NCSL’S Agriculture Task Force

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGRICULTURE TASK FORCE AGENDA</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGRICULTURE TASK FORCE PARTICIPANT LIST</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGRICULTURE RELATED POLICY DIRECTIVES AND RESOLUTIONS</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# AGRICULTURE TASK FORCE AGENDA

**Co-Chairs:**

Senator Justin Cronin – South Dakota  
Senator Rita Hart – Iowa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 11:30 a.m. | 425 Summer St. Boston                   | **Bus Departure**  
Please arrive on time, so the bus can depart from the Westin Boston Waterfront promptly. Boxed lunches will be provided. |
| 12:45-1:30 p.m. | Sachem St. Middleborough, MA | **Cranberry Cultivation**  
With nearly 400 growers, the cranberry industry is the largest agricultural food crop in Massachusetts. This 200-year old industry has bogs located in southeastern Massachusetts, Cape Cod and Nantucket. This native fruit is farmed on 13,250 acres and in total the growers have 60,000 plus acres of open space, which includes water resources and surrounding support land. |
| 1:45-3:15 p.m. | 152 Bridge St. Middleborough, MA | **Dried Cranberry Manufacturing**  
Each year this facility, which has operated continually since opening in 1966, produces more than 65 million pounds of dried cranberries and more than 2.2 million gallons of concentrate. It’s the largest cranberry processing facility in the world based on size and barrels handled; in addition, two pilot plants on site develop new and innovative Ocean Spray® products. |
| 3:30-4:15 p.m. | Sauchuk Farms 200 Center St. Plympton, MA | **Producer Success Stories – Direct Marketing and Agritainment**  
Sauchuk Farm grows 100+ acres of vegetables and fruit in Plympton. This flagship farm stand offers a full selection of produce, jams, jellies, salsas, kettle corn, fresh-baked muffins and pies, eggs, honey, maple syrup, chicken and turkey pies, and grass-fed beef. |

*NCSL is grateful to Brian Wick with the Cape Cod Cranberry Growers Association for his assistance with today’s tour.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The bus will return to the Westin Boston Waterfront by 5:15 p.m. to allow some free time before the group dinner.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:45-9 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Boat Tour and Dinner</strong>&lt;br&gt;&lt;em&gt;(Members, invited guests and partners of the Agriculture Task Force only.)&lt;/em&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 Seaport Boulevard Boston</td>
<td>Enjoy dinner and networking with fellow legislators on the Seaport Elite. We will be joined by legislators and partners of NCSL’s Energy Supply Task Force.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday, Aug. 6</strong></td>
<td>Room: 257A in the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30-8 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>Breakfast</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room: 257A</td>
<td><strong>Food Safety Modernization Act and the Produce Safety Rule</strong>&lt;br&gt;Now more than six years since enactment, where does implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) stand? Join us for a discussion about the costs, benefits and overall impacts of FSMA to states, farmers and the agricultural industry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-9 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>Food Freedom and the Growth of the Cottage Food Movement</strong>&lt;br&gt;The rapid growth of locally-grown foods and farmers’ markets has led to a corresponding growth in cottage food laws. These laws exempt small food producers from food safety requirements. Maine, North Dakota and Wyoming have enacted legislation to allow the direct sale of unregulated food to consumers. This session will discuss the benefits and concerns about the sale of unregulated foods.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10:15-11:15 a.m. | **Putting Workers to Work: Addressing Labor Needs and the H-2A Program**
Agricultural producers have looked to the federal H-2A program to fill temporary jobs with foreign nationals. This session will provide information on state approaches and current federal efforts to address this agricultural need through the guest worker program.

 Speakers:  
**Joe Young**, executive director, New England Apple Council  
**Mark Amato**, American Farm Bureau Federation’s Labor Committee

11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m. | **Business Session: Legislator Roundtable and Task Force Planning**
- Review of NCSL policies and resolutions
- What did you work on this past legislative session? What are your plans for next session?
- What NCSL meeting sessions would you like to see in the future?
- How can NCSL and the Task Force best support your work?

The following NCSL Legislative Summit sessions may be of interest to Agriculture Task Force members. All sessions will take place in the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center. Please see the NCSL mobile app and the main agenda for more information.

**Monday, Aug. 7**

7:30-8:30 a.m. | **Food and Farm Breakfast**
Join us for a full breakfast briefing about how bilateral trade creates jobs and economic opportunities, builds on our respective efficiencies and creates a more competitive and integrated agriculture and food industry.

 Moderator:  
**Senator Rita Hart**, Iowa, co-chair, NCSL Agriculture Task Force  
Speaker:  
**Jason Hafemeister**, acting deputy undersecretary for trade and foreign agricultural affairs, USDA

_NCSL is grateful for ADM’s support for this session._
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Moderators/Speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 10:15-11:45 a.m. | Critical Status: How Financing Can Help Address America's Infrastructure Crisis | There are multiple financial tools available to help build, maintain and operate critical infrastructure in the U.S., but some have thus far been underutilized or misunderstood. Learn how states have used public-private partnerships (P3s), bonding, value capture and federal financing to help improve transportation, water, energy and other kinds of infrastructure. Hear about NCSL’s newly released guiding principles for state legislatures to consider when creating P3 laws. | Moderator: Representative Andrew McLean, transportation chair, Maine House of Representatives  
Speaker: Alex Herrgott, associate director for infrastructure, Council on Environmental Quality  
Panelists: Deborah E. Brown, director, alternate delivery, WSP USA  
Kathy Ruffalo, principal, Ruffalo & Associates  
Shant Boyajian, associate, Nossaman LLP |
| 3:45-5 p.m. | Water Knows No Boundaries | Droughts, shifting populations and industrial needs threaten our water supplies. Innovations in data collection and withdrawal practices, however, can help states manage the demands for surface and groundwater and decrease interstate conflicts over this precious resource. Learn from other state experiences how to best promote sustainable water use. | Moderator: Larry Morandi, former director, State Policy Research, NCSL  
Speaker: Peter Gleick, president and co-founder, Pacific Institute for Studies in Development, Environment and Security  
Respondents: Senator Jerry Sonnenberg, Colorado  
Delegate Tawanna Gaines, Maryland |
| 11 a.m.-12:15 p.m. | Cannabis Crosses the Country | Lawmakers from states that recently legalized adult-use marijuana at the ballot box have plenty to learn from the pioneering states when it comes to |
taxation, product regulation and other concerns. But no one is certain how all this may change with the Trump administration. Explore the complexity and uncertainty of the cannabis industry.

Panelists:
Lewis Koski, co-founder and senior director, Freedman & Koski Inc.
Representative Daniel Pabon, Colorado
Jordan Wellington Esq., associate, Vincente Sederberg

The next Agriculture Task Force Meeting will be held October 13 - 14 in Sioux Falls, S.D.

NCSL Staff Contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ben Husch</td>
<td>Senior Committee Director</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ben.husch@ncsl.org">ben.husch@ncsl.org</a></td>
<td>609-947-0964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mindy Bridges</td>
<td>Policy Specialist</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mindy.bridges@ncsl.org">mindy.bridges@ncsl.org</a></td>
<td>720-412-9535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristen Hildreth</td>
<td>Policy Associate</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kristen.hildreth@ncsl.org">kristen.hildreth@ncsl.org</a></td>
<td>202-412-6872</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NCSL gratefully acknowledges the following companies & organizations for supporting the NCSL Agriculture Task Force!
Legislators and Legislative Staff

David Beaujon
Senior Analyst
Colorado General Assembly
200 E Colfax Avenue, Room 029
Denver, CO 80203
Phone: (303) 866-4781
Email: david.beaujon@state.co.us

Mike Bell
Senator
Tennessee General Assembly
War Memorial Building
301 Sixth Avenue North, Suite 309
Nashville, TN 37243-0209
Phone: (423) 829-0058
Email: sen.mike.bell@capitol.tn.gov

Elaine Bowers
Senator
Kansas Legislature
300 SW Tenth Avenue, Room 223-E
Topeka, KS 66612-1504
Phone: (785) 296-7389
Email: Elaine.Bowers@senate.ks.gov

Larry Byrd
Representative
Mississippi Capitol
400 High St.
Jackson, MS 39201
Phone: (601) 359-3337
Email: lbyrd@house.ms.gov

Thomas Collins
Policy Advisor
Michigan Legislature
120 N. Capitol
Lansing, MI 48909
Phone: (517) 373-1015
Email: tcollins@house.mi.gov

Justin Cronin
Senator
South Dakota Legislature
500 East Capitol Avenue,
Pierre, SD 57501-5070
Phone: (605) 773-3851
Email: justin.cronin@sdlegislature.gov

Thomas Dayley
Representative
Idaho Legislature
State Capitol Building
PO Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0038
Phone: (208) 332-1072
Email: tdayley@house.idaho.gov

Lynn DeCoite
Representative
Hawaii Legislature
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: (808) 586-6790
Email: RepDeCoite@Capitol.hawaii.gov

Robert Dickey
Representative
Georgia General Assembly
State Capitol
206 Washington Street, Room 245
Atlanta, GA 30334
Phone: (404) 463-2246
Email: robert.dickey@house.ga.gov

Tawanna Gaines
Delegate
Maryland General Assembly
Lowe House Office Building
6 Bladen Street, Room 121
Annapolis, MD 21401-1912
Phone: (410) 841-3058
Email: tawanna.gaines@house.state.md.us
Jamie Go  
Legislative Analyst  
House Majority Staff Office  
Hawaii Legislature  
415 S. Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
Phone: (808) 586-6144  
Email: go@capitol.hawaii.gov

Rick Hansen  
Representative  
Minnesota Legislature  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard  
St. Paul, MN 55155-1298  
Phone: (651) 296-6828  
Email: rep.rick.hansen@house.mn

Bill Hansell  
Senator  
Oregon Legislature  
900 Court Street, NE, Room S-415  
Salem, OR 97301  
Phone: (503) 986-1729  
Email: Sen.BillHansell@oregonlegislature.gov

Rita Hart  
Senator  
Iowa Legislature  
1007 East Grand Avenue,  
Des Moines, IA 50319  
Phone: (515) 281-3371  
Email: rita.hart@legis.iowa.gov

Randy Hiyoto  
Research Chief  
House Committee on Finance  
Hawaii Legislature  
415 South Beretania Street, Room 306  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
Phone: (808) 586-6200  
Email: hiyoto@capitol.hawaii.gov

Gene Hogan  
South Carolina General Assembly  
PO Box 142  
Columbia, SC 29201  
Phone: (803) 212-6230  
Email: GeneHogan@scsenate.gov

Nandana Kalupahana  
Committee Clerk  
House Committee on Finance  
Hawaii Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 306  
415 S Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
Phone: (808) 586-6200  
Email: kalupahana@capitol.hawaii.gov

John McCollister  
Senator  
Nebraska Legislature  
PO Box 94604  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4604  
Phone: (402) 471-2622  
Email: jmccollister@leg.ne.gov

Thomas Middleton  
Senator  
Maryland General Assembly  
Miller Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street, Room 3 East  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991  
Phone: (410) 841-3616  
Email: thomas.mclain.middleton@senate.state.md.us

Clarence Nishihara  
Senator  
Hawaii Legislature  
415 South Beretania Street, Room 214  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
Phone: (808) 586-6970  
Email: sennishihara@capitol.hawaii.gov

Jim Patrick  
Senator  
Idaho Legislature  
PO Box 83720,  
Boise, ID 83720-0081  
Phone: (208) 332-1318  
Email: jpatrick@senate.idaho.gov
**Kevin Ryan**  
Representative  
Connecticut General Assembly  
Legislative Office Building  
300 Capitol Avenue, Room 4108  
Hartford, CT 06106-1591  
Phone: (860) 240-8504  
Email: Kevin.Ryan@cga.ct.gov

**Francis Thompson**  
Senator  
Louisiana Legislature  
State Capitol  
PO Box 94183  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-4183  
Phone: (225) 342-2040  
Email: thompssofi@legis.la.gov

**Albert Vargas**  
Budget Chief  
Committee on Finance  
Hawaii Legislature  
415 South Beretania  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
Phone: (808) 586-6055  
Email: a.vargas@capitol.hawaii.gov

**Daniel Verdin**  
Senator  
South Carolina Legislature  
PO Box 142  
Columbia, SC 29202-0142  
Phone: (803) 212-6230  
Email: SAgriComm@scsenate.gov

**John Wilkinson**  
Senator  
Georgia General Assembly  
206 Washington Street, Room 421-A  
Atlanta, GA 30334  
Phone: (404) 463-5257  
Email: john.wilkinson@ senate.ga.gov

**Other Attendees**

**Matthew Choy**  
Sr. Specialist, Government Affairs  
The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company  
525 Okeechobee Blvd. Suite 860  
West Palm Beach, FL 33401  
Phone: (937) 624-9236  
Email: matthew.choy@scotts.com

**Gene Harrington**  
Director, State Government Affairs, Food & Agriculture  
Biotechnology Innovation Organization  
1201 Maryland Avenue, Suite 900  
Washington, DC 20024  
Phone: (202) 962-9513  
Email: gharrington@bio.org

**Brittany Jablonsky**  
Director of National Contributions and Stakeholder Relationships  
The Farm Credit Council  
50 F Street NW #900, Washington, D.C., DC 20001  
Phone: 2028790858  
Email: jablonsky@fccouncil.com

**Joseph Kelsay**  
Dow AgroSciences LLC  
9330 Zionsville Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46268  
Phone: 317-337-5348  
Email: JMKelsay@dow.com

**Warren Mayberry**  
Manager, Government Affairs  
Dupont  
6917 LaRue Belle Cover  
Austin, TX 78739  
Phone: (512) 364-7322  
Email: warren.e.mayberry@dupont.com

**Brad Mitchell**  
Deputy Executive Director  
Massachusetts Farm Bureau  
249 Lakeside Ave.  
Marlborough, MA 01752  
Phone: (508) 481-4766  
Email: bradmitchell@mfbf.net
Leslea Snyder  
Monsanto  
29 Laurel Drive  
Port Jefferson, NY 11777  
Phone: (631) 372-2951  
Email: Leslea.snyder@monsanto.com

Alan Takemoto  
Government Affairs Manager  
Monsanto  
P.O. Box 200  
Kunia, HI 96759  
Phone: (808) 292-3205  
Email: alan.takemoto@monsanto.com

Joanna Turner  
Director, Government Relations  
The Hershey Company  
1120 G Street NW, Suite 425  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
Phone: (202) 847-4335  
Email: jturner@hersheys.com

Brian Wick  
Executive Director  
Cape Cod Cranberry Growers’ Association  
1 Carver Square Boulevard  
P.O. Box 97  
Carver, MA 02330  
Phone: (508) 866-7878  
Email: info@cranberries.org

Mark Amato  
American Farm Bureau Federation’s  
Labor Committee  
75 School St.  
Hopkinton, MA 01748  
Phone: (508) 951-0901  
Email: Afarm75@comcast.net

Bob Ehart  
Senior Policy and Science Advisor  
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA)  
4350 N. Fairfax Drive #910  
Arlington, VA 22203  
Phone: (202) 296-9680  
Email: bob@nasda.org

Troy Jackson  
Senator  
Room 323  
Maine Legislature  
3 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0003  
Phone: (207) 287-1515  
Email: Troy.Jackson@legislature.maine.gov

Ernst Julian  
Chief, Center for Food Protection,  
Rhode Island Department of Health  
3 Capitol Hill  
Providence, RI 02908  
Phone: (401) 222-5960  
Email: Ernest.Julian@health.ri.gov

Christina Rice  
Clinical Fellow, Food Law and Policy Clinic  
Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation  
Harvard Law School  
122 Bolyston St.  
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130  
Phone: (617) 390-2556  
Email: chrice@law.harvard.edu
Joseph Young  
Executive Director  
New England Apple Council  
7 Main St.  
Goffstown NH 03045  
Phone: 603-860-5122  
Email: NEAC1A@aol.com

NCSL Staff

Mindy Bridges  
Policy Specialist  
National Conference of State Legislatures  
7700 East First Place,  
Denver, CO 80230  
Phone: (303) 856-1560  
Email: mindy.bridges@ncsl.org

Doug Farquhar  
Program Director  
National Conference of State Legislatures  
7700 East First Place,  
Denver, CO 80230  
Phone: (303) 856-1397  
Email: Doug.Farquhar@ncsl.org

Kristen Hildreth  
Policy Associate  
National Conference of State Legislatures  
444 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 515  
Washington, DC 20001  
Phone: (202) 624-3597  
Email: kristen.hildreth@ncsl.org

Ben Husch  
Senior Committee Director  
National Conference of State Legislatures  
444 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 515  
Washington, DC 20001  
Phone: (202) 624-7779  
Email: ben.husch@ncsl.org
# Policy Directives and Resolutions

## Table of Contents

### Existing Policy Resolutions for Reconsideration
- AVIAN FLU RESPONSE .................................................................................................................. 15
- COVER CROP RESEARCH .............................................................................................................. 18
- POLLINATOR HEALTH .................................................................................................................... 19

### Proposed Policy Resolution
- YEAR-ROUND E15 .......................................................................................................................... 22

### Proposed Amendments to Existing Policy Directive
- NATIONAL AGRICULTURE .............................................................................................................. 24

### Additional Policy Directives*
- ANIMAL AGRICULTURE PRODUCTION ..................................................................................... 32

*Existing policy – not up for consideration
A resolution of the National Conference of State Legislatures, expressing support for federal efforts to increase funding for avian flu research and vaccine development efforts.

WHEREAS, US farmers, poultry processing and food production plants supply a significant portion of poultry products consumed nationally and internationally; and,

WHEREAS, agriculture is a key driver of rural and state economies and the tremendous productivity of United States farmers benefits the national economy and the country's international trade balance; and,

WHEREAS, the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5N1 strain is a new mixed-origin virus that combines the H5 genes from the Asian HPAI H5N1 virus with N genes from native North American avian influenza viruses found in wild birds; and,

WHEREAS, according to the USDA, since December 2014, confirmed cases of HPAI H5 have been reported in the Pacific, Central, and Mississippi flyways (or migratory bird paths). The disease has been found in wild birds, as well as in a few backyard and commercial poultry flocks. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) considers the risk to people from these HPAI H5 infections to be low; and,

WHEREAS, 223 detections of HPAI H5 have been reported across 15 states, with the Midwest being hit the hardest, affecting over 48 million birds; and,

WHEREAS, farmers and agriculture related businesses have seen significant losses in revenue and workers have been laid off or subject to reduced work hours; and,
WHEREAS, according to USDA statistics, nationwide, over 11% of the nation’s laying hens and over 3% of the nation’s annual turkey production have been impacted to date, resulting in a significant threat to United States agriculture and the ability of our farmers to feed a growing world population; and,

WHEREAS, state and federal governments have invested millions of dollars to address the fallout associated with H5N1 and find solutions to the virus; and,

WHEREAS, the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Southeast Poultry Research Lab (SEPRL) is working to evaluate and develop avian influenza (AI) vaccines; and,

WHEREAS, the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) recognizes the serious threats posed by the HPAI outbreak and the key role that the federal government plays in harnessing resources and providing assistance to farmers and others affected by the virus.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the NCSL that it fully supports recent federal efforts to protect poultry production and the nation’s food supply by aggressively working to contain and remediate outbreaks when they occur. NCSL also supports federal efforts to serve as technical advisors and the clearinghouse of information for all sectors, and investigating ways to stop the spread of the virus; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NCSL strongly encourages the federal government to increase the funding necessary for state and federal agencies to continue development of biosecurity containment strategies, time sensitive approaches to sharing information, and more aggressive research into what is causing avian influenza, why some fowl are more susceptible, and prevention measures, including the development of vaccines, that can be taken; and,
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that federal agencies should work closely with the states to align HPAI efforts and share best practices; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NCSL and the states are willing partners in the federal government's HPAI efforts and will closely monitor federal actions and progress on these and related efforts of utmost importance to the states and our nation's food supply, rural agriculture economies, environment, and natural resources.
WHEREAS, growing concerns about water quality, soil fertility, weed control, nematode control, water retention and biodiversity; and,

WHEREAS, farmers need real solutions to solve concerns and maintain yields and profits; and,

WHEREAS, cover crops have proven to increase yields in university studies as well as in replicated farm research on real-world field plots; are an increasingly popular way to keep soil healthy; help reduce the need for N and other nutrients, and create a healthier soil environment that resists disease and pests; inhibit weed growth by shading them out, by preventing emergence, and by compounds exuded by the roots; are shown to reduce populations of pathogenic nematodes and encourage populations of beneficial ones; break up soil compaction whether it is naturally occurring or a result of heavy cultivation and tillage; add diversity to the natural biological life in heavily farmed soils, often working in synergy with cash crops for bottom line benefits; add diversity to the natural biological life in heavily farmed soils, often working in synergy with cash crops for bottom line benefits.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Conference of State Legislatures supports federal efforts to further the development of and proliferation and use of cover crops; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be submitted to appropriate federal officials and the U.S. Congress.
COMMITTEE: NATURAL RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

POLICY: POLLINATOR HEALTH

TYPE: RESOLUTION

A resolution of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) Natural Resources and Infrastructure Committee, recognizing the importance of pollinators, stressing the negative ramifications of continued pollinator loss, and expressing support for federal efforts to protect pollinators.

WHEREAS, farmers depend on pollinator species such as bees, ants, butterflies, birds and bats to successfully produce approximately one third of all United States agricultural output; and,

WHEREAS, in addition to food, pollinators also are vital to the production of fibers, edible oils, medicines, and other products; and,

WHEREAS, urban and rural beekeepers play an important role in state and federal agricultural production; and,

WHEREAS, agriculture is a key driver of rural and state economies and the tremendous productivity of United States farmers benefits the national economy and the country’s international trade balance; and,

WHEREAS, pollinator loss poses a significant threat to United States agriculture and the ability of our farmers to feed a growing world population; and,

WHEREAS, pollinators are essential organisms in the ecosystems that provide biodiversity, recreation and enjoyment for people and habitat for wild plants and animals; and,
WHEREAS, the NCSL recognizes the serious threats posed by pollinator loss and the key roles that the federal government plays as landowner and manager, regulator of pesticide products, and financial and technical assistance provider to farmers and other private landowners.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the NCSL Natural Resources and Infrastructure Committee that it fully supports recent federal efforts to: develop best management practices and enhance pollinator habitat on federally owned or managed lands; incorporate pollinator health as a component of all future federal restoration and reclamation projects; revise guidance documents for designed landscapes and public buildings in order to incorporate pollinator-friendly practices; increase both the acreage and forage value of pollinator habitat in the Conservation Reserve Program and other federal conservation programs; provide technical assistance in collaboration with land-grant university-based cooperative extension services to federal departments and agencies, state, local, and tribal governments, and other entities and individuals including farmers and ranchers; assist states and state wildlife organizations, as appropriate, in identifying and implementing projects to conserve pollinators through the revision and implementation of State Wildlife Action Plans; assess the effects of systemic pesticides and parasites on bee and other pollinator health and take corresponding action, as appropriate, to protect pollinators from pesticides and parasites; and take immediate measures to support pollinators with proper habitat and nutrition during the current growing season and thereafter, including planting pollinator-friendly vegetation, increasing flower diversity in plantings, limiting mowing practices, and reduce or avoid, when necessary, the use of pesticides in sensitive pollinator habitats through the use of integrated vegetation, pest and colony management practices; and, 

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that states work closely with affected individuals and serve as laboratories of innovation in problem solving and policy making. Federal
agencies should work closely with the states to align pollinator protection efforts and share best practices; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NCSL and the states are willing partners in the federal government's pollinator protection efforts and will closely monitor federal actions and progress on these and related efforts of utmost importance to the states and our nation's food supply, urban and rural agriculture economies, environment, and natural resources.
WHEREAS, EPA has approved fuel blends with 15 percent ethanol and 85 percent gasoline. E15 provides higher octane to improve vehicle performance and historically costs less than regular E10 gasoline. Current Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) restrictions prohibit most of the country from selling E15 from June 1 through September 15. However, retailers in air quality non-attainment areas can offer E15 year-round due to the greater reduction in exhaust emissions; and,

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Agriculture’s most recent report on corn-based ethanol stated that “greenhouse gas emissions associated with corn-based ethanol in the United States are about 43 percent lower than gasoline when measured on an energy equivalent basis;” and,

WHEREAS, as the farm economic downturn continues, states and rural communities are looking for increased market and economic opportunities for their agricultural products. Removal of this EPA regulatory barrier is one important way to provide more demand for agriculture, at no cost to the government, while also providing significant benefits to both state economies and consumers; and,

WHEREAS, H.R. 1311 and S. 517, the Consumer and Fuel Retailer Choice Act removes this unnecessary EPA limitation, giving consumers a choice at the pump that saves them money, enhances vehicle performance, improves the environment, and increases state economic output. S. 517 is sponsored by Senator Deb Fischer (R-Neb.), a former National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) Executive Committee member.
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, NCSL supports H.R. 1311 and S. 517.
The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) believes that maintaining a strong production agriculture capacity is critical to our nation’s strength and is a matter of national security. NCSL recognizes that decisions affecting American agriculture must reflect a working partnership of the federal government with the states in both the formulation and implementation of policy.

### Agricultural Fiscal Policy

NCSL urges federal efforts designed to enhance farm income while increasing agricultural exports. Monetary policies must be implemented which promote low interest rates and maintain dollar exchange rates which enhance the potential for sale of this nation's commodities in international markets. The federal government must also maintain a stable financial network capable of supplying adequate amounts of affordable credit to the agricultural industry. The government must also continue to search for innovative financing tools which enhance the ability of agricultural producers to manage risk and stabilize income. In addition, any domestic farm program must work in conjunction with a strong, aggressive export program which protects and expands our export markets.

State legislators should be represented on any working or study group for the purpose of addressing long term agriculture lending and payment needs established by Congress or the executive branch. NCSL urges Congress to review the existing payment limitations for individual farmers and program eligibility requirements to ensure that they provide support to economically efficient farming operations and promote the preservation of the family farm. In addition, the Conference recommends that all federal agricultural adjustment payments, price-support program loans, payments and other...
benefits not related to soil conservation efforts be limited to citizens of this country or aliens lawfully admitted for permanent residence.

**Secondary Market for Long-Term Loans**
NCSL urges the federal government to work with states to assure that the provisions of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1987 continue to be fully implemented.

**Bankruptcy law**
NCSL supports federal legislation to permanently extend allowing farm operations to declare Chapter 12 bankruptcy.

**Farm Credit System (FCS)**
NCSL encourages farm credit institutions to work with farmer-borrowers to restructure debt. NCSL urges that any disposition of land and assets held by the System or its units be conducted in an orderly fashion so that such disposition does not adversely affect the value of those assets or of other property within the community. NCSL also urges that FCS institutions continue to work with producers to provide necessary financing for changes in payments and crops resulting from adjustments to federal programs.

**Commercial Lending Institutions**
NCSL believes that as federal financial assistance is provided to member institutions of the FCS, assistance should also be provided to commercial lending institutions that provide credit to agriculture. Furthermore, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) policies and federal bank regulation procedures must be reviewed to ensure that the maximum assistance is being provided to troubled borrowers, without compromising the safety and soundness of the institution or the assets of the FDIC.

**Agricultural Bonds**
NCSL supports exempting agricultural bonds from the federal volume cap placed on industrial revenue bonds in each state. Furthermore, NCSL recommends that the
President and U.S. Congress amend the federal Internal Revenue Code to make the use of agricultural bonds more attractive to banks and other financial institutions. NCSL also recommends that the federal government permit deductibility for loans financed by issuers that are not necessarily small issuers as defined by the Internal Revenue Code.

**Crop Insurance**

NCSL supports a state-federal partnership to develop a fair and affordable crop insurance program that complements other risk management tools available in the marketplace for all crops. NCSL supports an efficient program that promotes informed production and management decisions. NCSL also supports federal efforts to encourage private-sector development of innovative risk management tools. However, any plan for crop insurance must not adversely impact a state's ability to levy premium taxes, regulate the business of private insurance or set solvency standards for private crop insurers.

**Marketing**

NCSL seeks a federal policy that will sustain a vibrant agricultural marketplace and strong farm economy while providing for competition and fair practices. The federal government should cooperate fully with states' efforts to supplement private sector marketing programs by providing comprehensive marketing, promotion and market development activities. These should include, at a minimum, sustained commitments to the provision of data on market trends and consumer demands, technical assistance, financial assistance and public education campaigns.

Special emphasis must be placed upon the development of new markets through the creation of demand for new crops or products or additional sources of demand for existing commodities and products; the improvement of linkages between buyers and sellers; a shift toward the sale of processed, not raw, commodities and high value cash crops; and the identification and analysis of potential markets. All parties, both public and private sector, must work together to develop effective strategies to exploit those
opportunities fully and to maintain an ongoing ability to respond to changing consumer demands.

**Direct Marketing Arrangements**

NCSL recommends that Congress review the Packers and Stockyards Act as a mechanism for addressing unfair practices that may occur under direct marketing arrangements, monitor activities in this area, and enact appropriate and timely legislation to safeguard the welfare of producers. NCSL urges Congress and USDA to strengthen and diligently enforce the provisions of the Packers and Stockyards Act in concert with the clear intent of the Act to curb monopolistic abuses in the concentrated meatpacking sector.

**Competition**

Family farmers ultimately derive their income from the agricultural marketplace. Congress must set rules to improve the competitive environment of agriculture so that farmers are able to retain a greater portion of their income.

**Natural Resource Conservation**

All federal government actions affecting natural resources should be conducted in close cooperation and only after consultation and coordination with the states. A strong commitment to conduct research, in the area of improved methods of natural resource conservation and protection, must be maintained. The federal government should work with state and local governments to develop agricultural land use policies, but should leave the responsibility for establishment of these policies to the state and local governments. NCSL favors a block grant approach that gives states maximum flexibility. NCSL supports the use of science, technology and effective practices to reduce nutrient losses to water, including nitrogen and phosphorus, from point and nonpoint sources.

We encourage significant federal investment in state-supported projects—with an emphasis on watershed-based public-private partnerships—that provide for
accountability and transparency, as evidenced by the establishment of goals, timelines, milestones, monitoring, measurement and regular public reporting documenting improvements in the quality of water in public waterways. Fundamentally, NCSL believes that states must be given a much stronger voice in ensuring that federal wetlands, endangered species, and land management policies respect the rights of local landowners and states.

**Wetlands and Endangered Species**

The federal government should delegate authority to states for the development, administration, and enforcement of wetlands protection and endangered species programs. The national government, acting through USDA, should set broad national goals and standards for wetlands protection and preservation of endangered species, but states should have the flexibility to meet those goals. The federal government, furthermore, should provide financial and technical assistance as incentives to encourage states to assume primacy over wetlands and endangered species programs.

**Land Management**

Devolution of authority to states should also be a goal of federal land management policies. Demonstration projects should be established to determine if state administration of national forests, grasslands, parks and other federal property will result in cost savings to taxpayers and greater sensitivity to the concerns of local citizens and property owners. NCSL, moreover, encourages Congress and federal agencies to hold hearings and public meetings in order to hear the concerns of state and local officials and of ordinary citizens and property holders regarding the impact of federal landownership and regulation.

**Soil Conservation**

NCSL supports an ongoing education program to make certain that producers are fully aware of the need for proper soil conservation practices and of the best methods to use in their implementation. Diligent efforts must be made by the federal government to
ensure that proper soil conservation practices are adopted and that fragile, erodible land is protected.

NCSL supports requiring that each farm have and follow an approved soil and water conservation plan in order to obtain government assistance. Benefits may be denied if a crop is grown in violation of this requirement. Further, NCSL supports continued extension of the Conservation Reserve Program and federal efforts to protect pollinators, including those that are vital to American food production.

**Research and Development**

NCSL supports the state-federal partnership in agricultural research at state universities. Furthermore, funds must be made available to support research and development of innovative products. Funds should also be used for dissemination of information about research discoveries both domestically and abroad. It is particularly important that the land grant universities maintain their commitment to agricultural research and development and that the federal government provide sufficient research dollars to support this vital effort.

NCSL urges the federal government to maintain a strong research program for the development of adequate, cost-effective and environmentally sound control measures to ensure the eradication of all insect and plant pests and animal diseases, which should be done in close cooperation with the states. Using existing mechanisms and institutions, the federal government should work with the states in providing the basic training and retraining opportunities necessary for the successful operation of an agricultural enterprise and for the continuing adjustment of producers to changing conditions in agriculture.

**Intellectual Property Rights in Publicly Funded Research**

NCSL calls on Congress to review the Bayh-Dole Act of 1980 and subsequent amendments for its impact on encouraging concentration and vertical integration within
the agricultural sector, and for its consistency with the mission and purpose of the Land
Grant College system. Further, Congress should increase federal support for
agricultural research, and retain through grant and contract provisions greater portions
of technology arising from such research within the public domain. Congress should
also affirm as objectives of the Land Grant Colleges’ agricultural research mission to
achieve broad dissemination and producer access to crop technology, and preserve
and enhance the income and economic opportunities of producers.

Beginning Farmer Programs
The National Conference of State Legislatures supports a state-federal partnership to
confront challenges faced by farmers and beginning farmers, including the use of
federal tax incentives to support state-based development and loan programs. NCSL
supports changes to the federal Internal Revenue code that reduce borrowing costs for
qualifying farmers and strengthen state beginning farmer programs. NCSL is particularly
supportive of beginning farmer and other training programs that provide assistance for
military veterans and limited-resource farmers. Furthermore, NCSL supports raising the
total volume of state bonding authority to free resources for beginner farmer programs if
achieved in a manner consistent with a balanced federal budget.

In collaboration with state governments, as well as public and private local partners,
NCSL supports investment in joint research, demonstration and development of food
systems that provide opportunity to young and beginning farmers with limited assets, to
produce and deliver affordable, healthy, fresh, nutritious food to consumers within the
local and regional markets where the producers operate, toward a goal of national food
self-sufficiency and optimal health.

Agriculture Biofuels
NCSL believes that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) should be the lead
federal agency to examine regulatory issues as they develop for the algaculture
(Farming Algae) industry.
Support State Regulation of Agricultural Biotechnology

NCSL supports the responsible use of the beneficial qualities of agricultural biotechnology such as in improved crop production techniques, pharmaceuticals, anti-immune disease control, biodegradable plastics, and other potential benefits to people in their states, the nation, the world and the global environment. NCSL supports the continued regulation of agricultural biotechnology through state and territorial governments working in close collaboration and partnership with the Coordinated Framework for Regulation of Biotechnology administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), USDA, and U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Industrial Hemp Farming

NCSL supports federal legislation to define industrial hemp as a distinct agricultural crop (1 percent% or less THC content) and allow states to regulate commercial hemp farming. Currently 33 states have laws allowing hemp research or farming. NCSL believes that hemp has a long history as a sustainable and a profitable crop, and has great potential as a new crop for American agriculture and industry. According to Vote Hemp, an estimated $687 million worth of hemp products were sold in the U.S. in 2016, including foods, body care products, clothing, auto parts, building materials, and paper. Most of these products were made from imported hemp due to federal policy that prohibits commercial hemp farming. NCSL believes that federal policies that obstruct industrial hemp farming are outdated and must be changed.
The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) believes a strong animal production agriculture capacity is imperative in maintaining domestic and international consumer confidence in the safety of the United States meat supply.

Animal Identification

The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) believes a national animal identification, if properly implemented in cooperation with the states and territories, could be beneficial in maintaining consumer confidence in meat from the United States, an invaluable tool in reducing and tracking future outbreaks of infectious disease, and serving as an important firewall against any attempted terrorist attack on the food production system in the United States.

Any future effort by USDA to develop a national animal identification program must be designed and implemented in full consultation with state legislatures to ensure proper attention to public interest and financial considerations. Any program must be designed and implemented in cooperation with the departments of agriculture of the states and territories. USDA must work to ensure that any animal identification system is compatible with the current inspection and enforcement systems of the state governments. Any applicable federal program should not be applied to animals involved in intrastate commerce without state consultation.

Equine Industry and USDA Inspection of Horse Meat

The processing of horses has become a controversial and emotional issue, resulting in the closure of the last horse processing facility in the United States. Without affordable and economic alternatives, unwanted horses are abandoned. The nation’s inadequate
and overburdened horse rescue and adoption facilities cannot begin to handle the influx. These additional unwanted horses will compete for adoption with wild horses that are currently fed and sheltered at a public expense. In the Western United States (US), the additional pressure on public lands from horses turned out to run wild is only intensifying the over-population, over-grazing, and ultimate destruction of the ecosystem.

NCSL urges members of Congress to:

- Recognize the need for humane horse processing facilities in the United States.
- Not to interfere with State efforts to establish facilities in the United States. State livestock programs that were once able to recoup the costs of caring and feeding for abandoned animals by marketing them, are now forced to greatly increase their budgets at the expense of taxpayers.
- Recognize the positive economic impact of willing market for the U.S. horse industry. These, and ethnic markets inside the U.S. would appreciate an additional source of high quality protein untainted by disease concerns of other species of livestock.
- Oppose legislation that would restrict the market, transport, processing, or export of horses. Horse processing in the United States is particularly tightly regulated, and the horse is the only animal whose transportation to processing is regulated. Horse processing facilities in the United States are required to have United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) veterinarians supervise the euthanasia, and the euthanasia method is humane, according the American Veterinary Medical Association and the United States Department of Agriculture.
- Oppose limitations under federal appropriations law prohibiting the use of federal dollars to be spent on the salaries of inspectors for ante- and post mortem inspections.

Interstate Sale of State-Inspected Meat and Poultry
The Farm Bill program authorizes USDA to promulgate rules to establish the parameters of the state programs. The proposed draft rule would allow these states to establish an interstate meat shipment program and request selected establishment status for those businesses who wish to remain state inspected, but wish to market products in interstate commerce. The creation of interstate sales of state-inspected meat and poultry programs will level the economic playing field for small business, spur more competition in the marketplace, create a more uniform inspection system, and enhance consumer confidence in the food supply—all of which will benefit farmers, ranchers, processors, small business, and consumers.

The National Conference of State Legislatures supports the establishment of interstate shipment of state-inspected meat and poultry programs in qualifying states, and urges USDA to create rules that facilitate the program.