

Senate Talking Points: Farm Bill

FOR DEMOCRAT/INDEPENDENT SENATORS THAT ARE NOT SUPPORTING THE AMERICAN FARMERS FEED THE WORLD ACT

This document is for individuals and groups that feel comfortable with more nuanced and/or complex talking points and ask(s). Please feel free to adjust the talking points and ask(s) to match your member, as appropriate.

Framing

Begin with gratitude

- Thank you for taking time to talk about global hunger and poverty, issues that are very important to me/us. I/We look forward to discussing the Food for Peace program in the Farm Bill.

Express gratitude for something your member has done recently related to hunger or poverty.

Introduction: Who you are and why you're there

- As people of faith seeking justice and care for all in our world, I/we believe there is a moral obligation to provide assistance for our human family and address the root causes of hunger and poverty. Food insecurity is a pressing issue and impacts our state as well as around the world.

Share about yourself/the group, your work in the state and your connection to CRS. Share your personal story of why you support CRS' international humanitarian and development work, including your concern about our human family and why global issues like hunger and poverty matter to you.

Moving to the issues: Sample talking points for your conversation

- **If you've previously met with your member about the Farm Bill and Food for Peace:** As you may recall from when we last met, as supporters of Catholic Relief Services, we support reauthorizing international food assistance programs in the Farm Bill, including Food for Peace, which provides people with the resources they need during emergency and non-emergency situations to feed their families and support long-term solutions to poverty by strengthening resilience and self-sufficiency.
- **If you haven't met with your member on the Farm Bill and Food for Peace:** Are you familiar with the international food assistance programs in the Farm Bill, including Food for Peace? Food for Peace programs provide people with the resources they need during emergency and non-emergency situations to feed their families and support long-term solutions to poverty by strengthening resilience and self-sufficiency.
- We are grateful for the support for international food assistance programs demonstrated in Chairperson Stabenow's Farm Bill proposal released in May. It continues the international food assistance programs that help save lives in emergencies, improve the livelihoods of small farmers so

they can feed their families, support school children in their studies and leverage the expertise of American volunteers to support food security and nutrition outcomes for our sisters and brothers worldwide. The proposal continues to provide food from the U.S. to address global hunger, while making overall positive changes to these international food assistance programs. Noteworthy are improvements for Resilience Food Security Activities in Food for Peace Title II and the McGovern Dole Food for Education programs, which will better support local farmers within the community or region.

- However, I/we am/are deeply concerned about the proposed inclusion of provisions from the American Farmers Feed the World Act (S. 2862) in Ranking Member Boozman’s Farm Bill proposal. Specifically, the new requirement that comes from a bill I/we oppose called the American Farmers Feed the World Act that would mean at least 50% of the Food for Peace account must be earmarked for purchasing U.S. food aid or covering its ocean freight.
 - This would compromise critical Food for Peace Resilience Food Security Activities—long-term development programs—and undercut the ability to tailor food assistance to the diverse needs of communities around the world. USAID has estimated that 2.3 million people currently receiving assistance under Food for Peace Resilience Food Security Activities could lose access to critical aid that builds capacity and self-sufficiency.
- As a U.S. taxpayer, I/we want to make sure foreign assistance is effective and reaching as many people as possible. Programs are most effective when organizations like CRS can provide the right response based on community needs—including U.S. commodities, locally supplied seeds for farmers and improved market access, among other approaches.
- I/We believe we need to do more than just give people food. There are increasing needs around the world and less resources to respond. Investing in long-term development programs such as Food for Peace decreases the need for future humanitarian assistance by helping people transition from emergency response to providing for themselves and their families.
- The new 50% commodity requirement would displace other funds needed to maintain Food for Peace non-emergency programs. I/We oppose the American Farmers Feed the World Act and this provision. While I/we do support the inclusion of U.S. farmers and shippers in the Food for Peace program, I/we want to make sure that it doesn’t come at the expense of helping people worldwide recover from a disaster or build resiliency through the Food for Peace program.

Share a story about the importance and impact of Food for Peace programs that help people feed their families, build sustainable livelihoods and strengthen their resilience against future economic challenges. Consider using one of these CRS program stories:

- [What the Farm Bill Makes Possible: Raúl’s Story](#)
- [Improving Child health and Survival in Guatemala](#)
- [Livestock Fairs Build Resilience in South Sudan](#)
- [How Climate Change is Pushing Herders in Northern Kenya to the Brink](#)

The Ask

Offices of Agriculture Committee Members: Please work with Chairwoman Stabenow, Ranking Member Boozman, and your whole committee to craft a Farm Bill that protects Food for Peace Title II by excluding damaging provisions of the American Farmers Feed the World Act.

General Offices: Please consider the concerns expressed by those of us in this meeting and Catholic Relief Services and oppose the inclusion of provisions of the American Farmers Feed the World Act in the Farm Bill, especially the requirement that 50% of the Food for Peace account must be earmarked for purchasing U.S. food aid or covering its ocean freight.

Advanced Ask if the Office is Known to Oppose the American Farmers Feed the World Act: We urge you to contact Sen. Stabenow to express your opposition to the provisions of AFFWA that are included in Ranking Member Boozman’s proposal.

Office of Sen. Stabenow: I/We appreciate your efforts to force a Farm Bill that will protect people facing hunger in the U.S. and internationally. Please continue to work with Ranking Member Boozman and your whole committee to craft a Farm Bill that protects Food for Peace Title II by excluding damaging provisions of the American Farmers Feed the World Act.

Discussion

Questions to Ask

- How does [senator’s name] plan to approach the international food assistance programs in the Farm Bill that fight hunger and malnutrition, like Food for Peace Title II?
- Will your office oppose the American Farmers Feed the World Act and the inclusion of its policies in the Farm Bill?
- What can I do, as a constituent, to continue to advance these important issues with you/your office?

Comments to Raise

- If the senator travels abroad, ask if he/she would like to visit CRS programming in the future. CRS works in more than 120 countries around the world and would welcome an opportunity to show the senator the impact U.S. investments in food security have on the lives of families and communities worldwide.
- Let your senator know that you—along with CRS—can serve as a resource both in Washington, DC and back home in the state. Express an interest in continuing to dialogue with them, or their staff, on these and other issues of mutual interest.