

In my view, S. 2251 does the most for specialty crops and minor crop insurance of any proposal I have seen to date. Once again, I want to thank Senator ROBERTS, Senator KERREY, Senator LUGAR, and others who have directed a tremendous amount of their energy to resolving the issue of Federal crop insurance by presenting the legislation now before the Senate. I hope we will have a sizable vote on it tomorrow and that we can move it to conference with the House to work out our differences and put it on the President's desk at the earliest possible date.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

ICAO NOISE STANDARDS

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I don't think there has been anyone in this body who has been more critical of the administration for the things that have taken place, for what has happened to our defense industry, for what has happened in many other problem areas that have come up, but I have to rise today to actually compliment the administration for an action that they took on March 14 of this year when they filed an article 84 action with the International Civil Aviation Organization, usually referred to as ICAO.

ICAO was put together as an organization where all of the nations that with aviation and commercial aviation would agree to certain standards so there is some degree of uniformity. They got together and determined we would have a noise standard that was classified as chapter 3.

The European Union, and I hate to say this, has demonstrated much arrogance. I guess they think that all of a sudden they have gone from a small fish in the pond to the big fish in the pond and they have totally disregarded agreements they have made. They signed an agreement, a trade agreement, an ICAO agreement with all of the other countries saying that by a certain date they would have to have chapter 3 noise level.

Then, not too long ago, they unilaterally decided they were going to abrogate that treaty and unilaterally say that they are going to not allow chapter 3 noise level unless it is done through new airplanes or re-engining, so a muffling system that takes it to the same noise level would not comply.

This means we in the United States are discriminated against. I think everyone is aware the big competition worldwide now is Boeing aircraft in the United States and Airbus in Europe. As a result of this, it gives a tremendous advantage to Airbus over Boeing. They would be financially discriminating against the U.S. in a way that would cost the United States and depreciate the value of the inventory of many of our Boeing aircraft.

The "hush" industry is a huge industry in the United States. They have been able to use this technology to

bring down the noise level of existing aircraft to chapter 3 standards, and it shouldn't make any difference how we get to this level.

The administration has taken this into consideration when on March 14 they passed an article 84 against the European Union with ICAO. I think it is very significant. I know it will be a long and drawn out process, but I hope and I admonish the administration not to use the fact that it will be a long and drawn out process to go sideways or to cave in on this very critical issue to American workers and American manufacturers.

I can assure the administration that we will be working with them very closely to correct this action to be able to use any method that can be used that is on the market today in order to reach the chapter 3 noise standards.

I yield the floor.

CROP INSURANCE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I come to the floor to stand in support of S. 2251, the crop insurance reform bill. I thank all of my colleagues on the Senate Agriculture Committee for the tremendous work they did in getting this bill to the floor. First and foremost, thanks goes to the chairman of the committee, Senator LUGAR, for his willingness to bring this issue up in a timely fashion, so we could get this legislation out of committee and to the floor to get some meaningful support for our Nation's farmers, particularly those farmers who are not participating in the current Crop Insurance Program.

Congress is reaching out to farmers, encouraging them to participate in the Crop Insurance Program to give them the kind of risk management tools they need to deal with the uncertainties of weather conditions, prices, et cetera, experienced in the past several years in agriculture.

I thank the chairman for his good-faith adherence to moving this bill in a prompt fashion. I thank in particular also Senator PAT ROBERTS of Kansas and Senator BOB KERREY of Nebraska for their incredible work with me as one of two Senators from the Northeastern part of the United States on the Agriculture Committee. They reached out to see what we could do in crafting a piece of legislation which would broaden the base of the Crop Insurance Program to include many areas of the country that have not participated in the old Crop Insurance Program, basically because it wasn't tailored to meet the needs of many regions of the country, particularly the Northeast.

Believe it or not, agriculture is the No. 1 industry in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Most people don't realize that, but we also have the largest rural population of any State in the country. Agriculture is very important

to the way of life for the millions in Pennsylvania who do not live in Pittsburgh or Philadelphia, who live in between those two cities in the great rural areas of our commonwealth.

We have the third lowest participation rate in crop insurance in the country. We are anywhere from single digits to reaching a high of about 20 percent participation of our farmers. It is a very small rate of participation. We need to encourage our very diversified farmers to get into this program to provide a safety net for them in the event of drought, floods, or other problems they may encounter in producing their crops.

There is an opportunity for them now with this bill. With about a third of the money in this bill devoted to specialty crops, it is a real opportunity for our fruit growers and for our vegetable growers—truck farmers, we call them—folks who produce potatoes up in the great northwestern part of our commonwealth, and a variety of other producers, as well as nursery men and women. Those are the folks who now cannot get any kind of help or support. We have provisions included for them in pilot programs. There is a real opportunity for risk management tools that many farmers in our States have not had the opportunity to enjoy.

Special thanks, again, go to Senator ROBERTS and Senator KERREY. They come from the bread basket, Nebraska and Kansas. Frankly, they understand very well the issues of agriculture. To their credit, they understood that if we were going to move forward with agriculture policy under Freedom to Farm, we would have to make sure that all areas of the country had the kind of tools necessary to be able to farm successfully. This legislation will go a long way in providing government aid to an area of the farming country that has been left behind in the past.

I heard Senator ROBERTS and I thank him for his kind comments. Senator ROBERTS talked about the battle we had on the floor of the Senate last year with respect to the agricultural supplemental.

There was a record drought, a 100-year drought in Pennsylvania, which caused about \$1 billion in crop losses. It was a frustration to me in that there was a very small part of that bill which was designated to help farmers who had suffered as a result of that nonprogram crop, former program crop farmers. We have a very small percentage of those in Pennsylvania.

As a result, a lot of the help in that bill was in the form of AMTA payments. A very small percentage of our farmers in Pennsylvania receive any AMTA payments. As a result, the bill was of minimal help to our farmers. We tried to include some things for dairy and livestock and some things for specialty crops, and we were successful—I thank the Senator from Mississippi for including that—but it highlighted the concern that many of us in the Northeast have with the direction of farm

policy in the Senate and in the Congress generally.

In this legislation, for the first time in quite some time, we have seen a nod to the Northeast, saying what goes on up there is not insignificant. Pennsylvania, for example, is the fourth largest dairy-producing State in the country. New York is the third largest dairy-producing State in the country. We have real production agriculture in many States in the Northeast and that production agriculture needs to have the same tools available to be able to survive through the difficult times as other areas of the country. We may not have the frequency of disasters as in other areas of the country, and I understand that and respect that, but it does not mean we should have any fewer tools to be able to deal with the vagaries of the marketplace or the vagaries of the weather.

This bill does that. It does it in a very fair way, reaching out to farmers who have not participated in the program in the past. It eliminates some of the hurdles and obstacles which have limited our access in the past and I think will create a much stronger backbone for agriculture in Pennsylvania which we desperately need.

Rural Pennsylvania is lagging behind economically from the rest of the Commonwealth. We have record employment rates in metropolitan areas, but, still, some rural counties in Pennsylvania have double-digit unemployment rates where the principal economy is either mining or agriculture.

These kinds of tools to support farmers who are the backbone of that economy are very important to keep these farms operating through very difficult weather disasters. It is very important to have these tools available to our farmers at an affordable rate and to provide real coverage for these losses, not as we have seen in the past.

I again thank Senator LUGAR and particularly Senator ROBERTS and Senator KERREY for their outstanding work on this legislation. I hope we can move on this bill rather quickly, get this passed, and move forward to join with the House in a conference that can result in a strong, bipartisan piece of legislation to be sent to the President. I am enthusiastic about the product we have on the floor and hope we can take care of that quickly.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise in support of the legislation before us. I think the crop insurance legislation before us this evening is very important. It is one of the pieces of legislation that should have been passed in

1996 when we passed the current farm bill. We promised farmers we were not only going to provide a safety net for them, we were also going to do what we could to expand trade, change the tax laws so they could better manage the highs and lows associated with on-farm income, spend more money for research, and provide a crop insurance program that provided a more opportunities to managing risk.

We still have not passed the necessary tax legislation. We have not done all we can do to promote trade in American agricultural products. And we have not done all we can to tear down the barriers to trade around the world. There is still a lot that should have been accomplished in 1996 that has not been done, but finally we are able to add one more thing that was promised in 1996. Now 4 years later, we are finally getting it done. What I am referring to is the ability of farmers to protect themselves from natural disasters over which they have no control by insuring for the productivity that they would normally experience in a good year.

This legislation will provide farmers in Iowa and across the country sound risk management opportunities that were promised in 1996. As everyone involved in agriculture knows, the weather is an unavoidable risk farmers must deal with every day. The Federal Crop Insurance Program was established to protect farmers from unavoidable risks such as adverse weather, plant disease, and insect infestation. There are two ways to respond. One is through a crop insurance program that farmers can manage and make their own participation decisions. This would be their decision, not my decision. The other way is through disaster relief. The farmer has little control over whether Congress will provide, at the time of a natural disaster, some disaster relief for him.

In most instances, Congress has responded. But that makes the individual family farmer a pawn of Washington. His welfare is based upon decisions that Members of Congress might make, which might not provide the relief that is needed.

Once again, the 1996 farm bill was meant to give farmers more control over their own destiny, with the proper tools. Crop insurance is one of those proper tools.

The agricultural community has recently been subjected to more than just unavoidable natural disasters. My neighbors in Iowa, where my son and I have a family farm have felt the brunt of the world economic crisis and its increased foreign competition and poor trade diplomacy. These factors have led to significant reductions of farm income.

Just last year, it was necessary for Congress to provide \$8.7 billion in additional assistance to farmers. This was only a short-term fix, not a long-term solution. But it did keep a promise to the family farmers of America that we

made in 1996 when we passed a 7-year farm bill. We set aside \$43 billion to meet the obligations of the safety net in that farm bill because we thought \$43 billion was enough. But nobody anticipated 4 good crop years with record yields, reduced prices, and the Far East financial crisis that reduced our exports.

The \$43 billion that was set aside for the 7 year farm bill in 1996 was not enough to meet our promise of a smooth transition for farmers and the maintenance of a safety net. Consequently, we had to provide more money. In doing so we kept our commitment to the farmers of America to provide a strong safety net.

With the farm economy in the tank and the price of multiple commodities hitting 20-year lows last year, many individuals have decided to lash out against the 1996 farm bill.

I would be the first to admit that Government policy was partly responsible for the instability within the agricultural community. But that is not the farm bill. That is a lack of wise International Monetary Fund policy regarding loans to countries whose banks went in the tank, a seemingly passive pursuit of trade opportunities for agriculture, and Congress, for that matter, not giving the President the authority to negotiate. While I have found fault in the past in our inability to pass a substantive crop insurance bill and the administration's failed efforts to open markets for our agricultural commodities, I hope this bill remedies one of those shortcomings. This legislation provides a long-term solution to the agricultural community for risk management which better mediates the unavoidable risks farmers experience.

The Congress can do disaster relief with the political exigencies that are involved with that or it can promote risk management. Through this legislation, we are promoting risk management, giving farmers the tools to respond to and control their destiny rather than having Congress involved in the family farmers destiny.

This legislation is entitled the Risk Management for the 21st Century Act. It is bipartisan. It will accomplish many of the most important goals requested by my farm constituency.

This has been a bipartisan cooperative effort from the beginning because those of us who understand agriculture know this is the right thing to do. Senators PAT ROBERTS and BOB KERREY wrote an excellent piece of legislation. Senator CONRAD of North Dakota and I, along with Senator ROD GRAMS and Chairman DOMENICI of the Budget Committee, worked hard 12 months ago to provide sufficient budgetary authority to fund this blue ribbon reform proposal that is now before us.

By adopting this legislation, we will increase the affordability of crop insurance, make the program more flexible and more responsive to changing demands, improve the public-private

partnership, provide opportunities for livestock coverage—so that livestock farmers will have the same opportunity to better manage risk as crop producers have had in the past—and last, but certainly not least, equalize subsidies for revenue-based products.

This means a lot for my State of Iowa. Eighty-one percent of all corn and soybeans are insured in the State of Iowa; in other words, meaning 81 percent of the acreage that is planted to corn and soybeans is insured. 85 percent of the insured acres are covered by buy-up policies. And 65 percent of the insured acres in Iowa are covered by a revenue insurance product.

Iowa has the highest percentage of revenue coverage in the United States. This might reflect the idea that farmers in my home State of Iowa distrust Congress to respond with disaster relief more than farmers in any other State in the Nation. My farmers are taking the bull by the horns, making the independent judgment that each one of the 97,000 farmers in my State has an opportunity to make. They are managing their own risks by purchasing crop insurance and not relying upon the Congress to cover their losses.

This bill makes crop insurance more affordable, especially when it comes to revenue products. Iowa farmers will use the improved subsidy formula to benefit from the highest subsidy at the highest level of coverage. The higher levels of coverage will help to support family farmers in poor years and alleviate some of the need for what is becoming an annual economic relief payment. Economic relief payments will only end when we stop losing our foreign market share and increase agricultural exports for the one-third of our agricultural products that we produce beyond the necessity of domestic consumption.

If we do not export, we will shut down one-third of our production. By shutting down one-third of our production, we would not only be hurting farm income but obviously endangering our manufacturers. We would be manufacturing fewer John Deere tractors with fewer jobs at "John Deeres," having less market for feed, for seed, fertilizer, and chemicals. There would be less income for farmers to buy products from the retail merchants of the small towns of America, and more of those small businesses in the small towns of America would go out of business.

When we talk about the necessity of exporting one-third of our products—because that is what we produce in excess of domestic production—we are talking not only about enhancing the income of the family farmers of America, but we are also showing the ripple effect that positive cash-flow has through the economy of rural America. We must reverse this trend to preserve small businesses and preserve numerous other enterprises in America, including the union jobs at John Deere and other farm manufacturers.

This program we have before us won't open new markets abroad for

new commodities, but it will stabilize the potential losses my friends and neighbors could experience due to poor exports. This legislation will provide the security necessary to help farmers through lean years so they will be around to experience better prices and increased revenue in the future.

We have an opportunity tomorrow at 11 o'clock, when we vote on this bill, to provide the agricultural community with a tool, a very important tool to better manage the risks inherent in farming. Improving the Crop Insurance Program and ensuring that quality coverage is more affordable and better suited to the needs of farmers will only serve to provide much needed stability in rural America, not just stability among the family farms.

While we have more to accomplish to guarantee stability for the family farmer, this is a very important first step, a step that should have been accomplished in 1996 but wasn't. In so doing, it would have provided the farm bill more of the safety net as we promised. Today we are taking an important additional step. I appreciate the opportunity of fulfilling some of the unfulfilled promises made in 1996, to make the 1996 farm bill the landmark measure it was meant to be.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

TWO-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF JONESBORO

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, this week we remember another tragedy in America's history, the 2-year anniversary of the school shooting in Jonesboro, AR. Two years ago this Friday, the Nation watched two boys, ages 11 and 13, open fire on their classmates, killing four young people and a teacher.

At the time the school shooting in Jonesboro had the distinction of being one of the Nation's bloodiest. We were stunned that two boys so young had so much anger in them, anger that was made deadly by access to more than a half a dozen guns and 3,000 rounds of ammunition. In 1998, the pastor of a church attended by one of the four children shot to death in Jonesboro said:

Nothing touches us more than when our children are hurt. There's never been anything you could possibly compare this to.

He didn't know that over the next 2 years there would be school shootings in Georgia, Colorado, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and recently in my own home State of Michigan.

Sadly, these tragedies have not convinced Congress to act to try to take guns out of the hands of children. In the aftermath of Columbine, almost a year ago, the Senate passed a juvenile justice bill with moderate gun safety amendments designed to reduce juvenile access to guns. That bill has been stuck in conference committee for months, and legislative proposals to prevent juvenile access to guns has been stymied by this Congress.

Americans cannot understand why Congress has done nothing to prevent the tide of shootings in our schools and public places. Americans do not believe the National Rifle Association's rhetoric—the argument that guns don't kill people, people kill people. They are absolutely and utterly appalled by the most recent statement of the NRA that the President is "willing to accept a certain level of killing to further his political agenda."

I believe the NRA owes an apology to the American people for those incendiary comments by Wayne LaPierre, its executive vice president. His words represent the lowest level of personal attack that has been hurled against any President that I can remember. They cross the line of acceptable political debate. There should be an outpouring of revulsion, not just from persons who disagree with policies supported by the NRA but from the NRA's own members and from those who agree with its positions.

Americans may be divided on the need to pass gun-related legislation but are surely united when it comes to protecting the lives of our fellow citizens and our children.

I yield the floor.

TRIBUTE TO HERMAN WELLS

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, a beloved gentleman, Herman Wells, the former president of Indiana University, has passed away. We are thoughtful about Herman Wells in our State of Indiana, as are all Americans who were touched by this remarkable man.

I have mentioned the legion of Hoosiers who have talked about the profound and inspirational influence of Herman Wells on Indiana University and on individual student lives. Herman Wells made a big difference in my life. He chaired the Indiana Rhodes Scholar Selection Committee in 1953, which included, at the same time, President Fred Hovde of Purdue and Byron Trippett, the president of Wabash. This committee sent me to the scholarship finals in Chicago, where ultimately I was successful.

During the past 46 years, I visited frequently with President Wells about that selection committee, about our first meeting. He wrote about it in his memoirs. He has been extraordinarily supportive throughout that period of time in all of my aspirations.

I thank President Wells for all the opportunities we had to work together for Indiana University and for my State. I thank him for the extraordinary vision he had for this country. I counted on his counsel and his generous enthusiasm. I will miss him very much, as will all Hoosiers.