

May-June, 2010

# The Council Caller

Legislative Issue

The Council on Food, Agricultural, and Resource Economics (C-FARE) is a non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening the application of economics to food, agricultural, and resource issues at the national level. *The Council Caller, Legislative Issue* is an e-newsletter provided by C-FARE with informational updates for agricultural and applied economists.

**To view the legislation visit <http://thomas.loc.gov/>, select the option that will allow you to search by Bill Number.**

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## Consumer Concerns, Food, Health and Safety

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### Child Nutrition

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) was established under the National School Lunch Act in 1946. Public or non-profit private schools or public or non-profit private child care institutions who participate in the program receive cash subsidies and donated commodities from the USDA. Participants must in turn serve lunches that meet the recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and they must offer free or reduced-price lunches to eligible students.

The Child Nutrition Act of 1966 expanded upon the National School Lunch Program, and several new programs have been added over the years, including the Summer Food Service Program, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, State Administrative Expenses, the Special Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children.

The National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program are permanently authorized, but the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 expires on September 30, 2010. Bills have been introduced in both the House and the Senate in support of reauthorization and strengthening of child nutrition programs.<sup>1</sup>

#### Select Bills Addressing Child Nutrition Programs

- Rep. George Miller (CA-7) and 30 cosponsors introduced the Improving Nutrition for America's Children Act on June 10, 2010. H.R. 5504 was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.
- Sen. Blanche Lincoln (AR) introduced the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 on May 5, 2010. S. 3307 has been placed on the Senate legislative calendar No. 363.
- Rep. Lynn Woolsey (CA-6) and 170 cosponsors introduced the Child Nutrition Promotion and School Lunch Protection Act of 2009 on March 5, 2009. H.R. 1324 has been referred to the Committee on Education and Labor.
- Sen. Tom Harkin (IA) and 32 cosponsors introduced the Child Nutrition Promotion and School Lunch Protection Act of 2009 on April 30, 2009. S. 934 has been referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

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<sup>1</sup> Source - USDA Food and Nutrition Service - [http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/lunch/aboutlunch/programhistory\\_6.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/lunch/aboutlunch/programhistory_6.htm)

**Other Related Bills:**

- Sen. Amy Klobuchar (MN) introduced the Healthy Living Starts Early Act of 2010 (S. 3124).
- Rep. Joe Courtney (CT-2) introduced H.R. 4963, the Healthy Milk and Dairy Choices in Schools Act of 2010.
- Rep. Dina Titus (NV-3) and 22 cosponsors introduced the Weekends Without Hunger Act (H.R. 5012).
- Sen. Arlen Specter (PA) introduced the Weekends Without Hunger Act (S. 3292).
- Rep. Jared Polis (CO-2) and 12 cosponsors introduced H.R. 5090, the NEW Schools Act.
- Rep. Judy Chu (CA-32) and 3 cosponsors introduced H.R. 5202, the National School Lunch Protection Act of 2010.
- Sen. Richard Durbin (IL) introduced S. 3342, the Healthy Schools Partnership Act of 2010.
- Sen. Tom Udall (NM) introduced S. 3448, the Ensuring All Students Year-round (EASY) Access to Meals and Snacks Act.
- Sen. Tom Udall (NM) introduced S. 3446, the Child Nutrition Enhancement Act of 2010.
- Rep. Betty McCollum (MN-4) and 24 cosponsors introduced H.R. 5456, the National Farm-to-School Act of 2010.
- Rep. Jared Polis (CO-2) introduced H.R. 5480, the Ending Childhood Hunger Challenge Act of 2010.

## Food Safety

The 111<sup>th</sup> Congress is considering legislation to revise the U.S. food safety system, focusing primarily on those laws and programs administered by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The House has passed a comprehensive bill, H.R. 2749, and the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions has reported its comprehensive proposal, S. 510. The ultimate goal of both bills is to reduce the burden of foodborne illness, which is a considerable and persistent public health problem in the United States.<sup>2</sup>

**Other Select Bills Addressing Food Safety:**

- Sen. Jon Tester (MT) introduced the Meat Safety and Accountability Act of 2010 on March 21, 2010. S. 3163, a bill to amend the Federal Meat Inspection Act to require tracing of meat and meat food products that are adulterated or contaminated by enteric foodborne pathogens to the source of the adulteration or contamination, was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.
- Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (NY) introduced S. 3435 on May 27, 2010., a bill to amend the Federal Meat Inspection Act to revise the definition of the term "adulterated" to include contamination with E. Coli. The bill has been referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

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## Agriculture's Global Competitiveness and Profitability

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- Rep. Jeff Flake (AZ-6) introduced H.R. 5439 to require that United States contributions to the fund established by the United States and Brazil to provide technical assistance and capacity building be offset by reductions in direct payments for cotton producers under the Farm Bill.

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<sup>2</sup> Source "Food Safety: Foodborne Illness and Selected Recalls of FDA-Regulated Foods" – A CRS Report Authored by Lister and Becker - <http://nationalaglawcenter.org/assets/crs/R40916.pdf>.

- Rep. Collin Peterson (MN-7) and 21 cosponsors introduced the Agricultural Credit Act of 2009 on July 31, 2009. H.R. 3509, a bill to reauthorize State agricultural mediation programs under title V of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1987, has been passed in the House and has been referred to the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.
- Rep. Marcy Kaptur (OH-9) and 42 cosponsors introduced the Greening Food Deserts Act on March 25, 2010. H.R. 4971, a bill to increase the emphasis on urban agricultural issues in the Department of Agriculture, was referred to the Agriculture Committee.

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## **Economic Opportunities in Rural Areas**

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- Rep. Mike Thompson (CA-1) and 23 cosponsors introduced the Family Farm Estate Tax Relief Act of 2010 on May 28, 2010. H.R. 5475 was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

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## **Environmental and Natural Resource Issues**

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- Sen. Benjamin Cardin (MD) introduced the Water Resources Research Amendments Act of 2010 on May 13, 2010. S. 3363 was placed on Senate Legislative Calendar No. 432 under General Orders.
- Sen. Harry Reid (NV) introduced the Clean Energy Infrastructure for Rural Communities Act of 2010 on May 27, 2010. S. 3439 was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.
- Rep. Rob Bishop (UT-1) introduced H.R. 5342 to prohibit the use of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 to document, predict, or mitigate the climate effects of specific Federal actions. The bill was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources.

### **EDITORIAL COMMENTS**

If you have any feedback for C-FARE or would like to inform us of a research area you have been working on, please contact Tamara Wagester, Executive Director at 202-408-8522 or by e-mail [tamarawagester@cfare.org](mailto:tamarawagester@cfare.org). If you are not currently getting our monthly e-newsletter directly from C-FARE, and would like to subscribe to "The Council Caller", please send an E-mail directly to [info@cfare.org](mailto:info@cfare.org).

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C-FARE is a non-profit, non-partisan association actively working to represent agricultural and applied economists in matters of science policy, priority setting, and budget determination at the federal level, and to collaborate with other scientific organizations and government agencies in these activities.