



BALANCING FOOD, FARM, AND ENVIRONMENT ACT OF 2013 BENEFITS

Congressman Earl Blumenauer ■ Third District of Oregon ■ www.blumenauer.house.gov

- **Clean Drinking Water and Rivers** The Act expands the use of permanent easements to protect and restore riverbanks and streams, puts water quality as a top priority for more programs and provides new funding to help farmers use fewer pesticides.
- **Keeping Antibiotics out of our Water and Food** For the first time, reducing the use of antibiotics in livestock is established as a program purpose in EQIP. Funding will be available to improve sanitation, ventilation, improved animal management techniques and other activities that will have a documented benefit in reducing antibiotic use. This will keep antibiotics out of our food and water and reduce the possibility of creating antibiotic-resistant microbes.
- **Helping Small Farms** The Act sets new limits on the maximum amount of funding available for the largest conservation programs, guaranteeing that more funding will be available for the backlog of farmers currently waiting for program assistance. The Act also provides farmers with flexibility by incorporating performance-based, rather than practice-based standards, and by reducing paperwork and red tape through program consolidation. Finally, it doubles the amount of money available to help existing and retiring farmers connect with beginning farmers for the purposes of selling their land.
- **Enhancing Wildlife Habitat** Wetland wildlife will benefit from easement funds being targeted to wetlands that provide the greatest value for migratory birds and other wildlife. Restoration of wildlife habitat buffers will be a recognized priority for CRP funding. The bill doubles the percentage of funding allocated to fish and wildlife habitat improvements. Preservation of wildlife corridors are established as a purpose of some conservation easements for the first time.
- **Protecting Wetlands** The bill provides unprecedented levels of dedicated support for wetlands protection and prioritizes wetland restoration and management throughout the title.
- **Addressing Climate Change** By allowing farmers to be rewarded for their carbon sequestration efforts through one of the best funded conservation programs, EQIP, the bill will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase carbon storage in farm and ranch soils. New funding for innovative partnerships will make the federal government a better partner to states that are already working to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture. Regional funding is prioritized for farmer-led efforts to increase resilience to rising temperatures and extreme weather.
- **Growing More Pesticide-Free Food** The bill expands assistance to help more farmers grow food using organic practices, expands support for integrated pest management techniques that will reduce pesticide use, and funds more expert assistance to help farmers and ranchers adopt new practices.
- **Restoring Endangered Species** Voluntary partnerships between farmers, ranchers and USDA have made a huge contribution to endangered species recovery in the past. This bill strengthens these programs by allowing more targeting of funds

For more information on Congressman Blumenauer's agenda for agricultural reform, please visit his website at www.blumenauer.house.gov or contact Tyler Frisbee at (202) 225-4811.



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for easements that protect critical habitat, makes wildlife a priority resource throughout the title, and allows program funds to be used to protect or restore endangered species habitat.

- **Saving America's Prairies** America has already lost more than 99 percent of its tallgrass prairies, and millions of acres of other grasslands are being lost every year. The bill reduces crop insurance subsidies to farmers who plow up native grasslands and prairies that have never previously been farmed.
- **Ending Grants for CAFO's** Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations have previously used significant amounts of conservation funding to build manure lagoons and other structures. The bill moves structural practices into the conservation loan program, freeing more EQIP funding for organic and small-scale farming and lower-cost conservation projects.
- **Protecting Taxpayers:** The bill ensures that taxpayer dollars will be better spent by improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the conservation title. For example more generous funding for permanent easements in place of temporary contracts will ensure that efforts to improve water quality or help wildlife will 'not disappear after 5 or 15 years.