

## SDASCOE 2015 Spring Board Legislative Committee Report

To keep informed of legislative items affecting us as employees at the national level, we would encourage everyone to log onto the NASCOE website for great up to date information. FSA faired very well in the recent appropriations bill. (Reference the attached copy of the latest NASCOE Legislative report which summarizes the positive news.)

Although the political winds may be what drives the budget process, this positive news is also reflective of the hard work of NASCOE, NAFEC, and yes the NASCOE PAC. Political Action Committees (PACs) help drive the legislative process and NASCOE has developed a member driven PAC with over 581 of us contributing an average of \$3 per pay period. Our NASCOE PAC is very transparent and full information can be found on the legislative section of the website. (See attached.)

The President's new FY2016 budget calls for a 1.3% COLA. While this is a slight improvement, the Federal Salary Council states Federal Employees are under paid relative to the public sector by an average of 35.2 percent. Some members of the House & Senate have proposed a 3.8% COLA for 2016, but this will not likely have enough support to pass.

Closer to home, Senator Mike Rounds has now taken office to join Senator Thune and Congresswoman Noem in representing South Dakota. On behalf of SDASCOE, your Legislative Committee has sent an information welcome letter to our newest Senator briefly explaining the role of NASCOE and NAFEC and the service we provide to agriculture. The Senator's new agriculture staffer is Peter Eckrich who can be reached via email at [peter\\_eckrich@rounds.senate.gov](mailto:peter_eckrich@rounds.senate.gov).

As SDASCOE members it can be helpful to build working relationships with all of the congressional staffers in your area. (Of course email contacts should be from home computers only.)

Remember to also promote membership in your National Association of Farmer Elected County Committees. This loyal group of volunteers proudly helps NASCOE carry the torch and helps gives us strength and influence in Congress. Jim sent out good information to share with our County Committee members encouraging them to join and as employees we also need to become associate members for the low cost of \$20/yr or \$1/ pay period.

Respectfully submitted,  
EJ Goetz & Bill Chase - Legislative Co-Chairs