

Reserve Fund En Bloc Amendments--Summary

Title II--Conservation

The amendment to section 2104 adds 5,000,000 acres of enrollment for GRP.

The amendment to section 1240I of the 1985 farm bill increases the funding for RWEP by \$40,000,000 for each fiscal year, for a total of \$100,000,000 in mandatory funds for each fiscal year.

The amendment to section 2201, which amends section 524 of the Federal Crop Insurance Act, provides \$20,000,000 in addition to the \$10,000,000 already provided for under current law for each fiscal year through 2012 for the Agricultural Management Assistance Program. If this amendment is not adopted, AMA will receive \$10,000,000 mandatory per year. \$20,000,000 was authorized for '04-07.

The amendment to section 2401(c) increases the funding for FRPP by:
\$175M for FY '08 (bringing total to \$300M)
\$150M FY '09 (\$300M total)
\$100M FY '10 (\$300M)
\$50M FY '11 (\$300M)
The title has \$300M authorized for FY '12. All mandatory.

The amendment to section 2401(d) (following FRPP) increases funding for EQIP by:
\$500M FY '08 (\$2B total)
\$400M FY '09 (\$2B)
\$300M FY '10 (\$2B)
\$200M FY '11 (\$2B)
The title has \$2B authorized for FY '12. All mandatory.

Title III—Trade

**SEC. . MCGOVERN-DOLE INTERNATIONAL FOOD FOR
EDUCATION AND CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM FUNDING
LEVELS.**

Provides mandatory funding for the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition program of \$140 million in 2008, ramping up to \$200 million in 2012.

Title IV--Nutrition

SEC. __. EXCLUDING COMBAT-RELATED MILITARY PAY FROM COUNTABLE INCOME.

Amends section 5(d) of the Food Stamp Act by excluding combat-related military pay from countable income, with respect to the Food Stamp program.

SEC. __. INCREASING THE STANDARD DEDUCTION.

- Amends section 5(e)(1) of the Food Stamp Act, by increasing the standard deduction for food stamp households and indexing it for inflation.
- Raises the standard deduction to not less than \$156 (the 48 contiguous States and the District of Columbia), \$267 (Alaska), \$220 (Hawaii), \$137 (Virgin Islands), and \$313 (Guam). [Note: Under current law the standard deduction is not less than \$134 (the 48 contiguous States and the District of Columbia), \$229 (Alaska), \$189 (Hawaii), \$118 (Virgin Islands), and \$269 (Guam)].

SEC. __. EXCLUDING DEPENDENT CARE EXPENSES.

Amends section 5(e)(3)(A) of the Food Stamp Act by lifting the cap on dependent care. [Under current law the maximum deduction allowable is \$200 for each child under two years of age, and \$175 for each child over two].

SEC. __. ADJUSTING COUNTABLE RESOURCES FOR INFLATION.

Amends section 5(g) of the Food Stamp Act by indexing for inflation the asset limits for food stamp households. [Current law sets the allowable amounts of financial resources (liquid and nonliquid assets) that an eligible food stamp household may own at \$2,000; in the case of an eligible food stamp household that consists of or includes an elderly or disabled member the amount is \$3,000.

SEC. __. EXCLUDING EDUCATION ACCOUNTS FROM COUNTABLE INCOME.

Amends section 5(g) of the Food Stamp Act by excluding qualified tuition programs and Coverdell Education Savings Accounts from countable financial resources, with respect to the Food Stamp program.

SEC. __. EXCLUDING RETIREMENT ACCOUNTS FROM COUNTABLE FINANCIAL RESOURCES.

Amends section 5(g) of the Food Stamp Act by excluding retirement accounts from countable financial resources, with respect to the Food Stamp program.

SEC. __. INCREASING THE MINIMUM BENEFIT.

Amends section 8(g) of the Food Stamp Act by increasing the minimum benefit to 10 percent of the thrifty food plan for household containing 1 member. [Current law sets the minimum benefit at \$10 per month].

SEC. __. EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOOD PROGRAM.

Amends Section 27(a) of the Food Stamp Act increasing to \$250 million and indexing the mandatory funding for commodities made available for the Emergency Assistance Food Program (TEFAP).

SEC. __. EXPANSION OF FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLE PROGRAM.

- Amends the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to increase funding for the fresh fruit and vegetable program to \$100 million in each of fiscal years 2008 through 2012.
- The Section expands the program from 50 schools in each of eight States to 50 schools in each State, plus additional schools in each State in proportion to the student population of the State.

Title VII—Research

The amendment to section 413 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (bottom of page 12 through page 13, lines 1-8) provides the following mandatory funds for the Specialty Crop Research Initiative:

\$20M FY '08
\$30M FY '09
\$40M FY '10
\$50M FY '11

\$60M FY '12 All mandatory.
Title authorizes Approps for \$100M each FY.

Title IX—Energy

The amendment to section 9002, Federal Procurement of Biobased Products, doubles current mandatory funding to \$2 million annually and expands the purposes for which the funding may be used to include support for ongoing operations of the biobased product designation program, the voluntary labeling program, procurement program models, procurement research, promotion, education, and awareness of the Bio-Preferred Program.

The amendment to section 9003, Biorefinery Development Grants; Loan Guarantees for Biorefineries and Biofuel Production Plants, provides mandatory funding to provide for up to \$2 billion in loan guarantees, and adds a provision requiring the Secretary to make receipt of a grant or loan guarantee conditional on the recipient agreeing to pay prevailing wages.

The amendment to section 9005, which amends section 9006 of the 2002 farm bill, Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvements, adds mandatory funding of \$50 million in 2008, ramping up to \$150 million in 2012.

The amendment to section 9006, which restates the Biomass Research and Development Act of 2000 as section 9008 of the 2002 farm bill, increases mandatory funding from current level of \$14 million to \$50 million in 2008, ramping up to \$150 million in 2012.

The amendment to section 9007, Adjustments to the bioenergy program (section 9010 of the 2002 Farm Bill) increases current funding level of \$0 for 2007 to \$1.5 billion for the 2008-2012 period.

New section 9014, added at the end of title IX, Biodiesel Fuel Education Program, reauthorizes the program in section 9004 of the 2002 Farm Bill, which educates the public about the benefits of biodiesel use. Maintains funding at \$2 million annually.

New section 9015 adds a new section 9017, Biomass Energy Reserve, which establishes a biomass energy reserve (BER) and provides financial and technical assistance to landowners and operators to produce energy crops and harvest, store, and transport cellulosic material. BER project areas must be within a 50 mile radius of a bioenergy facility.

- BER eligible crop land must have been tilled in the current or immediately preceding crop year, and does not include Federal land, forest land, or land enrolled in specified conservation programs (unless biomass harvest occurs in accordance with a conservation plan outside of nesting and rearing season, and payments under the conservation program are reduced—subsection (h)). (Forest land is covered in subsection (e), which provides \$5 million for grants to help owners develop plans for sustainable management of biomass from forest land.)
- Groups of owners and operators, energy and agricultural companies, and Agricultural Innovation Centers (AICs) are all “Eligible Applicants” that may submit proposals for BER project areas. AICs have dual role in the program, and may also serve as “Qualified Organizations”, which assist other Eligible Applicants in developing proposals for approval by USDA.
- Under the program, the Secretary will select 10 Qualified Organizations across the country. Qualified Organizations, which may also be colleges and universities, help Eligible Applicants structure projects that will advance the goal of sustainable production of dedicated energy crops. Specifically, a Qualified Organization will help Eligible Applicants to identify suitable land and crop mixtures and get a commitment from a bioenergy facility. Program crops and invasive or noxious species are ineligible.
- Qualified Organizations will then rate the various project area applications according to a ranking system established by the Secretary, based on criteria set out in subsection (d)(5). The Secretary will select at least one project area in each of the 10 Qualified Organizations, which will be regionally dispersed. The Secretary will enter into 5-year contracts with owners and operators (Eligible Participants) in the BER project area. Such contracts must comply

with certain conservation requirements and provide for information sharing.

- The Secretary will make Establishment Payments to Eligible Participants to cover seeds, stock, and the cost of planting, and annual Rental Payments in an amount to be determined by the Secretary. The Secretary may also provide Matching Payments of not more than \$45 per ton for collecting, harvesting, storing, and transporting biomass. (Matching Payments are at a rate of \$1 for every \$1 per ton paid by the bioenergy facility for the biomass. The Secretary must reduce Rental Payments if making a Matching Payment to an Eligible Participant.) Forest land owners are eligible for this Matching Payment if acting under a forest stewardship plan.

New section 9016 adds a new section 9018 to the 2002 farm bill entitled Forest Biomass for Energy. The section authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to work with other Federal agencies and universities to conduct a competitive research and development program (including grants, and cooperative agreements) to encourage new forest to energy technologies. It provides mandatory funded of \$15 million annually.

Title X—Horticulture and Organic Agriculture

The amendment to section 101(i) of the Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004 (page 40, after line 13) increases funding for Specialty Crop Block Grants by \$40M/year, bringing totals to:

\$80M FY '08

\$85M FY '09

\$90M FY '10

\$95M FY '11

\$115M FY '12 All mandatory.

Title XI – Miscellaneous

Sec. 11007. PERMANENT AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY AGRICULTURAL ASSISTANCE.

Requires the Secretary to use such sums as necessary from the Commodity Credit Corporation to make crop disaster assistance payments to

eligible producers on farms in disaster counties that have incurred crop production losses and/or crop quality losses.

Requires the Secretary to make livestock indemnity payments to eligible producers of farms that have incurred livestock death losses due to adverse weather; and further requires the Secretary to provide payments to eligible orchardists who lost trees due to natural disaster.

Stipulates that to be eligible for assistance under the program, producers on a farm must obtain crop insurance for insurable commodities or file the appropriate paperwork and pay the administrative fee for noninsurable commodities, subject to limited waiver by the Secretary.

Establishes a program under which eligible producers may purchase additional yield and price coverage under the noninsured crop assistance program.

Limits payments under this section to \$100,000 for an eligible producer; a producer with an average adjustable gross income in excess of \$2.5 million and 25 percent or more of the average adjusted gross income is from nonagricultural sources is not eligible for assistance.