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OA/ID Number: 23365
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H4 010

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of the
Assistant Secretary
for Administration

Office of
Civil Rights

1400 Independence
Avenue SW

Washington, DC
20250

Honorable James A. Graham
Commissioner
Department of Agriculture and Consumer Service
Post Office Box 27647
Raleigh, North Carolina 27611

FEB 9 1999

Dear Commissioner Graham:

Thank you for your July 27, 1998, letter to President Clinton regarding your concerns about the delay in settling the Pigford v. Glickman class action lawsuit of Black farmers. I concur whole heartedly with your feelings about the future of Black farmers.

As you probably have learned by now, this lawsuit was recently settled. The agreement is a historic moment for the Department and the nation in closing a painful chapter in the history of the Department.

The consent decree entered by the parties on January 5, 1999, certified the class as follows: "All African American farmers who (1) farmed, or attempted to farm, between January 1, 1981, and December 31, 1997; (2) applied to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) during that time period for participation in a Federal farm credit or benefit program and who believed that they were discriminated against on the basis of race in USDA's response to that application; and (3) filed a discrimination complaint on or before July 1, 1997, regarding USDA's treatment of such farm credit or benefit application."

Plaintiffs, named and unnamed to the lawsuit, who wish to file a claim or choose to opt out of the lawsuit and proceed administratively, should immediately call 1-800-646-2873, the Black Farmers Litigation Hotline or write to the following address:

Claims Facilitator
P.O. Box 4390
Portland, Oregon 97208-4390

Honorable James A. Graham

2

I hope this information will be useful to you and the Black farmers in the state of North Carolina. If you have any further concerns regarding this matter, please contact me at (202) 720-5212.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rosalind D. Gray".

Rosalind D. Gray
Director
Office of Civil Rights

JAMES A. GRAHAM
COMMISSIONER



State of North Carolina
Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Raleigh

July 27, 1998

The Honorable William J. Clinton
Office of the President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500



Dear Mr. President:

I am asking that you bring settlement to the Civil Rights Case of Pigford vs. Glickman. Mr. President, as you know it has been stated by the year 2000 there will not be a black farmer in the United States.

Many farmers will go under this growing season and many more if this case goes to court thus bringing us closer to making the above statement true. Congress has waived the statute of limitation, U.S.D.A. has admitted to discrimination. It would seem our action is clear, settle the case and save our last vestige of black farmers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Graham".

James A. Graham
Commissioner

JUL 30 1998

1998 NOV -11 P 12 00

COPIES: _____

October 26, 1998

The Honorable James A. Graham
Commissioner
Department of Agriculture
and Consumer Service
Post Office Box 27647
Raleigh, North Carolina 27611

Dear Jim:

Thank you for your letter regarding the civil rights case of *Pigford v. Glickman*. I appreciate knowing your perspective on this important issue.

Many of our most vulnerable farmers have had to face an obstacle that no one in America should ever have to confront: racial discrimination. More than 1,000 minority farmers have filed claims of discrimination by USDA's farm loan programs in the 1980s and 1990s. I am committed to achieving a speedy resolution of these cases and to providing claimants with a fair and full court review if they so choose.

You can be assured that the concerns you raise will be given careful consideration as we continue to work to resolve these matters. Best regards.

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON

BC/WMW/RSM/Counsel/DC/emu-ckb-pfs (Corres. #4079162)
(9.graham.ja)

cc: W. Wondwossen, 97 OEOB

cc: Crystal Ford w/copy of incoming, AGRICULTURE

pl

273743

HU 010

ms

October 26, 1998

The Honorable James A. Graham
Commissioner
Department of Agriculture
and Consumer Service
Post Office Box 27647
Raleigh, North Carolina 27611

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(9.graham.ja)

✓cc: W. Wondwossen, 97 OEOB

✓cc: Crystal Ford w/copy of incoming, AGRICULTURE

pl

Letter re: Pigford v. Glickman
Re-cleared 10/22 by Dawn Chirwa, Counsel's Office.

Thank you for your letter regarding the civil rights case of Pigford v. Glickman. I appreciate knowing your perspective on this important issue, and I have shared your correspondence with officials at the Department of Agriculture.

Many of our most vulnerable farmers have had to face an obstacle that no one in America should ever have to confront: racial discrimination. Over 1,000 minority farmers have filed claims of discrimination by USDA's farm loan programs in the 1980s and early 1990s. I am committed to achieving a speedy resolution of these cases and to providing claimants with a fair and full court review if they so choose.

You can be assured that the concerns you raise will be given careful consideration as we continue to work to resolve these matters. Best regards.

Support;
Please use
this language
de

NS 9/1/6
(RM) 9/17

September 16, 1998

The Honorable James A. Graham
Commissioner
Department of Agriculture
and Consumer Service
Post Office Box 27647
Raleigh, North Carolina 27611

Dear Jim:

Thank you for your letter regarding the civil rights case of Pigford v. Glickman. I appreciate knowing your perspective on this important issue, and I have shared your correspondence with ~~the~~ officials at the Department of Agriculture who are currently negotiating this matter. The concerns you raise will be given careful consideration.

delete

Best regards,

Sincerely,

BC/WMW/RSM/emu (Corres. #4079162)
(9.graham.ja)

cc: W. Wondwossen, 97
cc: Crystal Ford, Dept. of Agriculture w/copy of inc.


Dawn M. Chirwa

10/23/98 09:54:04 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Woyneab M. Wondwossen/WHO/EOP

cc:

Subject: letter re: Pigford v. Glickman

I made a change and am returning the letter to you. (I took out the housing loan programs language because it was somewhat contentious on the Hill, and I don't think we should highlight it.)

----- Forwarded by Dawn M. Chirwa/WHO/EOP on 10/23/98 09:47 AM -----


Woyneab M. Wondwossen

10/22/98 04:51:38 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Dawn M. Chirwa/WHO/EOP

cc:

Subject: letter re: Pigford v. Glickman

Thank you for your letter regarding the civil rights case of Pigford v. Glickman. I appreciate knowing your perspective on this important issue, and I have shared your correspondence with officials at the Department of Agriculture.

Many of our most vulnerable farmers have had to face an obstacle that no one in America ever should have to confront: racial discrimination. Over 1,000 minority farmers have filed claims of discrimination by USDA's farm loan programs in the 1980s and early 1990s, and I am committed to achieving a speedy resolution of these cases, including providing claimants with a fair and full court review if they so choose.

As we continue to work to ensure that this matter is handled promptly and effectively, the concerns you raise will be given careful consideration. Best regards.

BC

DRAFT OF BC LETTER

INITIALS: BC / wmw / *FWM 9/15*

DOCUMENT TITLE: /slr/ms/graham.j.wmw

DRAFT DATE / LETTER DATE: Sep 15 1998 /

CORRESPONDENCE #: 4079162

CLEAR WITH:

WHCC:

CC: W. Wondwossen, 97
Crystal Ford @ Department
of Agriculture w/ incoming

CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESSED TO:

The Honorable James A. Graham
Commissioner

~~North Carolina~~ Department

of Agriculture *and Consumer Services*
Raleigh, North Carolina 27611

APPROVAL/ENCLOSURES/SPECIALINSTR:

cleared 9/15 by Dawn Chirwa in Counsel's
Office

Post Office Box 27647

Dear Jim:

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Glickman. I appreciate knowing your perspective on this important issue,
and I have shared your correspondence with ^{he} officials at the Department of
Agriculture who are currently negotiating this matter. ~~Please be assured~~
~~that~~ The concerns you raise will be given careful consideration.

Best regards.

Sincerely,

BC

SEP 16 1998

W. Michael

JAMES A. GRAHAM
COMMISSIONER



273743

HU 010

State of North Carolina
Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Raleigh

July 27, 1998

The Honorable William J. Clinton
Office of the President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jim Graham".

James A. Graham
Commissioner

JUL 30 1998

*****Draft/Clearance Record*****

Woyneab M. Wondwossen

RECEIVED:

• Call to USDA Kristal Ford 8/26
• Draft sent to R. Weiner 8/31 for clearance
no response • Redent 9/14 Voice msg 9/14

SUBMITTED:

• towards settlement Black farmers
w/ Secretary Dan Glickman
Black Farmers Class Action Suit
Timothy Dister
settlement is eminent.
- Secretary of Ag
1 (202) 720-8046

*****Draft/Clearance Record*****
Woyneab M. Wondwossen

RECEIVED:

left msg w/ Cherice 10/13

Revised draft and new language based on research 10/22
for advisement 10/22

closed 10/22

SUBMITTED: 10/23

I.G.A. CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING SHEET

Date Received in PLM: 8/10/98

Assigned to:

Crystal Ford

- ☐ Kyle Baker
- ☐ Diane Ikemiyashiro
- ☐ Leanne Johnson
- ☐ Matt Pitcher
- ☒ Tracy Sisser
- ☐ Woyneab Wondwossen

RE: Settlement of Rigford vs. Glickman

☐ **Scheduling Request: Forward to Megan Williams, Room 106**

☐ **Personnel Recommendation: Forward to Ruth Eaglin, Room 158**

☐ **Request for a Presidential Message: Forward to Carmen Fowler, Room 91**

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM

To: Rob Weiner
6-1647

From: Woyneab Wondwossen
Presidential Letters and Messages
Voice 202/456-5492 Fax 202/456-5426

☐ Please see comments below	☐ Please advise on how to respond	☐ Please call me regarding the attached
☐ For your information	☒ For your approval	☐ Per your request
☐ No response necessary for attached letter, unless response otherwise recommended	☐ For your agency's response	☐ Please respond by:

Comments:

Rob -
Please let me know if draft is OK. Thanks.
- Woyneab