



Thomas A. Schatz
President

May 23, 2013

U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the more than one million members and supporters of the Council for Citizens Against Government Waste (CCAGW), I urge you to support the following amendments to S. 954, the Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act (commonly referred to as the 2013 Farm Bill), which is currently being considered on the floor of the Senate.

- Amendment No. 927, offered by Sens. Dean Heller (R-Nev.), Marco Rubio (R-Fla.), David Vitter (R-La.), and Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.), which would prohibit the transfer of funds for health care reform implementation by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).
- Amendment No. 956, offered by Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), which would repeal the 2008 Farm Bill conference provision that requires the United States Department of Agriculture to begin inspecting catfish. This duplicative program could cost \$30 million to set up, \$15 million per year to operate, and require over 90 new government inspectors.
- Amendment No. 967, offered by Sens. Bob Corker (R-Tenn.) and Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.), which would downwardly adjust the Renewable Fuel Standard volumes when cellulosic ethanol mandates are not met.
- Amendment No. 995, offered by Sen. Marco Rubio, which would make it a crime for IRS employees to knowingly violate the Constitutional rights of taxpayers.
- Amendment No. 999, offered by Sens. Tom Coburn (R-Okla.), Richard Durbin (D-Ill.), and John McCain, which would reduce the premium subsidy by 15 percent for those with an adjusted gross income in excess of \$750,000.
- Amendment No. 1001, offered by Sen. Tom Coburn, which would repeal the renaming of the Food Stamp Act of 1977, as well as the Food Stamp Program. The title of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) would be returned to its original name: the Food Stamp Program.

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- Amendment No. 1002, offered by Sen. Tom Coburn, which would ensure that SNAP funds are spent providing food to needy families, rather than misspent on soap operas, parties, and other questionable promotional activities.
- Amendment No. 1003, offered by Sen. Tom Coburn, which would prohibit individuals and entities with seriously delinquent tax debt from receiving federal farm subsidies. The amendment would prevent those who have willfully neglected to pay their income taxes from receiving government assistance under the Farm Bill, with an exemption for SNAP recipients.
- Amendment No. 1004, offered by Sen. Tom Coburn, which would remove the waiver authority for the adjusted gross income limitation for conservation purposes to end subsidies for millionaires. The USDA waives income limitations on a regular basis, and this amendment would save approximately \$225 million over a five-year period.
- Amendment No. 1005, offered by Sen. Tom Coburn, which would improve nutrition services by consolidating duplicative programs and directing the savings to food assistance. The amendment would require the USDA, HHS, and FEMA to consolidate overlapping food assistance programs and to evaluate the effectiveness of all remaining programs.
- Amendment No. 1006, offered by Sen. Tom Coburn, which would improve access and safety of specialty crops at the current spending level by eliminating wasteful and unnecessary spending. In addition to retaining funding at current levels (rather than the increased levels proposed in the 2013 Farm Bill), the amendment would ensure that these funds are spent on the production, access, and safety of specialty crops rather than marketing and promotion.
- Amendment No. 1007, offered by Sen. Tom Coburn, which would reduce funding for the Market Access Program (MAP) to the levels recommended by the President and prohibit the use of funds for animal spa products, reality television shows, pet food, wine tastings, and other activities.
- Amendment No. 1008, offered by Sen. Tom Coburn, which would require the Rural Utilities Service to ensure that grants and loans to provide access to broadband telecommunications services in rural areas are made to rural areas that do not already have access to broadband.
- Amendment No. 1009, offered by Sen. Tom Coburn, which would prohibit the use of an EBT card issued under SNAP to obtain cash benefits, whether from an ATM or via the cash-back function at a cash register.
- Amendment No. 1012, offered by Sens. Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.) and Claire McCaskill (D-Mo.), which would strike a provision prohibiting the realization of significant savings in the event of a renegotiation of the standard reinsurance agreement (SRA). Current law specifically prohibits taxpayers from realizing significant budget savings in the event of renegotiation of the SRA, and, while the amendment would not require a new SRA to

realize significant savings, it would at least allow the opportunity to realize such savings.

- Amendment No. 1013, offered by Sen. Jeff Flake, which would amend the Federal Crop Insurance Act to prohibit the paying of premium subsidies on policies based on the actual market price of an agricultural commodity at the time of harvest (the so-called “harvest price option” or HPO). Payouts under HPO plans cost taxpayers an extra \$6 billion alone.
- Amendment No. 1014, offered by Sen. Jeff Flake, which would roll back taxpayer subsidies that are paid to reduce the premiums of federal crop insurance policyholders to pre-Agriculture Risk Protection Act of 2000 levels. Enacting this amendment would save \$40.1 billion over ten years.
- Amendment No. 1015, offered by Sen. Jeff Flake, which would prohibit the IRS from developing discriminatory methodologies for organizations under or applying for 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4) status for ideological reasons.
- Amendment No. 1020, offered by Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah), which would attach the “Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny” (REINS) Act to the Farm Bill.
- Amendment No. 1021, offered by Sen. Mike Lee, which would repeal the estate and generation skipping transfer taxes.
- Amendment No. 1059, offered by Sen. David Vitter, which would ban recruitment efforts to increase SNAP enrollment.
- Amendment No. 1060, offered by Sens. John Barrasso (R-Wyo.) and Pat Toomey (R-Pa.), which would repeal the Renewable Fuel Standard.
- Amendment No. 1069, offered by Sen. Mike Johanns (R-Neb.), which would prohibit the use of federal funds to make payments or influence a foreign government or organization (including the Brazilian Cotton Institute) for the purpose of delaying compliance with a decision of the World Trade Organization.
- Amendment No. 1071, offered by Sen. Jeff Flake, which would strike a provision that would establish a Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO) in the Federal Crop Insurance Program. Eliminating SCO from the Farm Bill would save \$2.2 billion over 10 years.
- Amendment No. 1072, offered by Sen. Jeff Flake, which would require USDA to issue a report to Congress within 90 days for the purpose of identifying and recommending \$147.3 million in annual savings between 2013 and 2018 from agricultural support payments expected to be made to U.S. cotton producers for the express purpose of offsetting annual payments of \$147.3 million to the Brazilian Cotton Institute.
- Amendment No. 1073, offered by Sen. Jeff Flake, which would eliminate the Stacked Income Protection Plan (STAX). STAX would supplement the existing crop insurance policies of U.S. cotton growers, paying indemnities when cotton growers experience “shallow losses” that are not large enough to receive an indemnity payment under underlying policies.

- Amendment No. 1074, offered by Sens. David Vitter, Jim Inhofe, and Roger Wicker (R-Miss.), which would prohibit the introduction into commerce of gasoline blends containing greater than 10-volume-percent ethanol.
- Amendment No. 1083, offered by Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas), which would prohibit mandatory or compulsory check-off programs. The amendment would make voluntary, rather than compulsory, participation in the nearly \$1 billion of federal programs that mandate the collection of fees from all participants in an industry (from wheat, cotton, and eggs, to mangoes and popcorn) to use for a general marketing campaign for that industry. Thus, the amendment would give smaller agriculture producers the choice to invest maximum resources in their operations rather than being forced to contribute to such marketing campaigns.
- Amendment No. 1084, offered by Sen. Ted Cruz, which would lower food prices for poor Americans and ensure the availability of reasonably priced feed for livestock, by repealing the renewable fuel standards (RFS) mandate.
- Amendment No. 1085, offered by Sen. Ted Cruz, which would prohibit any targeting of individuals or groups on the basis of ideology or political affiliation. The amendment would require that, in the administration of farm bill programs, the government cannot single out individuals or groups for differential treatment due to ideology or politics.
- Amendment No. 1091, offered by Sen. John McCain, which would repeal Permanent Farm Law.

Lawmakers should support efforts to reduce the cost and increase the transparency and efficiency of all farm programs. All votes on S. 954 will be among those considered in CCAGW's 2013 *Congressional Ratings*.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Thomas Schatz in black ink.



May 22, 2013

OPPOSE BLOATED SENATE FARM BILL

SUPPORT COMMON SENSE AMENDMENTS TO REIN IN WASTEFUL SPENDING

Dear Senator:

Taxpayers for Common Sense urges you to vote no on The Agriculture Reform, Food and Jobs Act of 2013 (S. 954) while **supporting common sense amendments** to reduce its negative effects on taxpayers. While its proponents claim the bill makes long anticipated reforms and saves \$24 billion, in reality S. 954 costs nearly a trillion dollars, employs numerous budget gimmicks that seek to mislead taxpayers, and resurrects failed policies from farm bills of yesteryear.

Do not believe the hype. S. 954 is not a legitimate deficit reduction bill, authorizing **\$955 billion in mandatory spending**. The bill sponsors attempt to take credit for over \$6 billion in already mandated sequestration savings. In addition, fully two-thirds of the “savings” occur after this bill expires in 2018 and the Congressional Budget Office estimates that if all discretionary programs are fully funded, the bill would cost taxpayers an **additional \$40 billion** in deficit spending over ten years.

There is significant room for **greater deficit reduction, accountability, cost-effectiveness, and transparency** in federal agriculture policy. **Supporting the following common sense amendments** will help rein in the spiraling costs of agricultural commodity entitlements, allow the private sector to appropriately take on more risks, and reduce costs to taxpayers:

- **Sens. Feinstein (D-CA) and McCain’s amendment #923** eliminates crop insurance subsidies for tobacco.
- **Sens. Toomey (R-PA) and Shaheen’s (D-NH) amendment #926** adds a generous payment limitation on crop insurance premium subsidies; bringing crop insurance in line with other taxpayer-supported programs.
- **Sens. Begich (D-AK) and Flake’s (R-AZ) amendment #936** ensures taxpayers know that their tax dollars are going only to those who need it.
- **Sens. McCain (R-AZ) and Flake’s (R-AZ) amendment #955** eliminates subsidies for ethanol blender pumps within the USDA Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) since corn ethanol has already received over 30 years of taxpayer supports.
- **Sens. McCain (R-AZ), Shaheen (D-NH), and others’ amendment #956** eliminates the USDA catfish inspection office, repeatedly highlighted by GAO as a wasteful duplication.

- **Sens. Durbin (D-IL), Coburn (R-OK), and McCain's (R-AZ) amendment #999** modestly reduces crop insurance premium subsidies for agribusinesses earning over \$750,000 annually in adjusted gross income.
- **Sen. Coburn's (R-OK) amendment #1007** limits agribusiness marketing promotion subsidies, increase transparency, and prohibit spending on pet food, cheese awards, animal products, and beer and wine in the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture's Market Access Program.
- **Sen. Flake's (R-AZ) amendment #1012** removes the prohibition on USDA negotiating money-saving improvements in the federal crop insurance program.
- **Sen. Flake's (R-AZ) amendment #1013** eliminates subsidies for the Harvest Price Option, a common sense approach to reducing unnecessary risk taking and costs in federal crop insurance.
- **Sen. Flake's (R-AZ) amendment #1014** reduces crop insurance premium subsidies for a sector expected to reap record farm profits in 2013.
- **Sen. Lee's (R-UT) amendment #1016** repeals the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP), a program that has suffered from implementation issues and severe cost overruns.
- **Sen. McCain's (R-AZ) amendment #1091** repeals outdated agricultural laws and avoids future Washington manufactured crises.

Again, Taxpayers for Common Sense urges you to **vote no on The Agriculture Reform, Food and Jobs Act of 2013 (S. 954)** while supporting common sense measures to rein in the bill's out-of-control spending on wasteful agricultural entitlements and special interest carve-outs.

For more information, please contact Joshua Sewell of Taxpayers for Common Sense at 202-546-8500 x116, or josh@taxpayer.net.

Sincerely,



Ryan Alexander
President

TAXPAYERS PROTECTION ALLIANCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 31, 2013

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Taxpayers on the Hook for Multiple Unnecessary Catfish Inspection Programs

Broad Bipartisan Support Exists for Eliminating Waste, Saving Taxpayers Up to \$30 Million Annually

ALEXANDRIA, VA – Today, the Taxpayers Protection Alliance is urging the Senate to end the government's duplicate catfish inspection program, which wastes \$30 million in taxpayer funds annually. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration already inspects imported catfish, a food it labels as "low risk" for contamination. However, as a payoff to the domestic catfish industry, language was added to the pork-laden 2008 Farm Bill to add a second inspection under the purview of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"The redundant catfish inspection program is one instance where President Obama and a bipartisan coalition of lawmakers in both houses agree that taxpayer funds are being wasted," said Taxpayers Protection Alliance president David Williams. "Yet, even removing the most obvious waste has been an ongoing, 5-year process as entrenched interests fight every step."

According to the Government Accountability Office and the USDA, preparing for the program's implementation cost taxpayers \$19.8 million in FY-2012 – all without a single inspection. Similar amounts were likely spent in FY-2013, [according to Senators John McCain and Jeanne Shaheen](#).

"TPA applauds Senators John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Jeanne Shaheen (D.H.H.), as well as the 11 other senators from both parties, who are leading the fight to repeal this provision," said Williams. "Doing so today would save taxpayers \$165 million in future spending, according to the Government Accountability Office."

Visit <http://repealcattfish.com/> for more information on the USDA's catfish inspection program.

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About Taxpayers Protection Alliance

Taxpayers Protection Alliance (TPA) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to educating the public through the research, analysis and dissemination of information on the government's effects on the economy.

For more information, please visit www.protectingtaxpayers.org.

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NTU urges all Senators to vote “YES” on the following amendments to S. 954, the Farm Bill.

June 4, 2013

As the Senate considers the provisions of **S. 954**, the **Farm Bill**, NTU urges all Senators to vote “**YES**” on the following amendments. Though these amendments would improve the legislation by saving taxpayers money and reducing the heavy hand of government, Senators are reminded that NTU continues to strongly oppose the underlying bill.

“YES” votes on the following amendments will be considered the pro-taxpayer position:

#956: McCain-Shaheen: Catfish Inspection Repeal: This amendment would eliminate a duplicative new USDA office to inspect catfish, which are already inspected by the FDA. The new office would cost at least \$30 million to create (\$20 million has already been spent without inspecting a single fish) and \$14 million a year to maintain. The GAO has targeted the USDA Catfish Inspection program as wasteful and unnecessary no fewer than four times.