

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 1

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION, Urging action by Congress on agricultural issues and the federal farm bill.

WHEREAS, current federal authorities for nutrition, farm risk management, conservation, energy, and other programs are set to expire on September 30, 2013, after Congress enacted a one-year extension of the 2008 farm bill, leaving the future of a multiyear bill uncertain; and

WHEREAS, the farm bill is important for every American because it provides critical investment in rural communities, conserves precious natural resources such as soil and water, provides food for schools and those less fortunate, and creates new sources of energy made here at home; and

WHEREAS, the farm bill provides farmers with risk management tools necessary for efficient, uninterrupted operations and gives farmers critical certainty about farm policy as they make operating decisions and deal with volatile weather conditions; and

WHEREAS, the expiration of the current farm bill will leave producers and lenders with uncertainty as to the level at which federal protections will be in place, which could result in the inability to secure funding for the upcoming planting season; and

WHEREAS, federal support for crop insurance remains an important need for agricultural producers, particularly as large parts of the nation are under severe drought conditions, making passage of the farm bill essential to providing meaningful and responsible aid to farmers in difficult times, resulting from poor or low yields, low prices, or high input costs; and

WHEREAS, agricultural producers rely on livestock disaster assistance programs that are contingent on approval of the farm bill, including the Livestock Indemnity Program, which partially compensates ranchers for livestock mortality caused by disasters, the Livestock Forage Program to assist ranchers who graze livestock on qualifying drought- or fire-affected pastureland, and the Emergency Livestock Assistance Program, which compensates producers for disaster losses not covered under other disaster programs; and

WHEREAS, the farm bill includes the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), and other nutrition assistance programs for which bipartisan solutions are needed; and

WHEREAS, the farm bill supports conservation programming at lower spending levels through consolidation and improved efficiency while strengthening and expanding agricultural conservation programs, which are a strategic investment in our country's agricultural infrastructure, including improving air and water quality and the protection of rural and urban watersheds; and

WHEREAS, United States agricultural production is a unique and diversified industry providing a wide variety of food and fiber products to local and national consumers and export markets and continues to be the driving force of commerce, employment, and income in rural America, accounting for sales in excess of \$3.5 trillion dollars in 2011 and more than twenty percent of all United States jobs; and

WHEREAS, approximately ninety-one percent of our nation's farms are classified as small, and support of smaller-scale farmers in a local food system provides economic benefits to each region; and

WHEREAS, Agriculture is the keystone of rural America, supporting a critical combination of infrastructure and economic activity upon which nearly all other enterprises depend:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Senate of the Eighty-Eighth Legislature of the State of South Dakota, the House of Representatives concurring therein, that the South Dakota Legislature urges the United States Congress to work in a cooperative, bipartisan fashion to pass a new, multiyear farm bill that is beneficial to agricultural producers from all regions of the country and includes comprehensive programs for dairy, livestock, insurance, nutrition, energy, research and development, market development, and specialty crops; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the South Dakota Legislature urges the United States Congress to address the farm bill in a timely manner to ensure continuation of the vital aspects of federal farm policy that will enable the nation's agricultural producers to continue their operations and provide food security for this nation.

Adopted by the Senate,
Concurred in by the House of Representatives,

February 13, 2013
February 19, 2013

Matt Michels
President of the Senate

Jeannette Schipper
Secretary of the Senate

Brian Gosch
Speaker of the House

Arlene Kvislen
Chief Clerk of the House