

HELPING FARMERS

AGRICULTURE ACCOMPLISHMENTS



AGRICULTURE WORKFORCE REFORM

H.R. 1603, Farm Workforce Modernization Act – I introduced this bill to ensure a legal and reliable workforce for American agriculture. Farmers and ranchers across the United States are in desperate need of a high-quality, reliable workforce, and the current H-2A guestworker program is in need of meaningful, bipartisan reform. The Farm Workforce Modernization Act creates a workforce solution for America’s agriculture industry by providing stability, predictability, and fairness to one of the most critical sectors of our nation’s economy. The bill is now in the Senate where there is interest on both sides of the aisle to perfect the legislation and send it to the President’s desk for signature.

WILDFIRE RELIEF

H.R. 267, 2020 WHIP+ Reauthorization Act – I introduced this bill to help producers hit hard by wildfires. This legislation reactivates the Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program Plus (WHIP+) for 2020 natural disasters, including wildfires. WHIP+ offers critical assistance to agricultural producers, including winegrape, hop, and tree fruit growers, whose crops were impacted by smoke. In Washington State, there are more than 1,000 wineries and over 300 winegrape growers. With 16 unique AVAs across the state, Washington’s wine industry continues to grow and produce high-quality varieties that are enjoyed all over the world.

COVID-19 RELIEF

Prioritized Health of Agriculture Communities – Central Washington’s agricultural community was hit hard by COVID-19. Our farmers and ranchers have been working around the clock to protect their employees from this virus, but they need help. Agriculture workers are essential – to our communities, to keeping food on our tables, to ensuring a strong food supply chain throughout our country. I worked to include federal funding that will help keep these hardworking men and women safe and healthy, and now we must deliver. The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 directed the Secretary of Agriculture to use at least \$1.5 billion to purchase and distribute agricultural products and to provide grants and loans to protect agricultural workers from COVID-19.

TRADE

United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA)/Pacific Rim Partners – Washington is the most trade-reliant state in the nation, with 40% of the state’s jobs tied to international trade. Central Washington’s agriculture depends on strong trade agreements with our global partners. I supported President Trump in renegotiating our trade agreements with our closest partners Canada and Mexico as well as our Pacific Rim countries. These agreements will have an extraordinary impact on Central Washington’s farmers, ranchers, and manufacturers who are ready and willing to increase production and sales to our largest international trading partner. I look forward to continued negotiations as we continue to promote smart, fair, and beneficial trade policies.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Columbia and Snake Rivers – Federal water infrastructure makes our way of life possible throughout the West. Central Washington boasts one of the most productive agricultural regions in the country. Without the rivers and dams, our region would lose waterways that are critical for navigation, and our farmers and ranchers would simply not be able to provide food and fiber for the world. The region’s agriculture economy – especially wheat growers that are far inland – would suffer. Farmers and irrigators would lose access to water storage. We have seen the plight of agriculture communities in states like California that have grappled with diminishing access to water supplies. As long as I’m in Congress, I will support our Central Washington growers and continue to be a voice to protect our way of life.

I advocated for several provisions in the *Agriculture Appropriations* bill:

- ☑ **Hops Research** – Provided \$1,000,000 for hops-related research in order to sustain the growth of the U.S. hops industry and expand production of new varieties of hops.
- ☑ **FDA Grape Varietals** – Directed the FDA to make a distinction between grape varietals, so that wine grapes may be included on a list of produce that is rarely consumed raw.
- ☑ **Smoke Taint Research** – Provided \$1,500,000 for research into smoke taint in grapes and wine.
- ☑ **Wheat Falling Numbers** – Provided \$1,000,000 to research the accuracy of the Falling Numbers test and encourages ARS to continue testing environmental, storage, and generic conditions leading to wheat starch degradation.
- ☑ **Potato Research** – Supported research efforts to combat crop-threatening pests and diseases for potato varieties.
- ☑ **Alfalfa Research** – Supported research into alfalfa seed and forage in order to maximize crop yields, increase milk production, and improve genetics.

TAX RELIEF

The *Tax Cuts and Jobs Act* signed into law contained several provisions that advance agriculture:

Tax deduction for small businesses – provided the first-ever 20% deduction to the first \$315,000 of joint income for all businesses organized as S corporations, partnerships, LLCs, and sole proprietorships. For owners with income above this level, the bill provides a 20% deduction on business profits.

Immediately write off the full cost of new equipment – Instead of writing off expenses over several years, business owners are able to write off the full cost of new equipment within the first year of purchase.

Eliminating the Estate Tax – By phasing out the “Death Tax” and doubling the amount of the current exemption, the *Tax Cuts and Jobs Act* reduces uncertainty for family-owned farms and businesses when they pass down their life’s work to the next generation.

Write off for small business loan interest – Protecting the ability of farmers and small business owners to write off the interest on loans will allow them to expand, hire workers, and increase paychecks.