

Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

SHORT SUMMARY

Title I — Commodities: Modernizes the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage programs; increases statutory reference prices for all covered commodities by an average of 15%; enhances the effective reference price escalator to be 88% of the 5-year Olympic average market year average price, capped at 120% of the statutory reference price; increases the coverage level under ARC; adds base acres for farms without base or minimal base and creates a mechanism to continue bringing new and beginning farmers into the safety net for years to come; reigns in discretionary use of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) and increases transparency of CCC use; modernizes Dairy Margin Coverage by allowing farms to update their production history and maintains the premium discount for operations who lock in coverage for the life of the farm bill.

Title II — Conservation: Increases funding for conservation programs by more than 25% with annual increases for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Conservation Stewardship Program, Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, Regional Conservation Partnership Program and the watershed programs; reinvests Inflation Reduction Act conservation dollars into farm bill conservation programs and creates new mandatory permanent baseline; provides increased, permanent funding across all practices to address drought, water quality, wildlife habitat biodiversity, soil erosion, improved climate resiliency, carbon sequestering practices and greenhouse gas reducing practices; establishes a new easement program focused on private forests; continues conservation programs on the 5-year reauthorization schedule; allows livestock producers to continue to access conservation cost-share funds without any additional requirements or burdens that could limit their participation.

Title III — Trade: Doubles USDA's premier trade promotion programs, the Market Access Program and the Foreign Market Development Program; preserves the role of U.S. farmers in addressing global hunger by reserving at least 50% of the overall Food for Peace funding for commodities and ocean shipping costs; expands options for food assistance by including specialized nutrition products in Food for Peace and ensuring Food for Progress supports more than one commodity and country.

Title IV - Nutrition: Restores Congress' constitutional spending authority in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) by returning to a cost-neutral and transparent process for future 5-year reevaluations of the Thrifty Food Plan; maintains current SNAP eligibility and benefit structure for recipients and ensures an annual inflationary adjustment; requires all SNAP payment errors to be reported in the Quality Control process, and overpayments to be returned to the Treasury; establishes a state-federal cost share to hold habitually error-prone states accountable for covering a portion of SNAP benefits; increases access to nutrition incentives by allowing all forms of fruits and vegetables in the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program and milk, yogurt and cheese in the Dairy Nutrition Incentive Program; provides support for state agencies experiencing staffing shortages by allowing the flexibility to use contractors to perform administrative functions under SNAP.

Title V — Credit: Increases direct and guaranteed loan limits for producers at a time when many are struggling to keep up with record input costs and higher operating and land costs; expands opportunities for young and beginning farmers; ensures credit availability and liquidity for agriculture and rural communities.



REPUBLICAN FRAMEWORK

Title VI – Rural Development: Provides significant increase in mandatory funding available for rural infrastructure, community facilities and small business development; makes the ReConnect broadband program permanent and targets funding to rural and remote households that do not have access to broadband; makes precision agriculture more attainable for producers, creating avenues to reduce input costs and increase profitability; provides mandatory funding for rural development to increase access to healthcare, childcare, public safety as well as reliable, affordable and resilient broadband, water and energy infrastructure; creates a new program to assist rural communities with navigating federal funding opportunities from goal setting to pre-development, application and reporting.

Title VII – Research: Directly responds to U.S. agriculture's greatest long-term need by doubling research funding; answers the calls made by land-grant institutions, colleges of agriculture and beneficiaries of U.S. agricultural research by providing significant, mandatory funding to improve agricultural research facilities; commits long-term investments and increases funding for several important programs including the Specialty Crop Research Initiative, the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research and the 1890s Scholarship program.

Title VIII – Forestry: Modernizes the Forest Inventory Analysis program and develops publicly available mapping tools to demonstrate and track forest management activities, fuel breaks and information relevant to wildfire activities; authorizes new and expanded categorical exclusions to expedite management projects, mitigate insect and diseases, protect critical infrastructure and ensure public safety; enhances public-private partnerships by expanding "good neighbor" agreements to allow counties and tribes to retain project revenues and conduct management across jurisdictions; increases Stewardship Contracting term limits to 20 years and expands eligibility for Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program projects; expands adoption of wood products and mass timber by modernizing the Community Wood Facilities Grant Program and Wood Innovation Grant Program.

Title IX – Energy: Doubles the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) maximum guaranteed loan amount and lifts the federal match to 50% for grant funded projects to help producers reduce energy costs; streamlines the application for small REAP funded projects and expands market opportunities for farmers who produce the feedstocks necessary for renewable fuels and biomade products.

Title X – Horticulture: Keeps farmers at the forefront of agricultural innovation by decreasing bureaucratic red tape, maintaining a science and risk-based regulatory landscape and promoting greater coordination within and between our regulatory agencies; continues to provide significant investment in our specialty crop sector and gives USDA resources to tackle plant pests and disease challenges head-on.

Title XI – Crop Insurance: Improves crop insurance affordability for beginning farmers and ranchers through enhanced premium support for the 10 years of producer eligibility; improves the coverage and affordability of area- and individual-based revenue and yield protection policies while maintaining access to Title I programs; increases premium support for the Supplemental Coverage Option to 80% and the coverage level to 90%; increases the premium support to 77% for 80% coverage levels and to 68% for 85% coverage levels; directs USDA Risk Management Agency to research and develop new policies for underserved specialty crops; provides poultry growers with a new risk management tool.

Title XII – Miscellaneous: Increases funding for critical animal health programs and improves our capability to prevent and respond to foreign animal disease threats; bolsters meat and poultry processing capacity, particularly for small processors; protects the ability of livestock producers to raise and sell their products in interstate commerce, preventing a patchwork of state laws; provides long-term reauthorization for Livestock Mandatory Reporting; includes much-needed modernization and reforms to the Agriculture Foreign Investment Disclosure Act equipping USDA with the tools needed to address the challenges posed by foreign ownership of US farmland.

