



**72nd Annual Meeting
of the Midwestern Legislative Conference
of
The Council of State Governments**

July 9 – 12, 2017

Resolution on Reauthorization of the Farm Bill

- 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,** Farm Bills represent a delicate balance between America's farm, nutrition and conservation leaders and require strong bipartisan support, and it is vital to bring together a broad coalition of lawmakers to pass a Farm Bill; and
- WHEREAS,** the total cost of the Farm Bill is less than 1 percent of the total federal budget; and
- WHEREAS,** federal investment in agricultural research has been shown to provide returns on investment of 20-60 percent; and
- WHEREAS,** the Farm Bill is the most important legislation for conserving private lands in America, as it provides incentives that result in cleaner water, improved soil conservation, enhanced wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation opportunities, increased flood control, economic benefits for local communities and rural economies; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** that the Midwestern Legislative Conference (MLC) urges that the 2018 Farm Bill reauthorization include a size and crop neutral insurance program with one-time sign up that serves as a critical component of an effective farm safety net and is viable for the full range and diversity of American agriculture; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that the Farm Bill include a strong conservation program for both commodity and livestock producers, with states and counties provided flexibility in conservation and water quality programs to best meet the needs at the local level; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that the MLC urges that the 2018 Farm Bill provide significant support for agricultural research; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that the MLC urges that the Farm Bill support the development of agricultural bioenergy and bio-based sources that provide environmental benefits and promote jobs and economic development, particularly in rural America; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that the MLC urges that the Farm Bill reauthorization include a domestic hunger and nutrition safety net, in recognition that the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition assistance for victims of hurricanes, floods and other disasters; that more than \$100 million in SNAP benefits are redeemed at military commissaries annually; that rural residents have the highest percentage of households receiving SNAP benefits; and that farmers receive approximately 20 percent of the money spent on SNAP benefits; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that the MLC urges that the Farm Bill ensure rural America receives equitable treatment in federal infrastructure investments and that it encourage and promote rural development, capitalizing on new value-added market opportunities; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that this resolution be submitted to appropriate state, federal and provincial officials.

Adopted this 12th day of July, 2017 at the 72nd MLC Annual Meeting in Des Moines, Iowa