

TALKING POINTS ON WHEAT REFERENDUM POSTPONEMENT

- o Last night (Wednesday), the House passed the Senate bill to postpone the wheat referendum (S. 822), but amended it to eliminate the Secretary's discretion to hold the vote until after this session of Congress adjourns.
- o Secretary Block agreed earlier today to use the discretionary authority in the original Senate bill to postpone the referendum scheduled during the week of July 19. However, he indicated he would recommend a veto of the House-amended version, which took away his discretion.
- o Under the compromise worked out this afternoon, the Senate bill will be adopted, allowing the Secretary to hold the wheat referendum until 31 days after adjournment. Secretary Block will send letters to the two Ag Committee chairmen confirming that he will not schedule the referendum before October 1, and that it is not his desire to hold the referendum.

Current farm legislation expires on October 1, and permanent law dating to 1938 and 1949 would require the referendum for 1986 crop wheat if new legislation is not passed before Congress adjourns.