

FILED APR 12 1999

1 SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 20
2 BY GRONSTAL, BLACK, BOLKCOM, CONNOLLY, DEARDEN,
3 DELUHERY, DVORSKY, FINK, FLYNN, FRAISE, HANSEN,
4 HARPER, HORN, JUDGE, KIBBIE, SHEARER, SOUKUP,
5 SZYMONIAK, and HAMMOND
6 A Concurrent Resolution requesting that the President
7 of the United States, the United States Secretary of
8 Agriculture, and the United States Congress
9 immediately take all actions necessary to reevaluate
10 and amend the 1996 "Freedom to Farm Bill" in order to
11 preserve family farms.
12 WHEREAS, family farm agriculture traditionally has
13 been the foundation of this nation's economic
14 prosperity, providing the basis for a system of
15 production unmatched in the world for its abundant and
16 efficient production of food, feed grains, and animal
17 products, and contributing billions of dollars in
18 revenue each year to the nation's economy from export
19 sales; and
20 WHEREAS, in 1996 Congress enacted the Federal
21 Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act, commonly
22 referred to as the "Freedom to Farm Bill", contained
23 in Pub. L. No. 104-127 and Pub. L. No. 104-180; and
24 WHEREAS, since the passage of the Freedom to Farm
25 Bill, agriculture has faced a crisis caused by
26 disastrously low prices; and
27 WHEREAS, since the passage of the Freedom to Farm
28 Bill, farm families and rural communities have
29 suffered from a deepening economic crisis resembling
30 the devastating economic conditions experienced in the

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1 1980s; and

2 WHEREAS, according to statistics published by the
3 United States Department of Agriculture, net income
4 earned by farmers from the production of major field
5 crops in 1998 declined 17 percent below the average
6 income earned from the production of major field crops
7 for the five previous years; and

8 WHEREAS, according to projections by the United
9 States Department of Agriculture, net income earned by
10 farmers from the production of major field crops in
11 1999 will decline 27 percent below the average income
12 from the production of major field crops for the
13 previous five years; and

14 WHEREAS, in December 1998, prices paid for swine on
15 a live carcass basis plummeted to below depression
16 area levels; and

17 WHEREAS, when adjusted to 1933 prices, producers
18 received 67 cents per hundredweight for swine sold on
19 a live carcass basis in December; and

20 WHEREAS, the slaughter cattle market has been
21 depressed for several years and milk producers
22 witnessed the largest one-month price decline in
23 history; and

24 WHEREAS, since the passage of the Freedom to Farm
25 Bill, there is an increasing use of contracting,
26 integration of production and processing, and mergers
27 and consolidation of agribusinesses which exacerbates
28 the desperate financial condition faced by family
29 farmers, by limiting opportunities for family farmers
30 to market agricultural commodities; and

1 WHEREAS, since the passage of the Freedom to Farm
2 Bill, the decline in farm exports is significantly
3 below the levels predicted when the Freedom to Farm
4 Bill was enacted; and

5 WHEREAS, since the passage of the Freedom to Farm
6 Bill, losses of billions of dollars will force
7 thousands of family farmers out of business and may
8 threaten the cherished position of the small
9 independent producer in the agricultural economy; and

10 WHEREAS, for families who have farmed land for
11 generations, "freedom to farm" has come to mean the
12 freedom to leave their farms or face economic ruin;
13 NOW THEREFORE,

14 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, THE HOUSE OF
15 REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That the President of the
16 United States, the United States Secretary of
17 Agriculture, and the United State Congress immediately
18 take all actions necessary to reevaluate and amend the
19 Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act in
20 order to address critical issues facing agriculture
21 and to preserve family farms; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this
23 Resolution be sent by the Secretary of the Senate to
24 the President of the United States; the United States
25 Secretary of Agriculture; the President of the Senate
26 of the United States; the United States Attorney
27 General; the Speaker of the House of Representatives
28 of the United States; the Chairperson of the United
29 States Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and
30 Forestry; the Chairperson of the United States House

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1 of Representatives Committee on Agriculture; and
2 members of Iowa's congressional delegation.

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