



Chairman Robert Aderholt

*Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations*

OPENING REMARKS (as prepared)

Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies FY 19 Full Committee Markup May 16, 2018

You have before you the FY 2019 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill and report which passed the Subcommittee by voice vote on May 9th. When the Subcommittee met, there was much praise for the bipartisan nature of the legislation.

I want to thank the Ranking Member for his cooperative spirit and all of his work, and that of his staff, to bring this bill before the Committee today. I have enjoyed working with Mr. Bishop on behalf of American agriculture, public health, and rural communities.

I also want to express my appreciation to all of our Subcommittee members for participating in our hearings, sharing their ideas and concerns, and helping to develop this bill. Of course, none of this would be possible without Chairman Frelinghuysen, Ranking Member Lowey, and their commitment to the annual appropriations process.

Agriculture, food and related industries contributed over \$1 trillion to U.S. GDP in 2016, according to USDA's Economic Research Service. But the overall contribution of the agriculture sector to GDP is even larger than this because other sectors such as fishing, food and beverage stores, and textiles, rely on agricultural inputs in order to contribute added value to the economy. I am pleased we can support U.S. agriculture with provisions in this bill.

The Agriculture Subcommittee's overall total for both discretionary and mandatory programs equals \$145.1 billion, which is \$922 million below the fiscal year 2018 enacted level. The bill includes \$23.273 billion in discretionary budget authority, which is a \$14 million increase from fiscal year 2018. The mandatory funds in this bill support USDA's farm production, conservation, crop insurance, and nutrition programs.

There are a few topics I would like to highlight today. First, this Bill provides over \$3 billion for Rural Development discretionary programs as well as \$37.8 billion in loan levels for rural housing, rural business, and rural utility programs. I, like some of you on the Committee, come from a rural district. This bill includes funding for critical rural development programs, including the water and wastewater loan and grant programs, broadband deployment programs, housing programs, and programs operated

by the Rural Business Cooperative Service. These investments reflect our commitment to investing in the infrastructure of rural America.

Second, this bill provides \$3.1 billion to continue addressing critical research issues affecting agriculture, which will not only ensure our nation has a stable and abundant food supply but also maintains our country's competitiveness in the global marketplace. We do not support the proposed closure of 20 research facilities included in the budget request and we continue investments in ARS buildings and facilities.

Third, the bill provides targeted increases for animal and plant pests and diseases. In particular, we have increased funding to help address the devastating effects of citrus greening as well as maintained funding to address disease threats to the poultry industry.

To support America's farmers and ranchers, who are vital to our Nation's economy and our health and well-being, the bill provides important funding for farm loans and conservation programs. The \$1.7 billion for the Farm Production and Conservation mission area ensures that local county Farm Service Agency offices will be fully staffed and farm loan programs meet current estimates of demand, especially at a time when producers navigate the challenging farm economy and foreign trade markets.

The Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs mission area receives \$1.9 billion in funding to promote U.S. agricultural exports, remove barriers to trade, and provide U.S. commodities to those in need overseas through the Food for Peace, Food for Progress, and McGovern-Dole International Food for Education programs.

Additionally, this bill provides funding for all of USDA's nutrition programs at levels that ensure all eligible participants will receive the assistance they need.

The bill also provides \$255 million for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, a justifiable increase for an agency with new regulatory responsibilities in the financial technology and virtual currency markets such as Bitcoin.

For the Food and Drug Administration, the bill provides a \$3.1 billion direct appropriation to assist the FDA in protecting and promoting public health. A highlight of the bill is inclusion of a \$308 million increase for Medical Product Safety. This marks one of the largest, if not the largest, investment in the advancement of medical innovation, competition, and regulatory science as it relates to FDA. Within this increase, the Bill provides support for manufacturing of safe and effective therapeutics, including continuous manufacturing of drugs and biological products; generic drug manufacturing; rare diseases; transformation of digital health; and FDA's Oncology Center of Excellence. The bill continues to support the food safety activities associated with the Food Safety Modernization Act. This Subcommittee has provided more than \$300 million for FSMA activities since 2011. This bill also provides \$70 million in new funds from the 21st Century Cures legislation.

We have worked very hard to incorporate the priorities of those on both sides of the aisle. Thank you for your attention and I ask for your full support of this bipartisan legislation. I look forward to reporting this bill to the House today.

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