

WASHINGTON, DC—Today, Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) helped pass a House motion to instruct conferees on the Farm Bill, the authorization bill that sets agricultural policy for the next five years. The motion to limit farm payment subsidies was offered by Representative Nick Smith (R-MI) and passed today 256 to 158. Congressman Blumenauer has been active in the current fight to reform our nation's agricultural policy, increase funding for critical conservation programs and cap wasteful farm payments.

"It is hard to imagine anyplace outside of the Beltway where having a subsidy limit of \$275,000 is starving people to death," said Congressman Earl Blumenauer in a speech delivered on the House floor yesterday. "The current system, with its lavish spending, is not stopping the loss of farms. We just heard that in Nebraska a thousand farms went out of the hands of family farmers. We have a system now that drives the incentives toward larger and larger activities and more and more overproduction for a few commodities. This is goofy."

The motion also helps ensure that more farmers in every state receive assistance by funding key conservation programs that are drastically underfunded as well as agricultural research programs that were being cut 40% in the conference committee.

In Oregon, preservation of working farmlands will be enhanced by this motion because it increases funding for conservation programs, including the Farmland Protection Program. Local demand for the Farmland Protection Program has been overwhelming and federal funding is exhausted. If funding is increased for this program under the Farm Bill, Oregon farmers will be able to receive financial support in exchange for preserving their farms for continued agricultural use.

Additionally, Oregon farmers will benefit from a reduction in the largest farm payments, which now go to rice and cotton growers only. If payments for these crops were limited, as they would be under this motion, it would make more money available to support Oregon farmers through the farmland conservation and research programs.

For more information on Congressman Blumenauer's work on the Farm Bill, visit his web site at <http://www.house.gov/blumenauer/>.