

107TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 13

Expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the need for Congress to enact a new farm bill during the 1st session of the 107th Congress.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 22, 2001

Mr. DASCHLE (for himself, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. KOHL, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. WELLSTONE, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CONRAD, Mr. KERRY, Mrs. CARNAHAN, Mr. DAYTON, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. AKAKA) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the need for Congress to enact a new farm bill during the 1st session of the 107th Congress.

Whereas in contrast to the economic prosperity enjoyed by Americans over the past several years, many agriculture-dependent rural economies have continued to experience serious economic hardship;

Whereas independently owned and operated farms and ranches that are integral to the economic and social stability of rural America, but that are relatively less able to withstand economic shock, have suffered disproportionately during this period of ongoing economic distress;

Whereas the contract payments authorized by the Agricultural Market Transition Act (7 U.S.C. 7201 et seq.) increasingly are considered by producers to be inequitable because—

(1) the contract payments are not based on current production, but are instead based on 85 percent of program yields established in 1986 and frozen in 1990;

(2) the contract payments are provided to owners and producers that may no longer be producing the crop on which the contract payments are calculated;

(3) the contract payments are not available to producers of nonprogram crops, including soybeans and other oilseeds, resulting in further inequities and arbitrariness in making emergency farm payments;

(4) the contract payments are not available to owners and producers that did not enter into production flexibility contracts under the Agricultural Market Transition Act; and

(5) the contract payments are made for crops regardless of whether the crops are experiencing low prices;

Whereas despite being promoted as a means of limiting farm program spending, current farm policy necessitated

record levels of program spending and emergency assistance packages;

Whereas the previous record of \$26,000,000,000 in direct payments through the Commodity Credit Corporation for fiscal year 1986 during the heart of the farm crisis in the 1980's was eclipsed by direct payments made for fiscal year 2000 by nearly \$6,300,000,000;

Whereas even at these high levels of farm program and emergency spending, the farm economy and the financial condition of farm and ranch families and rural communities continues to decline;

Whereas agricultural producers are extremely frustrated and dissatisfied with the inconsistent criteria for receipt of disaster payments, the unpredictability of the payments, and the inequity of the payments across producers, regions, and agricultural commodities; and

Whereas over the past 3 years, Congress has waited until well into the legislative year before considering and responding to the need for disaster payments and then has justified the use of unnecessarily simplistic and fiscally wasteful payment formulas by claiming that there was inadequate time to devise superior alternatives: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That Congress should—

2 (1) enact a new farm bill during the 1st session
3 of the 107th Congress;

4 (2) include in the budget resolution for fiscal
5 year 2002 sufficient funds to provide an adequate
6 farm income safety net and eliminate the need for
7 off-budget, emergency spending;

1 (3) ensure that all farm-related payments are
2 allocated fairly and reasonably and in relation to
3 need; and

4 (4) provide such additional sums as are nec-
5 essary to fund other farm bill priorities, such as pri-
6 orities involving rural development and telecommuni-
7 cation, conservation, research, nutrition, and food
8 safety.

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