

ACTION ALERT
June 26, 2007

IT'S TIME TO REFORM THE U.S. FARM BILL
LET YOUR MEMBER OF CONGRESS KNOW THAT OUR FARM POLICIES
ARE NOT WORKING FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES AND THAT THE
STATUS QUO IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.

Dear colleagues:

We have mixed news on the House of Representatives' version of the 2007 Farm Bill (H.R. 2419). The good news is that House Agriculture subcommittee action in the areas of nutrition, conservation, rural development and the health and safety of farmworkers have been encouraging and heading in the right direction.

The bad news is that farm commodity programs are to remain unchanged, meaning very large operators continue to receive the bulk of commodity payments. The House Subcommittee on General Farm Commodities and Risk Management went in the wrong direction last week and voted unanimously against reforming our current broken system of farm subsidies.

They voted unanimously for maintaining the status quo, a system that is inequitable and hurts the poor, here and abroad. It has resulted in increased rental rates and land prices that put small family farmers at a disadvantage; it leads to increased concentration of our agricultural production in a way that harms our rural communities; and it distorts agricultural trade, harming farm families in developing countries who depend largely on agriculture for their livelihoods.

Take Action Now!

Call your member of Congress to oppose the decision to extend rather than reform Title I of the Farm Bill. Every member of Congress should hear that they need to address the inequities of our broken system of agriculture. Reform means moving away from commodity payments and providing more support for conservation, beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers, and rural development programs.

Tell your member that you oppose this direction of the current debate in Congress because it favors larger producers at the cost of smaller operations and undermines our position as leaders of free trade around the world. Status quo is simply bad policy for the poor and hungry, here and abroad.

We will be sending additional action alerts as the debate heats up in the coming weeks. The Senate version is expected later in July. We appreciate your help making calls to members and giving us feedback on local perspectives regarding how the Farm Bill debate is shaping up locally.

Calls from constituents of members of the House Committee on Agriculture are especially helpful. Here is the list of Committee members:

Democratic Majority

[Collin C. Peterson](#), MN,
Chairman
[Tim Holden](#), PA, *Vice Chairman*
[Mike McIntyre](#), NC
[Bob Etheridge](#), NC
[Leonard L. Boswell](#), IA
[Joe Baca](#), CA
[Dennis A. Cardoza](#), CA
[David Scott](#), GA
[Jim Marshall](#), GA
[Stephanie Herseth Sandlin](#), SD
[Henry Cuellar](#), TX
[Jim Costa](#), CA
[John T. Salazar](#), CO
[Brad Ellsworth](#), IN
[Nancy E. Boyda](#), KS
[Zachary T. Space](#), OH
[Timothy J. Walz](#), MN
[Kirsten E. Gillibrand](#), NY
[Steve Kagen](#), WI
[Earl Pomeroy](#), ND
[Lincoln Davis](#), TN
[John Barrow](#), GA
[Nick Lampson](#), TX
[Joe Donnelly](#), IN
[Tim Mahoney](#), FL

Republican Minority

[Bob Goodlatte](#), VA,
Ranking Minority Member
[Terry Everett](#), AL
[Frank D. Lucas](#), OK
[Jerry Moran](#), KS
[Robin Hayes](#), NC
[Timothy V. Johnson](#), IL
[Sam Graves](#), MO
[Jo Bonner](#), AL
[Mike Rogers](#), AL
[Steve King](#), IA
[Marilyn N. Musgrave](#), CO
[Randy Neugebauer](#), TX
[Charles W. Boustany, Jr.](#), LA
[John R. "Randy" Kuhl](#), NY
[Virginia Foxx](#), NC
[K. Michael Conaway](#), TX
[Jeff Fortenberry](#), NE
[Jean Schmidt](#), OH
[Adrian Smith](#), NE
[Kevin McCarthy](#), CA
[Tim Walberg](#), MI

Let us know what is helpful, and keep us informed on local reaction to farm bill proposals.

For more information, please do not hesitate to contact:

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Bob Gronski, National Catholic Rural Life Conference, (515) 270-2634, ncrlcg@mchsi.com