

Senate we reported it out of the Governmental Affairs Committee. On Wednesday, the House passed this legislation again by an overwhelming vote. It is my hope that we can enact it into law this year. The Mandates Information Act will help place responsibility for costly laws at their source—Congress. It's long overdue.

By Mr. GORTON:

S. 428. A bill to amend the Agricultural Market Transition Act to ensure that producers of all classes of soft white wheat (including club wheat) are permitted to repay marketing assistance loans, or receive loan deficiency payments, for the wheat at the same rate; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

LOAN DEFICIENCY PAYMENT FOR CLUB WHEAT

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce legislation that will restore payment equity to Pacific Northwest producers of club wheat.

Last year, during the middle of the 1998 harvest season, the U.S. Department of Agriculture made a rule change regarding the Loan Deficiency Payment (LDP) club wheat, a member of the soft white wheat subclass. While I applaud USDA for its efforts in providing equal payments for club wheat and soft white wheat, by making the policy change in the middle of the production year, many club wheat producers had already contracted with the lower payment.

In order to address the inequity between the 1998 club wheat LDP contracts, my colleagues and I requested that USDA make the policy retroactive. USDA claimed it does not have the authority to grant retroactivity, and as a result, I have introduced this legislation to provide the agency retroactive authority.

At a time when commodity prices are at an all time low, it is my hope that the LDP inequity for club wheat will be resolved by passage of this legislation. I ask unanimous consent that the legislation be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 428

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. REPAYMENT RATE FOR MARKETING ASSISTANCE LOANS FOR WHEAT; LOAN PAYMENT RATE FOR LOAN DEFICIENCY PAYMENTS FOR WHEAT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 134(a)(2) of the Agricultural Market Transition Act (7 U.S.C. 7234(a)(2)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (C), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (D), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(E) in the case of soft white wheat, be uniform for all classes of the wheat, including club wheat.”.

(b) APPLICATION.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply beginning with the 1997 crop of wheat.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. CLELAND, Mr.

GRAMS, Mr. DASCHLE, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. LAUTENBERG, and Mr. LEVIN):

S. 429. A bill to designate the legal public holiday of “Washington’s Birthday” as “Presidents’ Day” in honor of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Franklin Roosevelt and in recognition of the importance of the institution of the Presidency and the contributions that Presidents have made to the development of our Nation and the principles of freedom and democracy; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

THE REDESIGNATION OF WASHINGTON’S BIRTHDAY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I want to take this opportunity, along with my distinguished colleagues, Senators KENNEDY, CLELAND, GRAMS, DASCHLE, DEWINE, LAUTENBERG, and LEVIN, to reintroduce legislation recognizing the importance of the institution of the Presidency. My legislation would redesignate “Washington’s Birthday” as “Presidents’ Day,” honoring George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Franklin Roosevelt. In taking this step, we would honor three of our nation’s most important leaders, Presidents who led our nation through our greatest challenges and crises. In so doing, we would be celebrating the contributions that these and other great Presidents have made to the development of freedom and democracy in our great nation.

Our democracy depends upon the participation of a well-informed electorate—citizens who take their civic responsibilities seriously. However, many Americans appear to have lost confidence in our political system. In the last presidential election, less than half of eligible voters—49 percent—voted. In the 1998 midterm elections, only 36 percent of the voting populace cast their vote to determine the future of our nation. This was the lowest voter turnout since 1942, over 50 years ago. The turnout rate among younger voters is even lower.

Tests administered by the National Assessment of Educational Progress found that almost 60 percent of high school seniors lacked even a basic understanding of American history. These findings indicate that too many Americans feel a sense of alienation from the political process and do not believe that government and political involvement are relevant to their lives.

In this time of cynicism about American politics, we must restore the faith and pride of our citizens in our government. Passage of this legislation will recognize three of our nation’s greatest leaders and the enduring strength of the Office of the Presidency. It will remind all of us—but particularly young people who are our nation’s future leaders—of the important contributions made by Presidents of the United States and the principles on which our nation was founded.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 5

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 5, a bill to reduce the transportation and distribution of illegal drugs and to strengthen domestic demand reduction, and for other purposes.

S. 185

At the request of Mr. ASHCROFT, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mr. GORTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 185, a bill to establish a Chief Agricultural Negotiator in the Office of the United States Trade Representative.

S. 249

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. GRAMS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 249, a bill to provide funding for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, to reauthorize the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, and for other purposes.

S. 279

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. DEWINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 279, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to eliminate the earnings test for individuals who have attained retirement age.

S. 285

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 285, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to restore the link between the maximum amount of earnings by blind individuals permitted without demonstrating ability to engage in substantial gainful activity and the exempt amount permitted in determining excess earnings under the earnings test.

S. 314

At the request of Mr. BOND, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. JEFFORDS) were added as cosponsors of S. 314, a bill to provide for a loan guarantee program to address the Year 2000 computer problems of small business concerns, and for other purposes.

S. 315

At the request of Mr. ASHCROFT, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. FRIST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 315, a bill to amend the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978 to require the President to report to Congress on any selective embargo on agricultural commodities, to provide a termination date for the embargo, to provide greater assurances for contract sanctity, and for other purposes.

S. 327

At the request of Mr. HAGEL, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 327, a bill to exempt agricultural products, medicines, and medical products from U.S. economic sanctions.

S. 333

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. CHAFEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 333, a bill to amend the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 to improve the farmland protection program.

S. 335

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. AKAKA) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. CAMPBELL) were added as cosponsors of S. 335, a bill to amend chapter 30 of title 39, United States Code, to provide for the nonmarketability of certain deceptive matter relating to games of chance, administrative procedures, orders, and civil penalties relating to such matter, and for other purposes.

S. 346

At the request of Mrs. HUTCHISON, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. CAMPBELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 346, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to prohibit the recoupment of funds recovered by States from one or more tobacco manufacturers.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 5

At the request of Mr. BROWNBACK, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. DEWINE), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER), and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of Senate Concurrent Resolution 5, a concurrent resolution expressing congressional opposition to the unilateral declaration of a Palestinian state and urging the President to assert clearly United States opposition to such a unilateral declaration of statehood.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 10—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THERE SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE PARITY BETWEEN THE ADJUSTMENTS IN THE COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS OF THE UNIFORMED SERVICES AND ADJUSTMENTS IN THE COMPENSATION OF CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. SARBANES (for himself, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. CLELAND) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services:

S. CON. RES. 10

Whereas members of the uniformed services of the United States and civilian employees of the United States make significant contributions to the general welfare of the United States; and

Whereas, increases in the levels of pay of members of the uniformed services and of civilian employees of the United States have not kept pace with increases in the overall levels of pay of workers in the private sector so that there is now up to a 30 percent gap between the compensation levels of Federal civilian employees and the compensation levels of private sector workers and a 9 to 14

percent gap between the compensation levels of members of the uniformed services and the compensation levels of private sector workers; and

Whereas, in almost every year of the past two decades, there have been equal adjustments in the compensation of members of the uniformed services and the compensation of civilian employees of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that there should continue to be parity between the adjustments in the compensation of members of the uniformed services and the adjustments in the compensation of civilian employees of the United States.

• Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I am pleased to join with Senators MIKULSKI and WARNER in submitting a resolution which would express the sense of the Congress that parity between Federal civilian pay and military pay should be maintained. Disparate treatment of civilian and military pay goes against longstanding Congressional policy that for more than a decade has ensured parity for all those who have chosen to serve our Nation, whether that service be in the civilian workforce or in the armed services. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this important resolution. •

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 11—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS WITH RESPECT TO THE FAIR AND EQUITABLE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AMENDMENTS MADE BY FOOD QUALITY PROTECTION ACT OF 1996

Mr. CAMPBELL (for himself, Mr. CONRAD, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. FRIST, Mr. GRAMM, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mrs. HUTCHISON, and Ms. LANDRIEU): submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry:

S. CON. RES. 11

Whereas the Food Quality Protection Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-170; 110 Stat. 1489) was enacted with unanimous congressional approval and with the assistance and leadership of a broad coalition of agricultural, industry, and public interest groups;

Whereas the amendments made by that Act are intended to be an important tool in protecting public health, particularly the health and well-being of the most valuable resource of the United States, the children of the United States;

Whereas it is critical that the amendments made by that Act be implemented in a way that accomplishes the intent of Congress while maintaining an abundant, affordable, and safe food supply for the United States, ensuring urban pest control, and not unfairly providing competitive advantages to foreign food suppliers over domestic producers;

Whereas the amendments made by that Act require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to develop risk assessment methodologies that are based on reliable information and to undertake a massive review of all approved pesticide tolerances;

Whereas on August 4, 1997, the Administrator published a schedule for reassessment

of more than 3,000 tolerances by August 3, 1999, that could include certain classes of products that are extensively used;

Whereas the sudden loss of uses and products could both economically cripple a host of agricultural commodities, including corn, soybeans, wheat, rice, cotton, and dozens of fruit and vegetable crops and create a public health threat to the urban environment from the unchecked infestation of insects; and

Whereas it is critical that the amendments made by that Act be implemented in a fair and equitable manner, and that the protections be implemented while maintaining an abundant, affordable, and safe food supply for the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Secretary of Agriculture should ensure that the implementation of the amendments made by the Food Quality Protection Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-170; 110 Stat. 1489)—

(A) be based on sound science that protects public health;

(B) include transparent processes with full disclosure of decisions and be subject to peer and public review;

(C) provide for a reasonable transition for agriculture; and

(D) require consultation with the public and other agencies;

(2) the development of risk assessment methodologies, guidelines, and protocols for collection of data under the amendments made by that Act be based on sound science and not default assumptions in the absence of reliable data;

(3) the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency should devote sufficient resources to register new pesticide products and uses to provide effective substitutes for pesticides that may be considered high risk under the amendments made by that Act; and

(4) the Administrator should establish ongoing means for input regarding the implementation decisions of the Administrator with respect to that Act from producers, pesticide users, registrants, environmental and public health groups, consumers, State and local agencies, tribal governments, Members of Congress, and appropriate Federal agencies.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, today I submit a Senate Concurrent Resolution which addresses the controversy surrounding the Food Quality Protection Act. I am pleased to be joined today by my colleagues, Senators CONRAD, BROWNBACK, HUTCHISON, FRIST, GRAMM of Texas, LANDRIEU, and HUTCHINSON who are original cosponsors of the resolution.

The Food Quality Protection Act directs the EPA to base its tolerance review decisions pertaining to pesticides on reliable data that is currently available. Or, the EPA can require the development of new data through the data call-in provisions of the Food Quality Protection Act.

In order to meet the review deadlines, the EPA is basing some critical decisions on assumptions, which are primarily EPA's preliminary findings. This could lead to needless and questionable product cancellations, and have a significant impact on the agricultural industry.

It is essential that the EPA's insect tolerance assessment process be based