



June 19, 2012

\*\*\*\*\*

## National Taxpayers Union Vote Alert

**As the Senate considers amendments to S. 3240, the Farm Bill, NTU urges all Senators to vote “YES” on the following amendments that save taxpayers money, and support free markets. Please note that due to the numerous amendments, further explanation of the NTU position on these proposals continues on the following pages. Senators are urged to support the amendments below, and are reminded that NTU continues to oppose overall passage of the Farm Bill.**

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

- Warner (D-VA): #2457: Broadband Accountability
- Durbin (D-IL)-Coburn (R-OK): #2439: Crop Insurance
- Grassley (R-IA): #2167: Pay Cap Marketing Loans
- Paul (R-KY): #2181: \$250,000 Income Limit
- McCain (R-AZ): #2199: Catfish
- Toomey (R-PA): #2217: Organic/AMA
- DeMint (R-SC): #2263: RUS Funding
- DeMint (R-SC): #2262: SoS Free Market
- DeMint (R-SC): #2268: Loan Guarantees
- DeMint (R-SC): #2273: Voluntary Check-off Program
- DeMint (R-SC): #2273: Broadband
- Coburn (R-OK): #2289: MAP
- Coburn (R-OK): #2293: Limit Millionaires
- Toomey (R-PA): #2226: Energy Title
- Toomey (R-PA): #2433: Sugar
- Chambliss (R-GA): #2432: Farmers Markets Promotion Program
- Lee (R-UT) Motion to Recommit (2008 levels)
- Coburn (R-OK): #2214: Convention Funding
- Rubio (R-FL): #2166: RAISE Act

1. **Warner (D-VA): #2457: Broadband Accountability**: The Rural Utility Service (RUS) and rural broadband program is largely unnecessary as 95% of people have access to broadband Internet service. This amendment ensures that funding goes only to those communities where more than 25% of residents have no access and where there is no more than one provider for the other 75% of the area. This brings much-needed accountability to the program, targets funding to where it is needed most, and ensures we are not building on top of existing networks.
2. **Durbin (D-IL) – Coburn (R-OK): #2439: Crop Insurance**: This amendment reduces the crop insurance premium subsidy by 15% for farmers with an Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) of more than \$750,000.
3. **Grassley (R-IA): #2167: Pay Cap Marketing Loans**: This amendment establishes a limit of \$75,000 on marketing loan gains and loan deficiency payments.
4. **Paul (R-KY): #2181: \$250,000 Income Limit**: This amendment prevents payments or other benefits under the Act for those with an AGI greater than \$250,000.
5. **McCain (R-AZ): #2199: Catfish**: This amendment eliminates a duplicative new USDA office to inspect catfish, already inspected by the FDA. The new office would cost \$30 million to create and \$14 million a year to maintain.
6. **Toomey (R-PA): #2217: Repeal Organic Certification Cost Share Programs/Agricultural Management Assistance**: This amendment saves \$115 million in mandatory funding by eliminating an unnecessary subsidy to organic food producers.
7. **DeMint (R-SC): #2263: Maintain 2008 Levels for Rural Utilities Service (RUS)**: This amendment would maintain the current \$25 million annual funding for RUS broadband programs, saving taxpayers \$25 million off the \$50 million authorized in the legislation. Appropriations for this program have averaged less than \$14 million annually over the past decade, making a 100% increase unjustifiable.
8. **DeMint (R-SC): #2262: Sense of the Senate for Free Markets**: This amendment states that nothing in the Farm Bill or any amendment should manipulate prices or interfere with the free market. The new shallow-loss program currently in the farm bill replaces similar services already offered by private companies, while commodity programs regarding dairy, sugar, and cotton increase costs for consumers and violate free market principles.

9. **DeMint (R-SC): #2268: No Loan Guarantees**: This amendment would prohibit loan guarantees under the Farm Bill, protecting taxpayers from further market-distorting and potentially costly government-backed loans as demonstrated in the recent Solyndra debacle.
10. **DeMint (R-SC): #2273: Voluntary Check-Off Programs**: Best described as “right-to-work” for small businesses and farmers, this amendment would make participation in “check-off” programs voluntary. Currently, these programs, which raise \$905 million annually, operate with little oversight, waste taxpayer dollars, mistreat whistleblowers, force individuals to support programs that might not be in their best interest or violate beliefs, and subsidize products of billion-dollar companies like McDonald’s and Domino’s.
11. **DeMint (R-SC): #2273: RUS/No Secretary Waiver**: This amendment would ensure that the taxpayer share of RUS broadband grants does not exceed 50% of the project’s cost. Because grants require no repayment (unlike direct loans or loan guarantees), this makes certain that recipients also help shoulder the risk.
12. **Coburn (R-OK): #2289: Market Access Program (MAP) Reduction**: This amendment would cut funding for MAP by 20% (down from its current \$200 million a year) to subsidize overseas advertising of private companies and trade associations like Welch’s, Sunkist, and Blue Diamond. The amendment also prohibits funds from subsidizing some of the most egregious examples of waste such as promoting cat or dog food, wine tastings, animal spa products, and reality television shows.
13. **Coburn (R-OK): #2293: Limit Subsidies for Millionaires**: Through a variety of conservation programs, over the past two years the USDA has paid a total of \$89,107,803 to individuals and entities with an AGI of \$1 million or more in exchange for not developing property. With a skyrocketing national debt and struggling economy, taxpayers shouldn’t be forced to incentivize the wealthy to make good conservation choices.
14. **Toomey (R-PA): #2226: Energy Title**: This amendment eliminates grants and loan guarantees for bio-refineries and renewable chemicals as well as bio-based manufacturing facilities, protecting taxpayers from additional losses and decreasing mandatory spending by \$216 million.
15. **Toomey (R-PA): #2433: Sugar Reform**: This amendment implements new free market reforms to current sugar policy, which costs consumers and businesses approximately \$3.5 billion and 20,000 jobs each year, by repealing the Feedstock Flexibility Program, repealing unnecessary trade restrictions, eliminating higher price support levels, revising domestic supply restrictions, and providing more flexibility to the USDA in administering quotas.

16. **Chambliss (R-GA): #2432: Farmers Markets Promotion Program**: This amendment eliminates funding for the unnecessary and wasteful Farmers Markets and Local Food Promotion Program.
17. **Lee (R-UT) Motion to Recommit (2008 levels)**: This amendment would strip the current legislation of all additional amendments and set funding at 2008 levels (a 60% cut), saving taxpayers billions of dollars.
18. **Coburn (R-OK): #2214: Convention Funding**: This amendment prohibits the use of the Presidential Election Campaign Fund for political party conventions in elections occurring after 2012, saving taxpayers millions of dollars.
19. **Rubio (R-FL): #2166: RAISE Act**: This amendment would permit employers to give individual employees merit-based pay raises and bonuses over and above the minimum payment stipulated in their union contract.

**Roll call votes on the above amendments will be included in our annual Rating of Congress.**

If you have any questions, please contact  
 NTU Federal Affairs Manager Nan Swift at (703) 683-5700

\*\*\*\*\*