



Congresswoman
Rosa L. DeLauro

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday 11 June 2008

CONTACT: Adriana Surfas

(202) 225-3661

Statement of Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro

*Subcommittee Markup: Fiscal Year 2010 Agriculture,
Rural Development, FDA Appropriations Bill*

Washington, D.C. – Congresswoman Rosa L. DeLauro (Conn.-3), chairwoman of the House Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee, marked up the subcommittee’s fiscal year 2010 bill. The Chairman’s Mark includes \$22.9 billion in total discretionary spending – a \$2.3 billion increase from fiscal year 2009 –which reflects proposed cuts totaling more than \$650 million.

- The Department of Agriculture is funded at \$20.4 billion – \$2 billion above fiscal year 2009.
- The Food and Drug Administration is funded at \$2.35 billion – \$298.6 million above fiscal year 2009.
- The Commodities Future Trading Commission is funded at \$160.6 million - \$14.6 million above fiscal year 2009.

Below is DeLauro’s opening statement (as prepared for delivery).

Thank you, I am delighted to present the subcommittee’s recommendations for the 2010 Agriculture FDA Appropriations Committee Markup. Thank you, to Ranking Member Congressman Jack Kingston – I appreciate your collaboration and input over the last few months as this subcommittee has convened hearings on the administration’s policy priorities and budget. I want to thank both the minority and majority staff as well for all of your tireless work and Ranking Member Lewis for his leadership during this process.

In particular, I want to thank Chairman Obey for the allocation provided to this subcommittee and for his steady hand and clear vision at the helm of this very important process.

Today, we stand at a turning point. As I have said before, the issues we confront in this subcommittee speak to the core responsibilities of the Federal government and our own obligation to the citizens of this country. We are talking about people's lives – struck hard by an economy in chaos, unemployment rising, services shrinking and prices still going up.

After years of underinvestment in the federal government's capabilities, I believe the Administration's budget demonstrates that it is interested in protecting public health, supporting American agriculture, strengthening rural communities and conserving the environment. And with this Mark the Committee proposes new investments in those priorities and the agencies that can help us meet them.

As it has in recent years the bill focuses on several key areas such as: protecting public health; bolstering food nutrition programs; investing in rural communities; agricultural research; strengthening animal health and marketing programs; and conserving our natural resources.

As you know the Fiscal Year 2010 Mark provides \$22.9 billion in discretionary budget authority. That is a \$2.3 billion increase over 2009 levels, the vast majority of which went toward 3 program areas: WIC, FDA, and International Food Aid.

Additionally, in order to invest in this bill's important programs and use the resources available to it wisely, the Committee has proposed a number of cuts totaling more than \$650 million.

Protecting Public Health

The American people must be able to depend on the system and the people in charge of protecting them. The Food and Drug Administration's first responsibility is to the American people – to ensure the safety of the food they eat, the drugs they take, and the medical devices they rely on.

The bill provides a substantial increase for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to support a total discretionary funding level of \$2.338 billion in discretionary funding in fiscal year 2010, an increase of almost \$299 million above fiscal year 2009.

When current law user fees are included, the bill provides nearly \$3 billion to FDA, an increase over 2009 of \$373 million. This substantial investment in FDA's priority needs will help to reform and significantly improve how the agency ensures food and medical product safety.

Key pieces of that increase are:

- \$134 million for the foods center and field activities;
- \$44 million for the drugs center and field activities; and
- \$35 million for the medical devices center and field activities.

With these increases, FDA will hire additional inspectors and conduct more domestic and foreign food and medical products inspections.

In addition, at the USDA the bill fully funds the Administration's request for the Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS), providing over \$1 billion for FSIS for the first time in history.

Conservation

With ongoing demands for cleaner water, reduced soil erosion, and more wildlife habitat, Congress believes that those resources are critical. The Committee makes a significant investment in USDA's natural resource conservation programs. The bill appropriates a total of \$980.3 million, or \$72.9 million more than the Administration's request and \$11.9 million higher than 2009.

The bill rejects the Administration's cuts to the Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) farm bill conservation programs, including:

- the Wetlands Reserve Program where the Administration had proposed to reduce the number of acres that NRCS could enroll and cut the program funding by \$184 million;
- the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program where the Administration had proposed cutting the program by \$30 million; and
- the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, where the Administration had proposed cutting \$43 million from the program.
- The bill restores funding to all of these programs and, in total, provides hundreds of millions of dollars more in funding for farm bill conservation programs than the Administration's budget.

In addition to the farm bill programs, the bill restores funding for other valuable programs, including the Resource Conservation and Development Program and the Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations Program.

With the substantial funding resources provided in the Committee's bill, NRCS will be able to make valuable investments in assistance to help farmers and ranchers protect the environment and meet their resource management needs.

Improving Nutrition

WIC

Food costs and participation continue to increase at dramatic rates for fiscal years 2009 and 2010. The bill provides funding to support participation in the WIC program at 10.1 million people, above the Administration's participation level of 9.8 million. It sets aside \$125 million for the upcoming WIC reauthorization, including a number of program improvements such as: increasing fruit and vegetable vouchers, supporting management information systems, implementing the electronic benefit transfer system, and expanding breast feeding peer counseling program.

The bill addresses growing critical needs by providing sufficient funding to help up to an additional 700,000 women, infants, and children providing \$7.541 billion for WIC to serve our nation's vulnerable populations. This record funding level is over \$681 million above (or 10 percent) FY 2009.

The bill does not provide the additional \$225 million contingency fund that was requested since there is expected to be \$487 million available in fiscal year 2010.

CSFP – Commodity Supplemental Food Program

The bill includes record funding of \$180 million for supplemental food for CSFP, an increase of almost \$20 million above fiscal year 2009 and over \$17 million above the Administration's request. In order to ensure that more families receive the support they need during this period of economic stress, the bill also provides

funding to expand this critical assistance in 32 states currently in the program and 6 new states with USDA-approved feeding plans: Arkansas, Oklahoma, Delaware, Utah, New Jersey, Georgia.

International Food Aid

As the financial crisis grows and goes global, commodity prices are dropping and export markets are disappearing – leaving poor countries less equipped than ever to fight poverty and end hunger. In developing countries alone, 907 million people are hungry today.

The bill also expands America's historical commitment to international food aid by providing an increase of over \$464 million (27 percent) to the U.S. government's primary international food aid program, the P.L. 480 Title II Grants Program.

With this increase, the program will have a base funding level of almost \$1.7 billion in fiscal year 2010 to provide critical assistance to meet emergency and nonemergency feeding needs in other countries.

According to the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Title II program provided assistance to approximately 56 million people in 49 countries in fiscal year 2008.

In addition, the bill also provides an additional \$99.5 million to the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program, doubling the amount of funding appropriated in fiscal year 2009 to a total of \$199.5 million. This valuable program supports education, child development, and food security for some of the world's poorest children.

According to USDA, in 2009 alone the program supported education and feeding programs in 15 countries that benefitted over 3.7 million children. To date, the McGovern-Dole program has provided meals to more than 22 million children in 41 countries and boosted school attendance by an estimated 14 percent.

Rural Development

This Committee seeks to not only sustain our rural communities, but also to create new opportunities for growth and development in the nation's small town economies. This bill continues to build on the strong base that we started with in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. In that Act we provided \$11.5 billion for housing, over \$1 billion for community facilities, \$3 billion for business programs, almost \$4 billion for water programs and \$2.5 billion for broadband loans and grants.

The Committee makes substantial investments in rural communities. The bill provides funding for programs that help house families, invest in rural businesses, and support new community facility infrastructure. The bill also increases funding for water and waste water infrastructure grants by \$73 million. This bill provides \$8.7 billion for housing, \$541 million for community facilities, \$1.2 billion for business programs, and \$9.3 billion for the rural utilities programs.

Supporting American Agriculture

Research

If we want to maintain our role as a global leader we must maintain our lead in crop development, competitiveness, international trade, nutrition research, food safety and even homeland security. The bill

makes significant investments in agricultural research by providing total funding levels of nearly \$1.2 billion for the Agricultural Research Service (ARS). And nearly \$1.25 billion for the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES). Funding for CSREES is nearly \$82 million over the

Administration's budget request, including increases in key programs such as Hatch Act, Evans-Allen, the new competitive Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, Smith Lever, the 1890 programs, and the Veterinary Medical Services Act.

Animal and Plant Health

The bill includes nearly \$886 million to fund programs that protect American agriculture against animal and plant diseases, such as preventing or controlling the spread of emerald ash borer and the Asian long-horned beetle among others.

The bill eliminates funding for the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). After receiving \$142 million in funding since fiscal year 2004, APHIS has yet to put into operation an effective system that would provide needed animal health and livestock market benefits. USDA is currently conducting a public listening tour around the country for several months to hear from stakeholders. Until USDA finishes its listening sessions and provides details as to how it will implement an effective ID system, continued investments into the current NAIS are unwarranted.

Farm Service Agency

The bill fully funds the budget request for the Farm Service Agency (FSA) salaries and expenses and IT. For the first time, USDA is requesting funding in its budget to continue critical investments in modernizing its information technology networks and databases to provide more effective and secure service for the agency's customers. In total, the bill provides a \$67.3 million increase for these IT modernization efforts.

I also want to say that we are working on language for the report for full committee to ensure that we can "benchmark" USDA's use of these and other IT funds in the bill. We have waited for a long time to see the problems addressed and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle want accountability.

Finally I want to mention that with the continuing volatility in the futures markets, the Committee recommendation agrees with the need for additional resources to better secure the markets from improper speculation.

The bill provides the Administration's request for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC), a total of \$160.6 million (or \$14.6 million above 2009).

In closing, I look forward to working with all of you today, as we move toward full committee, to craft responsible legislation that ensures a quick recovery and long term growth, investing in our future and reflecting our priorities as a nation. Thank you.

###

DeLauro.House.Gov