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Thank you for reading The Conaway Chronicle, a weekly review of my activities in Congress. This newsletter is to let you know what's going on in Washington and what important issues are being debated in Congress.

2007 FARM BILL

Last week, the House Agriculture Committee completed the mark-up of the 2007 Farm Bill. The bill was reported out of committee to the full House favorably by a bipartisan unanimous, voice vote. The basic structure of the bill does not differ from the 2002 Farm Bill. American producers like the existing plan, and we are working through the few changes that are up for dispute. One such controversial title brings the Davis-Bacon rules into play. Davis-Bacon is a union giveaway that requires any construction on ethanol plants that receive a federal loan guarantee to pay union wages. Although I believe that this is bad policy, the Democrats have insisted that the Davis-Bacon rule be included.



Payment limits have also been changed so that there is a hard ceiling on anyone getting either commodity or conservation payments. If your adjusted gross income average is more than \$1 million a year over a three year period, you are excluded from participating in either one of these programs. If your adjusted gross income average is between \$500,000 and \$1 million, and if the farm-related income is at least 67 percent, then you will be able to participate in both commodity and conservation programs. If your adjusted gross income average is below \$500,000, there would be no change and you are eligible to participate in both programs. The title change on payment limits is representative of the reality we are facing in Washington on both sides of the aisle. We were able to work with the commodity groups and their leadership to come up with a compromise on this issue.

I offered five amendments to the Farm Bill, four of which passed in committee. I offered an amendment to the Energy title stating that the free market is an important instrument in determining which forms of renewable energy inputs and technology are the most effective and efficient. Another amendment to the Commodity Title will set a minimum threshold of \$25.00 for payments made in the commodities program. In 2005, payments of less than \$25.00 totaled over \$31 million. The committee also voted to place a one year moratorium on closing any county field office of the Farm Service Agency, the Rural Development Agency or the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

I am looking forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to pass this legislation through the House. It is of the utmost importance that rural lawmakers band together to

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express the importance of this legislation to our urban counterparts to move forward with sound policy that makes sense for American consumers, producers and taxpayers.

Speaker Pelosi and other members of the House leadership say that they will back this bill in its current form. It is important to have the leadership behind us as we take the Farm Bill to the House Floor for final passage. The full House is expected to vote on the 2007 Farm Bill at the end of this week. [Click here](#) to listen to my podcast on this issue.

SUPPORTING ISRAEL

Last week I joined my colleagues in condemning the United Nations Human Rights Council for ignoring human rights abuses in various countries, while unfairly targeting Israel.

The Human Rights Council replaced the previous UN Commission on Human Rights, which was discredited by its extreme anti-Israel bias and by granting membership to reprehensible human rights abusers. The Council was established on March 15, 2006, with the purpose of "promoting universal respect for the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all".

Since the formation of the Human Rights Council, there have been numerous serious violations of fundamental human rights across the globe that demand fair justice, such as the situation in the Sudan. Unfortunately, the Council has deemed Israel as the only country in the world to be a human rights violator. It is important that we stand up for Israel in their fight against terrorists and support their efforts to ensure that the only true democracy in the Middle East continues to be a thriving nation. It is my deep and firm hope that the Council will reorder its priorities and seek to become a legitimate and respected force for good in the world.

The Conaway Chronicle will be issued every Monday or Tuesday when Congress is in session. I hope that you will find it informative and will continue to stay informed with my recent legislative activities in Washington. In the meantime, if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions for future issues of the Conaway Chronicle, please visit the website at www.house.gov/conaway or don't hesitate to call me at (202) 225-3605. Check out my blog at www.conawayblog.com!

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