislative agenda. For more information, please visit <https://ncbaclusa.coop/advocacy/congressional-caucus>.

Is Your Congressional Representative on this List?

REP. JIM BAIRD (R-IN), CO-CHAIR*

REP. MARK POCAN (D-WI), CO-CHAIR*

REP. ALMA ADAMS (D-NC)

REP. RICK ALLEN (R-GA)

REP. KELLY ARMSTRONG (R-ND)

REP. JAMAAL BOWMAN (D-NY)

REP. KEN BUCK (R-CO)

REP. ANGIE CRAIG (D-MN)

REP. DEBBIE DINGELL (D-MI)

REP. MIKE GALLAGHER (R-WI)

REP. RO KHANNA (D-CA)

REP. DEREK KILMER (D-WA)

REP. RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY (D-IL)

REP. JIM MCGOVERN (D-MA)

REP. ANN MCLANE KUSTER (D-NH)

REP. CHELLIE PINGREE (D-ME)

REP. CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS (R-WA)

REP. RASHIDA TLAIB (D-MI)

REP. PETER WELCH (D-VT)

(List updated March 2024.)

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- **If your Representative is NOT on the list above**, use the SAMPLE LETTER on the other side of this sheet to ask them to join the bipartisan Congressional Cooperative Business Caucus!
- **If they ARE on the list**, use our SAMPLE LETTER to thank them for their leadership and highlight the impact of foods co-ops in our region and the opportunity of the International Year of Co-ops in 2025!
- **Let us know that you took action** and send us a copy of your letter.
- **Send us your e-mail address** for updates on our Policy Advocacy Initiative.

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Roger Noonan
New England Farmers Union
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Sample Letter (Thanks to NCBA CLUSA)

For contact information for Congressional Representatives, visit:
<https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>

Dear Representative _____ :

I am writing to you today as a member of [your food co-op], a co-operative grocery store in your district, to urge you to join the bipartisan **Congressional Cooperative Business Caucus** [or if they are already members: "...to thank you for your participation in the bipartisan **Congressional Cooperative Business Caucus.**"]. As you may know, co-ops and credit unions empower their members to meet their common needs together and are also significant contributors to the economy. Co-ops are a proven business model used to create and sustain jobs that provide valuable products and services across all sectors of the economy.

For example, my co-op is a member of the Neighboring Food Co-op Association, which includes more than 30 food co-ops in New England and New York State. These community grocery stores are locally owned by more than 185,000 members, employ over 2,545 people, and generate \$442.5 million in revenue. They are also committed to sustainability, food security and supporting local producers, selling more than \$121 million in local products in 2023 (an average of 25% of sales).

The Congressional Cooperative Business Caucus is important because it creates a platform to better informing our elected officials on the important role that co-ops play in our national and international economy. The use of the co-operative business model is a viable market solution and business option to help solve a number of today's public policy challenges. At the same time, a co-operative's unique structure and characteristics need to be more fully understood so that policies can ensure that they can thrive and grow.

Co-operatives exist worldwide and inject \$3 trillion into the U.S. economy every year. They create millions of jobs; can be found in virtually every sector of our economy; and offer solutions to meet challenging public policy needs — from affordable housing, to quality food, greater access to electricity, banking and credit needs, and for early childhood learning. They spur economic growth in underserved rural and urban America; empower individuals, families, and communities to better their lives; and ensure that people have access to high-quality goods and services at competitive prices and costs.

Despite their position in the American economy, there remain substantial awareness challenges among the general public and the elected leaders that represent them on what co-operative enterprise looks like, who are members of co-ops, where they operate, and why people choose them. This caucus will facilitate briefings to promote greater awareness and understanding of these issues, provide a forum for members to share best practices, work to improve the effectiveness of policy, and promote the co-operative business model nationally and internationally.

With the second International Year of Co-ops on the horizon in 2025, **I encourage you to join the Congressional Cooperative Business Caucus** and have your office contact the staff of co-chairs Rep. Mark Pocan (D-WI) and Rep. Jim Baird (R-IN) to become a member. [If your Representative is already a member, you could say: "With the second International Year of Co-ops on the horizon in 2025, the opportunity to promote the impact of co-operative business has never been greater."]

Thank you!

[FULL NAME, HOME MAILING ADDRESS]



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