

**United States Senate**  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 3, 2023

**VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION**

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary  
Department of Agriculture

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

On June 7, 2023, I sent the Department of Agriculture (DOA) a letter with four questions with respect to the taxpayer funding the eradication of the Brown Treesnake (BTS) from the island of Guam.<sup>1</sup> On July 27, 2023, DOA provided a response that failed to answer all four questions.<sup>2</sup> The DOA also failed to provide any responsive records.

In the response letter from DOA, it states “[s]ince 2011, DoD and DOI have provided funding to [Wildlife Services] for this work through reimbursable interagency agreements.”<sup>3</sup> However, the response failed to provide any records relating to those interagency agreements.

In light of DOA’s failure to substantively respond, despite working on its reply for over a month after the two-week deadline, please answer the four questions previously asked, as well as the additional question below. Please provide all relevant records no later than August 17, 2023.

1. How much taxpayer money has your department spent related to the Brown Treesnake, including eradication, control, and research? Please provide a yearly breakdown from 1993 to the date of this letter.
2. For each project related to the Brown Treesnake, including eradication, control, and research, describe and name each project, the government agency and/or contractor involved, and its results. Provide all records.
3. How many Brown Treesnakes are estimated to be on the island of Guam? What was the estimate in 2005, 2010, 2015, and 2020?

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Senator Charles Grassley, Ranking Member, Senate Budget Committee, to Thomas J. Vilsack, Secretary, Department of Agriculture, (June 7, 2023), (on file with Comm. Staff).

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Michael Watson, Acting Administrator, Department of Agriculture – Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, to Senator Charles Grassley, Ranking Member, Senate Budget Committee, (July 27, 2023), (on file with Comm. Staff).

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

4. What is your estimated timeline to complete the stated goal of eradicating the Brown Treesnake from Guam?
5. Provide all reimbursable interagency agreements relating to BTS projects from 2011 to the date of this letter.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. Should you have any questions, please contact my Committee staff at (202) 224-0642.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Budget