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March 31, 2008 Action Alert #17

Calls Needed to Rep. Moran and Sen. Roberts

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDING AT RISK IN FARM BILL; PLUS, THIS IS THE LAST CHANCE FOR PAYMENT LIMITATIONS

Final negotiations are underway in the Farm Bill in an effort to pass a bill before the current bill expires April 18. Conferees are making final decisions over what titles of the farm bill get funded and at what levels. President Bush has also threatened to veto any bill that does not include greater commodity program reform than what was passed in the House or Senate versions of the bill.

Funding for a number of sustainable agriculture priorities hang in the balance, including the Conservation Stewardship Program (formerly Conservation Security Program), and most of the Rural Development programs.

Under the proposed funding framework, the Conservation Title would be cut by \$1 billion to increase funding for a proposed \$5 billion permanent disaster program. CSP is one of the conservation programs that could lose funding. The same funding proposal completely zeroes out funding for the Rural Development Title, which includes the Value Added Producer Grant Program.

KRC urges you to contact Rep. Moran and Sen. Roberts on the following three key issues:

- 1) Payment limitations**
- 2) Conservation Stewardship Program**
- 3) Rural Development Title.**

**Call or fax Rep. Jerry Moran (Ag Aide Aaron Popelka)
at 202-225-2715; FAX 202-225-5124**

**Call or fax Sen. Pat Roberts (Ag Aide Mike Seyfert)
at 202-224-4774, FAX 202-224-3514**

The message is simple: "I am a constituent (or Kansas resident) and am calling to urge Rep. Moran or Sen. Roberts to:

1) Support the new Dorgan-Grassley payment limitation compromise and to reinvest the \$2 billion savings in conservation, nutrition, and rural development;

2) Support a \$2 billion increase in mandatory farm bill funding for the Conservation Stewardship Program in the final farm bill. With all the pressure to produce fence row to fence row in response to the ethanol market, we need programs like the Conservation Stewardship Program more than ever to protect soil, water, air, and wildlife. Please ensure the final farm bill does not funding for this innovative program.

And 3) Support mandatory farm bill funding for key rural development programs, including the Value Added Producer Grant Program with \$20 million in annual mandatory funding. Rural development [programs allow farmers and non-farmers in rural communities to pursue innovative projects that raise incomes and create jobs."

Background:

For more background on these programs, please see the Sustainable Agriculture Coalition's farm bill platform, at: www.sustainableagriculturecoalition.org. And for more background on this alert, please see SAC's Weekly Update dated March 28, 2008, available at the same website.

For Further Information, or to sign up for KRC Action Alerts, contact:

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