



**71st Annual Meeting
of the Midwestern Legislative Conference
of
The Council of State Governments**

July 17 – 20, 2016

Resolution in Support of Strengthening the Crop Insurance Program

- WHEREAS,** the farm bill supports our nation's farmers, ranchers, forest owners, food security, natural resources and wildlife habitats, rural communities and the 16 million Americans whose jobs directly depend on the agriculture industry; and
- WHEREAS,** a strong safety net and insurance program are essential to many farmers to secure bank financing for production expenses, to make operating decisions and to deal with increasingly volatile weather conditions; and
- WHEREAS,** U.S. agricultural producers face very different conditions and factors of production, and variances in climate, transportation, energy costs and land values compound those regional differences; and
- WHEREAS,** the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) commodity outlays as a share of the federal budget are less than one half of one percent of all federal spending; and
- WHEREAS,** there have been serious issues with payments for Midwestern farmers that signed up for the 2014 farm bill's Agriculture Risk Coverage-County (ARC-County) program in counties where there wasn't enough voluntary yield data reported to the National Agricultural Statistics Service (an estimated \$100 million or more in government payments may have been lost); and
- WHEREAS,** in addition to issues with ARC-County, the 2014 farm bill, like previous legislation, continues to issue very expensive and limited insurance options and risk management tools for the growers of alternative and specialty crops; and
- WHEREAS,** specialty crops can provide a viable entry into farming, and incorporating them into commodity rotations can reduce disease and insect problems, fix atmospheric nitrogen in the soil and diversify farming operations; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** that the Midwestern Legislative Conference urges the USDA to review options to address inequities in the ARC-County program and to improve access to crop insurance for specialty crop farmers; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that Congress address inequities in the ARC-County program and provide equitable risk management tools for specialty crop producers in the 2018 farm bill; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that this resolution be submitted to appropriate state, federal and provincial officials.

Adopted this 20th day of July, 2016 at the 71st MLC Annual Meeting in Milwaukee, Wisconsin