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(p.113) 1/23/96 Do Pass*

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SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 16

BY BANKS

A Senate Resolution to urge and petition the federal government to reexamine the requirements of the conservation reserve program administered by the United States Department of Agriculture in order to ensure that suitable land under the program is eligible for suitable uses relating to the grazing by livestock.

WHEREAS, agricultural production represents the cornerstone of this nation's economy, by providing abundant supplies of food and fiber to this nation's population, and providing billions of dollars in annual exports to world markets; and

WHEREAS, the state of Iowa is one of the largest agricultural producing states in the nation and, as part of the upper midwest region, includes the most fertile soils in the world, and represents one of the world's leading areas in the production of grain and livestock; and

WHEREAS, there is a great number of soil classifications, including orders, suborders, great groups, and subgroups which contain wide differences in characteristics, including the order mollisols and its subclassifications developed under prairie vegetation, found in Iowa and other midwestern states; and

WHEREAS, the production of livestock by this nation's farmers and ranchers represents a vital part of agricultural production in this state and in the nation, and provides a number of value-added food and

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1 other products essential to the welfare and prosperity
2 of the country; and

3 WHEREAS, the conservation reserve program provided
4 under Title XII of the federal Food Security Act of
5 1985, Pub. L. No. 99-198, authorizes the United States
6 Secretary of Agriculture to enter into contracts and
7 make payments to eligible owners of eligible crop land
8 to set aside the land in order to conserve and improve
9 the soil and water resources of farms and ranches by
10 converting crop land to land with permanent vegetation
11 cover; and

12 WHEREAS, farmers and ranchers in this nation,
13 including Iowa, have conscientiously entered into
14 contracts with the United States Secretary of
15 Agriculture to set aside erodible land under the
16 program; and

17 WHEREAS, the growing need in Iowa, as in many other
18 states, to encourage persons to enter into family farm
19 agriculture and especially raising livestock combined
20 with the expansion of cattle herds in this state which
21 utilize pasture land, increasingly places pressure
22 upon livestock producers who require rich pasture
23 land, and land for the disposal of manure produced by
24 livestock operations; and

25 WHEREAS, the degree to which land is subject to
26 soil erosion depends upon the characteristics of the
27 land's soil classification as well as the use of the
28 land including well managed livestock production which
29 need not threaten soil or water resources; and

30 WHEREAS, current restrictions prohibiting the

1 grazing of livestock on land subject to contract under
2 the conservation reserve program or the use of such
3 land for manure disposal limits the economic
4 opportunity of livestock producers, including
5 beginning producers, decreases the availability of
6 fertile land used for benign purposes such as
7 livestock production, and distorts market forces which
8 discourages the production of livestock in regions
9 with rich soils best suited to grazing; NOW THEREFORE,

10 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, That the Congress of
11 the United States; the President of the United States;
12 and the Secretary of Agriculture, United States
13 Department of Agriculture, reexamine the requirements
14 of the conservation reserve program administered by
15 the United States Department of Agriculture in order
16 to ensure that suitable land under the program is
17 eligible for grazing by livestock; and

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Secretary of
19 Agriculture, United States Department of Agriculture,
20 establish a forum in which interested persons,
21 including state legislative members serving on
22 committees on agriculture, may discuss issues
23 regarding the conservation reserve program and the
24 need to allow suitable uses under the program with
25 federal officials; and

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this
27 resolution be sent by the Secretary of the Senate to
28 the President of the Senate of the United States; the
29 Speaker of the House of Representatives of the United
30 States; the Chairman of the United States Senate

1 Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry; the
2 Chairman of the United States House of Representatives
3 Committee on Agriculture; members of Iowa's
4 congressional delegation; the President of the United
5 States; and the Secretary of Agriculture, United
6 States Department of Agriculture.

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