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House of Representatives

FY2008 AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FDA APPROPRIATIONS BILL

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON
OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 31, 2007

MR. SIMPSON: Mr. Chairman, in accordance with House earmark reforms, I would like to place into the record a listing of Congressionally-directed projects in my home state of Idaho that are contained within the report to the FY08 Agriculture, Rural Development and FDA Appropriations bill.

I'd like to take just a few minutes to describe why I supported these projects and why they are valuable to the nation and its taxpayers.

First, the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) grants included below are targeted to our nation's Land Grant Colleges. In the case of Idaho, these funds are used by the University of Idaho to conduct research on a variety of crops important to the Pacific Northwest. I have also supported research in Washington and Oregon because their research is invaluable to my constituents as well.

In assessing the value of these requests, there are some important considerations that must be made. World labor standards and costs are far below those of the U.S. Our nation's farmers are subjected to far more stringent environmental regulations than those of many of our competitors. Input costs in the U.S. far surpass those of other nations. And energy prices, including farm diesel, are rising dramatically.

So how can a U.S. farmer remain competitive in a global market? He can do it by achieving greater productivity and efficiency, increased yields, and better defenses against diseases. These are the very

things that agriculture research funding delivers for U.S. producers – and for U.S. consumers.

If you want to rely on foreign nations for our food in the way we rely on them for our oil, then by all means eliminate these important agriculture research programs. But if you believe, as I do, that maintaining a domestic capability to produce our food is a national security issue, then you ought to support these research programs and fight for their continuation.

The second entity that receives the bulk of these funds is the Agriculture Research Service (ARS) and its stations across rural America. In Idaho, these institutions are conducting vital research into some of our most important crops – sugar, potatoes, small fruits, and aquaculture. I encourage all of my colleagues to visit an ARS station to see firsthand the value of this research. If you do, you will learn that these researchers are doing amazing things with very limited budgets. These projects are usually small in terms of their funding, but the benefits that flow from that research cannot be measured in dollars alone.

Four of the projects below are funded through the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). The first program, Potato Cyst Nematode (PCN) Detection and Eradication, provides funding that is critical to saving the potato industry, both in Idaho and across the nation. In August 2006, PCN was discovered in our country for the first time on approximately 1,000 acres in Eastern Idaho. PCN is

a major pest of potato crops and is one of the most destructive and difficult pests to control. If left uncontrolled, this pest can result in devastating crop yield losses of up to 80%. Without this funding, the pest's significant risk of dispersion could lead to a devastating impact on our nation's agriculture production and exports.

The Greater Yellowstone Brucellosis funding is particularly critical to my home state of Idaho. Idaho recently regained its Brucellosis Class Free Status and these funds are critical to continuing a management plan that will allow Idaho to maintain brucellosis free status.

The Tri-State Predator control funding is hardly a handout to ranchers. The federal government forced wolf reintroduction on Idaho and other western states and it is duty-bound to pay for the deadly and gruesome impacts of this decision.

The funding for the Nez Perce Bio-Control Center will enable the Center to utilize organism-rearing technology to improve mass rearing capabilities for biological control organisms, thus providing long-term management of invasive weeds.

Another project on this list is the Idaho One-Plan. The Idaho One-Plan is a unique collaboration of agencies, industries, and associations dedicated to assisting Idaho farmers and ranchers in their continuing natural resource stewardship responsibilities. The program was developed jointly with state and federal resource agencies, the University of Idaho Cooperative Extension program, the Environmental Protection Agency, and local commodity groups. It's a successful program that has enormous value to not only the Idaho agriculture community and the environment, but to other states that might be interested in a similar collaborative process.

The final project is the Idaho Food Bank Facility Acquisition and Expansion Program. Currently, the Idaho Food Bank, located in Pocatello, Idaho, cannot process all of the donated food and often turns away delivery trucks and donations due to lack of space. An expansion of the food bank would allow more needy families in Eastern Idaho to utilize the food bank's services.

Mr. Chairman, any effort to remove these projects from the bill would not only result in zero savings to

taxpayers, it would stop dead these important efforts to enhance and protect our nation's food supply.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide a list of Congressionally-directed projects in my region and an explanation of my support for them.

- 1.) ***\$6,750,000 for APHIS Potato Cyst Nematode Detection and Eradication***
- 2.) ***\$854,000 for CSREES Increasing Shelf Life of Agricultural Commodities (WA, OR, ID)***
- 3.) ***\$96,994 for ARS National Plant Germplasm Program - Aberdeen, ID***
- 4.) ***\$628,843 for ARS Aquaculture – Barley Sustainable Feeds - Aberdeen, ID***
- 5.) ***\$1,093,728 for ARS Aquaculture Rainbow Trout Research - Aberdeen, ID***
- 6.) ***\$99,000 for ARS Aquaculture Sustainable Feeds – Aberdeen, ID***
- 7.) ***\$756,000 for CSREES Aquaculture (WA, ID)***
- 8.) ***\$728,000 for CSREES Barley for Rural Development (MT, ID)***
- 9.) ***\$900,000 for APHIS Greater Yellowstone Interagency Brucellosis Committee***
- 10.) ***\$198,000 for NRCS Idaho One-Plan***
- 11.) ***\$250,000 for APHIS Nez Perce Bio-Control Center***
- 12.) ***\$1,300,000 for APHIS Tri-State Predator Control in Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming***
- 13.) ***\$558,000 for CSREES Cool Season Legume Research (ID, WA, ND)***
- 14.) ***\$446,000 for CSREES Grass Seed Cropping for Sustainable Agriculture Research (WA, OR, ID)***
- 15.) ***439,000 for CSREES Small Fruit Research (OR, WA, ID)***
- 16.) ***\$702,592 for ARS Sugarbeet Research - Kimberly, ID***
- 17.) ***\$634,000 for CSREES STEEP III Water Quality Water Quality in the Northwest***

- 18.) \$6,371,000 for CSREES Wood Utilization (OR, MS, NC, MN, ME, MI, ID, TN, AK, WV)*
- 19.) \$1,482,000 for CSREES Potato Research*
- 20.) Idaho Food Bank Facility Acquisition and Expansion Program*