

Legislative Committee Report

11/11/18

As of right now there is not a lot to report on as we are obviously still waiting on a new Farm Bill, which won't happen until after the election. There are a few other things to comment on, they are as follows:

- President Trump has asked that all Agency heads impose an overall 5% budget cut, USDA has responded saying they would meet those cuts. Thus far no details have been released from Secretary Purdue's office indicating which sub agencies would be affected. However, multiple news outlets indicate that FSA would not be greatly affected.
- The President has also written a letter to Congress asking for a federal employee pay freeze, however, this will likely not happen. It is likely that employees will see a 1.9% pay increase.

Right now, the biggest issue we have is that a new Farm Bill, or extension, has not been passed. The biggest differences that the House and the Senate have are the SNAP benefits, which are hopefully resolved sooner rather than later. As of today, there is no date set to reconvene the conference committee, but below you will see the changes that are in the current legislation regarding FSA programs:

- require farmers to make a new election to obtain either Price Loss Coverage or Agricultural Risk Coverage for the 2019-2023 crop years, which may be changed for the 2021-2023 crop years;
- replace the Dairy Margin Protection Program with Dairy Risk Coverage and modify coverage levels and premiums;
- make Indian tribes and tribal organizations eligible for supplemental agricultural disaster assistance programs;
- reduce the adjusted gross income limitation for receiving benefits under commodity and conservation programs;
- modify funding levels and requirements for several conservation programs,
- increase the loan limits for farm ownership and operating loans;
- modify the experience requirement for farm ownership loans;