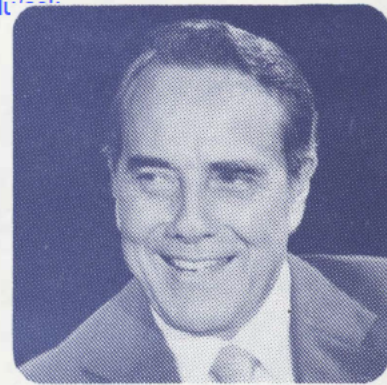


News from Senator

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AG CONFERENCE OKS DOLE PLAN TO HALT "SILLY" FARM STUDIES; DOLE ALSO EXPANDS GREAT PLAINS CONSERVATION PROGRAM TO HELP KANSAS

WASHINGTON - Senate and House Conferees on the 1990 farm bill today approved a portion of the package's Conservation title which includes the reauthorization and expansion of the Great Plains Conservation Program (GPCP).

Senate Republican Leader Bob Dole (R-KS) led the fight to expand funding for this program, which will help producers in Kansas and nine other Great Plains states in complying with conservation compliance requirements over the next five years.

"This reauthorization is the critical next step in following up on the aggressive conservation initiatives which we began in 1985," Dole said. "Farmers and environmental groups alike recognize the long-term benefits of protecting our natural resource base, and today's action will assist producers in reaching our conservation goals."

The GPCP provides cost share and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers in carrying out soil and water conservation on the fragile lands of the Great Plains where harsh climate conditions cause special threat to the valuable land and water resources.

The current five-year funding level of \$600 million was expanded to \$1 billion in answer to concerns of producers who may have difficulty in fully implementing mandated conservation plans in the coming years. Over the past five years, the program has offered an average of \$20.6 million annually to the ten-state region, with \$1.75 million of that total going to Kansas producers. Many expect a need for additional funding in areas such as western Kansas which are highly susceptible to wind erosion.

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II. STUDIES

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In other conference action, Dole also won approval of a plan that could potentially save up to \$100 million by severely limiting the number of Congressionally-mandated studies by USDA. The new farm bill calls for 168 studies, reports and surveys, along with an additional 28 which are duplicated in both the Senate and the House version.

"We have got to show some discipline and commonsense," said Dole. "Many of these studies are duplicative and unnecessary, and very likely will never even be read or used to shape future policy decisions."

The Dole provision approved on Thursday directs the Secretary of Agriculture, after concurrence by the Chairmen of the Senate and the House Agriculture Committees, to prioritize the studies and pick a minimum of twelve to be carried out.

"This provision removes some of the nonsense which an election year has put into the farm bill," remarked Dole, pointing out that the current Senate bill is 1,700 pages long. "We need to remember that farmers want a farm program, not an election year free-for-all. The problem with all these great ideas is that they aren't free. Let's save some money for a change and stop this silly study craze."

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