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From: Paige E. Buck [paige.buck@il.usda.gov]
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To: McKay, David
Cc: Oldroyd, Taylor
Subject: CSP comments from Illinois

Importance: High



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xt (81 KB)...

Greetings:

Attached is an electronic version of the transcript from the CSP Public Listening Session held in Illinois on 2/11/04. I also have written comments that I will FedEx to you. If you want a hard-copy version, just let me know. I assumed this would be quicker and easier to work with.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
PUBLIC LISTENING SESSION

FEBRUARY 11, 2004
1:00 P.M.
MCLEAN COUNTY FARM BUREAU
BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS

HELD BEFORE:
NRCS STATE CONSERVATIONIST BILL GRADLE
ASSISTANT STATE CONSERVATIONIST IVAN DOZIER
STATE FARM BILL COORDINATOR PAULA HINGSON
STATE COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST PAIGE BUCK

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(Overview concluded.)
MS. BUCK: Okay. I think we're pretty much
ready to go here. If you have brought written comments
but you still plan on getting up and speaking, it would

5 still be valuable to us if you could turn those comments
6 in just to aid in the whole court reporting process and
7 make sure that we have captured everything as you really
8 want it to be captured. So, I've got a box back here in
9 the back; and if you would, throw your written comments in
10 there. If we do run out of time or you have to leave,
11 just drop them in there, and they will be attached with
12 all the other comments; and we will send them on to
13 Washington, D.C.

14 So, I'm just going to leave this here. And if
15 anybody starts to get too long-winded or people start to
16 debate issues that we're actually not here to debate, I'll
17 probably come up and grab you -- or grab the microphone
18 away from you. But we can just start, and people can just
19 step up or I can coordinate it. Let's kind of play it by
20 ear and see how it happens. It's kind of informal.

21 We were supposed to have coffee back here, and
22 it's not here yet. But this is informal; so, if you need
23 to leave and get a drink, feel free to do so.

24 So, who's up first?

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1 MR. DAVIS: Good afternoon. My name's Terry
2 Davis. I am president of the Association of Soil, Water
3 Conservation Districts of Illinois and also a producer
4 from Warren County, and I'm here today representing the
5 Association of Illinois Soil, Water Conservation
6 Districts. I'd like to read the letter that we're going
7 to present in the written comment, and then I have some
8 private comments from my personal operation afterwards.

9 On behalf of the Association of Illinois Soil

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10 and Water Conservation Districts, we represent the 98 soil
11 and water conservation districts in Illinois. We fully
12 support the purpose and objectives of the Conservation
13 Security Program. It is the belief of the AISWCD that the
14 Conservation Service Program, fully funded and
15 implemented, will have a tremendous beneficial impact on
16 conserving the nation's soil, water and other natural
17 resources. Congress and the administration are to be
18 congratulated for their efforts to develop a new and
19 innovative approach to conserving our natural resources
20 and thereby assuring the sustainability of the country's
21 food and fiber production.

22 In addition, the USDA NRCS service is to be
23 commended for preparing proposed rules as closely as
24 possible to reflect the intent of Congress for CSP.

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1 The AISWCD would like to offer the following
2 comments or suggestions regarding some of those proposed
3 rules: First, authorized funding level for the CSP. The
4 CSP was originally envisioned as a 7 billion dollar
5 program in the current 2002 farm bill. Currently, funding
6 is capped at 3.77 billion over ten years or about one half
7 of what was originally proposed. The proposed rule was
8 written with this funding limitation in mind. The House,
9 in their FY 2004 version of the budget, has removed this
10 funding cap and restored the original funding level. If
11 supported by the senate, the restoration of funding would
12 require some significant changes in the proposed rule.

13 Secondly, the availability of the CSP to all
14 producers. The proposed rule would significantly reduce
15 funding levels in mind, limiting availability of CSP to

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16 only high-priority watersheds nationwide. The intent of
17 the CSP as originally proposed would make it available to
18 all producers. As an entitlement program, if full funding
19 authorization is restored for the CSP, the proposed rule
20 should be amended to make CSP available to all producers.

21 Thirdly, CSP base payments. It suggested that
22 the calculation of base payments be made on best available
23 information on land rental rates. Rental rates used to
24 calculate the base payments should be, under no

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1 circumstances, less than what the national average rental
2 rate is established.

3 Fourthly, conservation cost share percentages.
4 It is recommended for consistency that cost share payments
5 be the same rates as recommended by the state's ethical
6 committee in each state for other farm bill programs. The
7 state technical committee should be given the opportunity
8 to discuss and recommend a cost share rate to and with the
9 state conservationists.

10 And fifthly, conservation practices. It is
11 recommended that all conservation practices recommended by
12 the state technical committee for eligibility in all other
13 farm programs, such as EQIP, also be available for CSP --
14 I mean eligible. The state technical committee should be
15 given the opportunity to discuss and recommend eligible
16 practices to the state conservationists.

17 On behalf of the IASWCD, we thank you for the
18 opportunity to comment on these proposed rules.

19 Respectfully submitted by myself as association president.

20 Taking you back to the producer level, would

21 like to see this Conservation Security Program become a
22 very viable option for the sustainability and the
23 protection of production agriculture in this country, as
24 well as protection of the environment from out-point

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1 source pollution. As an individual producer, I have taken
2 great strides in my own operation over the past 20 years
3 to achieve a lot of these goals that are being asked in
4 the Conservation Security Program. As I initially saw the
5 CSP as it was proposed, it looked like an opportunity for
6 operations such as myself (sic) that had maybe taken
7 that step to reach out and look for better ways to produce
8 with, at the same time, protection of the environment and
9 protection of our resources by adoption of practices such
10 as no till, conservation tillage, reduction of ag inputs,
11 integrated pest management practices, and applying best
12 management practices, or BMPs, on the entirety of my
13 operation.

14 To achieve some of these goals myself that now
15 I'm seeing that there's a recognition from the federal
16 government that this is something that could be of benefit
17 to everyone. I'm very concerned, though, that as these
18 rules are being written that now -- that the remark made
19 by the secretary that, "Reward the best and motivate the
20 rest," to plagiarize a phrase that was used just last week
21 by a friend of mine, Howard Brown, "Don't want it to turn
22 into a program that rewards just a few. So, what's really
23 new over what's been done in the past?"

24 There's an opportunity here for this

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1 Conservation Security Program to really open up
2 conservation in the United States by allowing incentives
3 to pass along to producers to take these steps. I think
4 there would be some real opportunities to develop new
5 programs and bring more people into the community of
6 conservation.

7 The problems with some things such as the land
8 race -- land rental factor, the concern is that the
9 program will end up being watered down to such a point
10 that nobody will want to take the time to work on them.

11 You take this base payment from a 60- to
12 \$70-an-acre payment for achieving Tier III down to what
13 possibly could be, by the time you put the land rental
14 factor back into it, maybe as little as 5 or \$6 an acre,
15 for the additional paperwork that's going to be required,
16 the additional attention that's going to have to be
17 required for management of these practices, plus the term
18 length that these practices will need to be maintained, it
19 is my concern that not too many people will buy into it
20 without -- as a voluntary program.

21 Secondly, the five-year commitment, that more
22 than half of the land in Illinois is on a cash rental
23 basis with between -- contract between the farm owner and
24 the tenant that is actually producing the crop on the

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1 land. These rental agreements are usually on a
2 year-to-year basis. Because of this year-to-year
3 commitment, it's going to make it very difficult for many
4 cash rent tenants to be able to implement these practices
5 on their farm. The rent in Illinois, there's

6 traditionally been with the current program in place, it's
 7 been a shift of the government payment becoming part of
 8 the cash rent payment and shifting that direction that --
 9 as guaranteed income that has been felt in the past that
 10 the landowner has received a proportion of. With this new
 11 program coming in place, if those are placed, there is a
 12 concern of my own that the landlords will want to receive
 13 the entire payment for themselves, ask the tenant to make
 14 the sacrifices that are going to be necessary on their
 15 part to get the farm into the position where it can become
 16 more sustainable, and that the tenant will not be able to
 17 buy into the program because of the time frame. Some
 18 adjustment may need to be made so that a year-to-year
 19 contract can be renewed; but with not having that
 20 five-year commitment up front, that it could be a
 21 challenge.

22 I know that in my own operation that I have
 23 been able to achieve carbon sequestration, been able to
 24 achieve reduced nutrient loading to the fields and the

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1 farms, productivity levels have been sustained. I'm in
 2 hopes that this program will recognize those things of
 3 producers like myself and also be able to reward them for
 4 what they've done, not just what can be done in the
 5 future.

6 And some of the problems with some of the Tier
 7 III requirements are going to be that incentives currently
 8 being placed are on -- majority of the incentives are on
 9 new practices established. To those people that have
 10 already been and have got those practices in place, I'm
 11 very concerned about the mechanism to be put in place to

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12 recognize what already has been done versus what will have
13 to be done.

14 Just a few years ago, there was an issue that
15 came to light of installing buffer strips in CRP. There
16 was actually ground that was sod-busted so it could be put
17 back in the Conservation Reserve Program. That should not
18 have to be done. It was bad for the environment; it was
19 bad for the program. But to play the game, that's what
20 needed to be done. I'm hoping this program will recognize
21 those things and not make that same mistake again.

22 Thank you.

23 MS. BUCK: who's next?

24 MS. ERICKSON: Good afternoon. My name is

10

1 Nancy Erickson. I'm the director of Natural and
2 Environmental Resources with Illinois Farm Bureau. We do
3 appreciate the efforts of the Natural Resources
4 Conservation Service to organize this hearing for Illinois
5 on the proposed rules for the Conservation Security
6 Program. We would also like to thank the McLean County
7 Farm Bureau for hosting the hearing today.

8 I have some brief comments regarding the
9 Conservation Security Program and will file additional,
10 more detailed comments prior to March 2nd.

11 The Conservation Security Program is the type
12 of program that Illinois Farm Bureau has long supported.
13 IFB has been involved with the development of programs
14 such as this that are voluntary, incentive-based, and that
15 help private landowners and producers implement best
16 management practices to help conserve soil and improve

17 water quality and address other natural resource issues.
18 The CSP is designed to support conservation practices on
19 working lands. It will help reward the implementation of
20 best management practices on cropland, grassland and
21 others.

22 This first year of the program contains
23 limited funding, and that will present many challenges to
24 the program. It will be important to help -- it will be

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1 important to help lay a sound base for the CSP this year
2 so that when it is evaluated for future funding, we will
3 have a positive initial program that will be able to
4 garner more funding in the future.

5 Illinois Farm Bureau will continue to inform
6 our members about the proposed rules and provide details
7 about how they may comment on this program. With the
8 increasing challenges that agriculture faces, it will be
9 important to have as many good programs as possible, such
10 as this one, for farmers to continue the positive
11 environmental trends that we have seen in Illinois.

12 Thank you for providing the opportunity to
13 comment on this important program.

14 MS. BUCK: Okay. Who's next?

15 MR. DASSOW: Good afternoon. Duane Dassow,
16 Livingston County. These are a few of the major concerns
17 that we as producers, conservationists and stewards of the
18 land have with the proposed rule changes to the
19 Conservation Security Program.

20 Priority watershed restrictions. By law, CSP
21 is designed for all farmers, no matter location, across
22 the nation to be eligible for rewards for their

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23 stewardship of the land. The proposed rule would limit
24 the program to those few who are located in the priority

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1 watersheds.

2 My glasses and my paper don't match up.

3 The high soil and quality standards. CSP
4 should include both existing and new farm conservation
5 plans which are at or above sustainable use levels for
6 resources. It is only fair to reward those farmers who
7 have been at a sustainable level for an extended period of
8 time prior to the implementation of this program and to
9 reward new farm plans to encourage further growth.

10 Also, low payments by the CSP to a tier
11 program. Cost share and base payments need to rise
12 significantly if this program is going to take hold and
13 enhance our environment in the years to come. Proposed
14 CSP payments are just too low to increase any sort of
15 participation. Who and what will determine the farmers
16 and landowners who are exceptional stewards of the land?

17 A few of the practices that have been
18 implemented on our farm since 1982: 12 acres oak, hickory
19 forest; 5 acres conifers; 23 acres of prairie; restoration
20 of native wetland; restoration of native oak, hickory
21 forest; 45 acres of field windbreaks; grass waterways; PTO
22 terraces; two manmade wetlands; farm shed windbreaks; food
23 plots; nesting cover for wildlife; rotational grazing; no
24 till farming practices; three-way crop rotation; cover

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1 crops including rye, dairy hedge, buckwheat, oaks and

2 forage turnips; rebuilding of the biological soils and
3 balancing of nutrients; also participating in a
4 sustainable agriculture grant program entitled Soil
5 Structure Improvement for the Better Sustainable
6 Agricultural Systems. The tests include water
7 infiltration, water stable aggregate tests, soil slating
8 tests and soil penetration tests.

9 CSP and other conservation programs alike need
10 full funding for those who are exceptional stewards of the
11 land and to also encourage new ones.

12 The eminent French scientist and Nobel Peace
13 Prize winner, Dr. Alexis Carol (phonetic) wrote as early
14 as 1912 in his book, Man: The Unknown, "And since soil is
15 the basis for all human life, our only hope for a healthy
16 world rests on establishing the harmony in the soil that
17 we have disrupted by our modern methods of agriculture.
18 Today's soils are tired, overworked, depleted, sick and
19 poisoned by synthetic chemicals. Hence, the quality of
20 food has suffered, and so has health. Malnutrition begins
21 with the soil. Bouyant human health depends on wholesome
22 food, and this can only come from fertile, productive
23 soils. Minerals in the soils," say Carol, "control the
24 metabolism of the cells in the plant, animal and man.

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1 chiefly destroying the harmony of the soil results in
2 diseases that man harbors today."

3 Duane Dassow, Connie Dassow, John Dassow and
4 Joe Dassow, Chatsworth, Illinois. Thank you.

5 MS. BUCK: who's next?

6 MR. TAROCHIONE: I don't think I'll need the
7 microphone. I'm going to do five minutes, and I'll -- and

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8 that was a Terry Davis five minutes, so --

9 I don't really have any prepared comments. I
10 would like to echo Terry's concern -- sorry. My name is
11 Lance Tarochione, a producer from Fulton County and
12 industry representative. I share Terry's concern about
13 practices available to someone like the gentleman who just
14 spoke. It would be pretty tough for him to go above and
15 beyond where he's at, it sounds like, so it would be
16 interesting to see how a gentleman that's already went
17 that far can benefit from CSP.

18 And then also, just to make sure that there
19 aren't any loopholes in the program, Terry's example was a
20 good one, that encourages mismanagement of land so that
21 later qualifies for the program. CRP certainly did that
22 in a big way.

23 I'm going to take a little bit different slant
24 on Terry's comments regarding cash rent. As I understand

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1 it, learning here today, the way it's proposed right now,
2 a landowner would not qualify for the program if they're
3 cash renting their land. And Terry made the comment that
4 most rental leases are one year in nature, maybe as much
5 as three, rarely ever five -- five or more that I'm aware
6 of. Personally, I like that, and I would like to see that
7 stay to encourage a return to crop share leases in
8 Illinois as opposed to cash rent leases because if you
9 allow participation on a one-year cash rent lease, I
10 guarantee you, just like the CCC program money, it's all
11 going to leave the farmer's hands, and it's going to go
12 right to the landowner because we're competitive by

13 nature. And if a farmer can make an extra \$40 on an acre,
14 he'll pay another \$40 for that acre. And if the money is,
15 is meant to stay with the producer, which I would like to
16 see that happen, I think you're going to have to leave
17 some protections from ourselves in the program. And
18 leaving it as is would make it very difficult for the
19 standard as-written cash rent land rental agreement in the
20 state of Illinois to even qualify for CSP. And I expect
21 that to be very controversial. But to me, in the long
22 run, it would be a good thing for agriculture if they did
23 not.

24 That's all I have to say.

16

1 MS. BUCK: Okay. I'm going to use back seat
2 people. Let's go. Back row?

3 MR. KING: If you don't mind, I'll just do it
4 from here. I think I'll speak loud enough so the folks
5 can hear me. I just have three points. Two of them flow
6 directly from the -- pardon?

7 MR. GRADLE: State your name.

8 MR. KING: Oh, excuse me, Martin King from
9 Sangamon County.

10 Three points, two which flow directly, I
11 think, from a statement made this morning.

12 First off, the rules should be modified by
13 removing restrictions, limiting enrollment to certain
14 watersheds, certain classes of farmers and ranchers, and
15 to a limited set of resource concerns.

16 Second, we talked about EQIP in the state
17 technical committee, and it should be basically
18 prioritizing new practices. The rule, as it exists, goes

19 a bit too far. The proposed rule would restrict access
20 only to those farmers who have already addressed all of
21 their major conservation needs and deny access to those
22 transitioning to sustainable agriculture. The rule should
23 be modified to retain high environmental standards but to
24 allow farmers and ranchers to achieve those high standards

17

1 while in the program and motivate the rest.

2 The third point I want to bring up,
3 particularly since we've talked about grazing quite a bit
4 in the state technical committee meeting. In determining
5 base payment pasture and grazing land, the proposed rule
6 would determine the cash rent value of the land based on
7 how the land is currently being used rather than by land
8 capability. Since rental rates for pastures are far lower
9 than cropland, base payments would be far lower for
10 grazers even if their land is fully capable of producing
11 crops, and a different owner or operator's lands might
12 well be cropped. Land which has been placed in permanent
13 cover, a practice with enormous environmental benefits, is
14 unwise to buy this proposal. The rule should establish
15 base payments based on NRCS land capability classes, not
16 based on current land use to reward exceptional
17 performance.

18 Thank you.

19 MR. COVENTRY: I would like to speak. I think
20 I can do without the microphone. My name is Roger
21 Coventry. My wife and I are landowners, and we're in
22 cahoots with Duane Dassow and his operation. And my
23 questions and my comments at this point in time is, who

24 are the special interests that are motivating the changes

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1 and decisions in Congress over this bill? Having
2 witnessed the recent debacle in Congress over the media
3 relationship with conglomerates and the FCC and how the
4 Senate bill got back-roomed into something different and
5 had to be restructured in the Senate and handed on to the
6 House where the House even refused to address it. It
7 seems to me like these things that are happening in
8 Congress need to be addressed by the electorate. It seems
9 to me that if we have special interests that are driving
10 these programs and are causing decisions to be made in
11 Congress that are affecting all of us, we should know who
12 these special interests are and how we can get to them
13 with our thoughts and comments.

14 It seems to me like when we have governmental
15 conversations such as we're having now, they're coming
16 from the bureaucracy, and the bureaucracy is having to
17 deal with what it's got. But how is it getting it?
18 How -- what are the special interests that are driving the
19 decisions over how these things are going to -- where
20 these watersheds are going to be? Whose, whose interest
21 is that? How are these watersheds -- are they really
22 going to be addressed by science or logic, or, or are they
23 going to be addressed by some big corporate interest that
24 is driving a lot of campaign finance into these senators'

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1 and representatives' pockets?

2 Those are my questions.

3 MS. BUCK: Thank you.

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4 MR. BIELFELDT: I guess I'm next.

5 MS. BUCK: I knew we'd get this back row
6 going.

7 MR. BIELFELDT: I'm Adolph J. Bielfeldt from
8 Anchor, McLean County. I'm president of the Mackinaw
9 Drainage District, Anchor Township. I've had filter
10 strips on my farm since 1970, and I've always had a
11 30-foot strip, and that never did qualify for any payments
12 up until now. And they wanted me to tear them out and
13 start over, and I refused to do that. And I've had
14 waterways since 1946 when I started farming.

15 In 1993, we went to the conservation and had a
16 concrete spillway put in because what we had was not
17 working. So, they drew us up a nice plan, concrete
18 structure with a spillway and an apron and a -- concrete
19 leading into it, and it stopped our erosion 100 percent in
20 that waterway.

21 we -- in my opinion, we always felt like
22 conservation people were penalizing the ones that have
23 been doing all this conservation work and trying to get
24 people to do it by tearing stuff up or just starting to

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20

1 put it in. And, let's see. And I have either a state or
2 -- I don't know who's got their testing equipment on our
3 farm, but they're testing the water in my drainage ditch,
4 and they're telling me -- I stop and talk to them quite
5 often, and they're telling me our water is getting better
6 every year. It's been there since 2000.

7 And I had a lady call me to answer a whole
8 bunch of questions on conservation; and I didn't quite

9 understand who she represented, but she was quite
10 interested in all the stuff that I've been doing.

11 So, I'm a representative of the Mackinaw
12 Drainage District.

13 MS. BUCK: Thank you. All right.

14 MR. FISHER: I've waited long enough.

15 MS. BUCK: Here comes Butch.

16 MR. FISHER: I'm Butch Fisher, Douglas County
17 Soil and Water Conservation District, but I'm speaking on
18 my own today.

19 I don't want this.

20 One of the things -- how many remember the
21 '30s? All the dust? Because of the '30s, we had passion.
22 We wanted to get rid of the dust bowls. There was dust
23 going -- it rained mud in New York City. It snowed black
24 snow in Maine because of the dust. And we had passion.

21

1 we had conservation. CSP can bring this back. CSP should
2 be -- should reward the best and motivate the rest. Guys
3 like this gentleman we've heard from, you know, doing
4 excellent. We need to motivate him. We don't want to do
5 it -- we've got all kinds of other programs to get the
6 guys up to speed. CSP is to reward people like him. We
7 need the passion back, and CSP can do it because CSP
8 should reward the best and motivate the rest.

9 A couple of things that we need to do, though,
10 since there is a limit -- and, you know, it's supposed to
11 be an entitlement, but there is a limit. We need to this
12 year, unfortunately, go to the watersheds. I know some
13 people doesn't (sic) like that word, watersheds, but these
14 are the priority watersheds that have got the people on

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15 their way that can get the most bang out of the dollar, so
16 Washington wants to see that. So, unfortunately, we need
17 to do that.

18 Cost share should definitely be at 75 percent.
19 We can't -- you know, anything lower, we're not going to
20 do it. This -- I'll come back to that one because I'll
21 get booed on that one.

22 But anyway, the base payment should not be
23 lower than the national rate -- rental rate. There should
24 also be no limit on the number of contracts that a farmer

22

1 can have. In other words, if he's doing a good job, let's
2 pay him for it.

3 The other thing that's very critical is, going
4 back to the cash rent and all that, that it should not be
5 limited to the five years or ten years because it really
6 realistically can't happen in Illinois.

7 The last thing, I think it should be -- and I
8 haven't read the complete rules so it might be in there.
9 But in order to meet the criteria for Tier II and
10 Tier III, the applicant must be 100 percent no till
11 because that's where I am, the passion. We had the
12 passion in the '30s because of the dust. I don't know,
13 back -- when was it we closed the State office up in
14 Champaign because of the snow here? What was it, two to
15 three weeks ago? Anyway, going south on I-57 where there
16 was no till, where there was stalks still left, you could
17 see the road where there wasn't ice.

18 The same thing with the dust. Remember a
19 couple years ago we had big dust storms. I think in

20 Decatur, 500 feet before you could get out of the dust.
21 where there were corn stalks and no till, there wasn't
22 dust. We need the passion back, and CSP should reward the
23 best and motivate the rest.

24 Thank you.

23

1 MS. BUCK: Thank you. All right. Now
2 everybody's hyped up. Let's go, people. I'll try and
3 eyeball people that I know haven't said.

4 MR. DOZIER: It's like an auction, Paige.
5 Anyone who makes a move.

6 MS. HINGSON: I guess it must be tough to
7 follow Butch.

8 MR. KINSELLA: I'll go.

9 MS. BUCK: Are you ready?

10 MR. KINSELLA: I've followed Butch for a long
11 time so I'll keep going. I won't need the -- first of
12 all, I didn't have any prepared comments. I didn't know
13 about --

14 Oh, my name is Jim Kinsella. I'm a McLean
15 County farmer. I'm representing the soil, the water and
16 the air; that's it. I didn't know about this; I've been
17 traveling. And I complained to Senator Fitzgerald about
18 not having one in this area, and here I came home, had a
19 message there's one here today, so I really don't have
20 anything prepared. I will comment.

21 I do commend the Congress and administration
22 for passing this potential paradigm shift in our
23 environmental stewardship, and it is strictly just a
24 potential at this point. It definitely needs to be

1 funded; it needs to be fully funded.

2 Some of my concerns are: One, the eligibility
3 that we read here today, that if you look at those
4 requirements, you have to jump some more hurdles. Well,
5 this gentleman here -- and I think myself and Terry Davis
6 -- we've jumped most of these hurdles, and there's nothing
7 -- maybe just a few little things we can do. But as long
8 as there's limited money, it's going to be the guys that
9 have the most to do. It's going to come back to -- like
10 all the other programs, looks to me like, as long as we're
11 limited on money, the guys that have really been doing the
12 best job are not going to have the highest priority for
13 eligibility. And somebody in some office is going to
14 decide that.

15 So, I think in my opinion, the guys that have
16 already jumped all the hurdles, they're the number-one
17 priority; they get the first money. Then the guys that
18 are furthest behind get -- are the last priority. It
19 looks to me like the way the program is written, that's
20 going to be opposite. So, if you've already done
21 everything, like you guys have, you're the first on the
22 list to get the money.

23 Secondly, who's going to police the program?
24 That's the biggest issue. And that was the failure of the

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1 Conservation Compliance Program. It was a good program,
2 but nobody wanted to follow up. I could have done
3 anything I wanted to, and people did. And it varied a lot
4 by counties, by states. Who really followed the

5 Conservation Compliance issues? Not very many people.

6 MR. COVENTRY: I'm having trouble hearing you.

7 MR. KINSELLA: I'll use this. The problem, as
8 I saw it, with Conservation Compliance is nobody wanted to
9 follow up. And this is a great program, and it was a
10 great program, but nobody really took the policeman role.
11 I think NRCS would have to be the policeman.

12 Secondly, the outside vendors really concern
13 me. Writing a plan and policing a plan, somebody's going
14 to have to do it. NRCS is short of people. If this thing
15 really goes and gets funded, you guys are going to need
16 more people. You're going to have to be the policemen and
17 check on these things. You cannot allow outside vendors
18 that are selling us farmers stuff. I spent over \$120,000
19 on chemicals this year, \$86,000 -- just doing my taxes --
20 on seed. All these guys are, are CCAs; they're just
21 sitting there licking their chops to get at a selling
22 opportunity to get me to buy their stuff. And they'll
23 write me a good plan, and -- are they going to come out
24 with a \$100,000 potential sales on, on their books and

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1 tell me I'm not in compliance, because I'll just go to the
2 next guy that will give me a better plan, that will offer
3 me -- he will police me and make me qualify. We have to
4 have NRCS be the policeman.

5 My last thing is on the rents that Lance
6 brought up. I commend -- I think all these are
7 conservation. This is the land. It's going to go to the
8 owners one way or the other, so we, as farmers, have to
9 say, okay, they own the land. If you own an apartment
10 building and you're a renter, you don't have a heck of a

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11 lot to say what they're going to get. So, we are the
12 renters. I own some, but we rent most of our land; we
13 mostly cash rent.

14 I think that is a good -- I think the
15 five-year -- I would like to see a ten-year requirement,
16 and I think what that's going to do is put these owners
17 back on a requirement, rather than to go out and put this
18 land out to the highest bidders, to the people who can
19 rape the ground the most and get out of there. They will
20 have an incentive; they get 30 bucks an acre, 45 bucks an
21 acre to sign these long-term leases to somebody who will
22 take care of the ground. So, I compliment the agency for
23 doing that. I would like to see a mandatory lease.

24 The last thing -- and my five minutes are

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1 probably up, but I go by Terry's watch, so the -- now I
2 lost my -- I lost my train of thought there, Terry.

3 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Talking about the land.

4 MR. KINSELLA: The land, going back to the
5 land. I had one really good final point here, but I can't
6 remember it. Part of the aging process, I guess.

7 Thanks a lot for letting me speak.

8 MS. BUCK: If you think of that last third
9 point, we'll give you the mike back.

10 MR. KINSELLA: Tomorrow I'll call you.

11 MR. DOZIER: You've got one more second.

12 MS. BUCK: All right. Anybody else want to
13 speak?

14 MR. COVENTRY: I think I have about 30 seconds
15 left from my previous time. I'm still curious, how many

16 people in here would like to know who's really driving the
17 decisions on this? Wouldn't you like to know whether
18 Monsanto or some big seed company, what their special
19 interests are that are driving the legislation that's
20 going to wind up being decided this way? How many in here
21 would like to know that and be able to write letters to
22 them?

23 MR. TAROCHIONE: I can answer that for you.
24 We are.

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1 MR. KINSELLA: I think the people who are
2 driving it are anybody that cares about their environment.
3 For once, I don't think special interests really is --
4 John Deere sure isn't.

5 MR. COVENTRY: I'm talking about the
6 legislation that's being enacted.

7 MR. KINSELLA: Yeah, I think the environmental
8 groups are, and outside interests. I, I don't think
9 special interests -- I don't think the business is driving
10 this one, in my opinion.

11 MR. DAVIS: I think the budget is probably the
12 biggest issue that the federal government has to work with
13 right now. OMB has put some definite restrictions.

14 MS. BUCK: Anybody else?

15 MR. BIELFELDT: Going back to the cash rent,
16 my son has farmed the same farm for 20 years, and he
17 absolutely didn't want nothing to do with conservation
18 whatsoever. So, since he's had it this long, I would say
19 that making him have a five-year wouldn't hurt a thing. I
20 think it would give him more interest in taking care of
21 it. Because we had waterways in, he told us to take them

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22 out, he wouldn't pay us, take it off the acreage of the
23 farm, so we took them back out.

24 But we're conserving. We use stalk stand now,

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1 and water -- the waterways are level here. They were two
2 or three feet deep at one time.

3 MR. RUTHERFORD: Jim Rutherford. I'm with the
4 McLean County Soil Conservation Service -- Soil and Water
5 Conservation District. I used to work for the SCS years
6 ago. I'm also a landowner. I have one question, and I
7 don't know that it's been answered, is cross-compliance.
8 In other words, if you're a cash renter, would all parcels
9 have to be in compliance, or are they on an individual
10 basis? That's one comment I have.

11 I've had experience in the watersheds of Lake
12 Bloomington on a nutrient management project back in '01
13 and '02. It was funded by the IEPA, and third-party
14 vendors were the ones that developed the plans for this
15 nutrient management project. And this was funded by the
16 EPA. NRCS approved the plans.

17 And in the year -- Lake Bloomington watersheds
18 had 43,000 acres and probably 18,000 acres of corn. The
19 first year we had the project, we paid \$7 an acre -- \$5 to
20 the producer, \$2 to the third-party vendor. We got 6,000
21 acres in compliance following the nutrient management
22 plan, based on the U of I recommendations. The following
23 year, it was increased to \$9 an acre; the City of
24 Bloomington contributed towards that \$2 an acre. We

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1 increased that to 10,000 acres.

2 My point is that -- make it user-friendly. In
3 other words, don't get so much red tape involved that the
4 producers, just when they walk in the door and listen to
5 you for five minutes, they're going to walk back out the
6 door. You gotta make it friendly to them, and you gotta
7 make it profitable to them.

8 The State came in with a project, Conservation
9 Practices Program this year, through the CPP program, as
10 it's called. We managed the project on a \$5-an-acre
11 basis; \$2, I think it is, to third-party vendor. But it
12 was a four-year contract, only going to get paid for one
13 year. Basically, the producers laughed at you, you know.
14 Who's going to sign a contract for four years, only get
15 paid for one? I don't know what I'm going to do this
16 afternoon sometimes, but that's because of old age,
17 basically.

18 But my main point is the program's got to be
19 user-friendly, and they've got to be paid a decent
20 cost-sharing reimbursement back to make it profitable.

21 Thank you.

22 MS. BUCK: Thanks, Jim. Maybe it would help
23 if everybody looked over the power point presentation.
24 During that presentation, if something came up that you

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1 had a question about or that you were concerned about,
2 just feel free just to throw those questions out, just so
3 we can capture them.

4 Terry wants more time.

5 MR. DAVIS: Embarrassed as I am to ask for
6 this, but clarification that -- what I was needing to get

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7 at, and I knew I was running long is the reason I cut my
8 comments short. But on land rental, I would like to use
9 an example. You get someone that's willing to commit into
10 a Tier III commitment on the entire area of their
11 operation. They do have some cash-rented land. For
12 whatever reason, within that five-year to ten-year period,
13 they lose that part of their operation. The contract goes
14 with the land and not with the person that's farming the
15 land. The new tenant comes on the farm; he decides he
16 doesn't want to comply with those program requirements.
17 The landlord's not tied to the contract; it's the tenant,
18 the producer that's on the farm that's tied to the
19 contract.

20 My fear is that if someone else comes into
21 this land -- because land does change hands so many times
22 in the course of a ten-year period -- that the previous
23 tenant would lose his entire program benefit for
24 everything he's done over the remaining of his operation

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1 because he lost the farm that was not due to his control.

2 And in the current rules, that is something
3 that is -- has to be maintained for those years. And that
4 was my concern, was if that's lost, then whatever had been
5 done for the remaining of the operation, that it's the
6 tenant that's going to be penalized and not the landlord.

7 MS. BUCK: Any other final questions or
8 thoughts?

9 MR. KINSELLA: I remembered what I was going
10 to -- Terry jogged my memory, and Jim, too. But the way I
11 understand -- and I read the whole thing, and you did a

12 good job of summarizing it, but it sounds like if a
13 producer, if a farmer has to -- on all the land that he
14 controls has to be in that tier, in other words, comply
15 with everything, and if -- to kind of -- Terry jogged my
16 memory a little bit. But if one is not -- if one landlord
17 doesn't want to go along, I assume he'll just have to drop
18 that land. Is that correct?

19 Is it the same about the land -- the
20 landowners have to have all of their land under control,
21 it all has to be in? Is that correct?

22 MR. DOZIER: (Nodding head.)

23 MR. KINSELLA: So, I think it is positive for
24 the renter because we have a lot of people now running

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1 around now renting 40, 50,000 acres, and there's no way in
2 the world that they're going to have everything in
3 compliance. So, I think you need to keep that in there
4 and be strict about that.

5 And also be strict on the limit of operations
6 because the big farmers have found a way to get around all
7 that stuff. And I think -- it's kind of written in here.
8 It's much more -- there's being more hoops to jump through
9 to make sure an operation is an operation and not just a
10 cover for a whole big operation.

11 So, I compliment you on that, and I think it
12 needs to stay. And all operations have to be in, both
13 from a landowner and a tenant operation.

14 But what Terry addressed is that one --
15 conditions beyond your control. If a piece of land sells
16 that you've got a ten-year contract on, you have to --
17 your obligation is over with if you lose that land.

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18 MS. BUCK: All right. Anybody else? I hate
19 to shut things down if you've got an itching, burning
20 question or comment that you're --

21 MR. BIELFELDT: Is he trying to say that -- is
22 he trying to suggest that we have the next -- when you
23 sell the farm, he didn't agree to do that contract, keep
24 the contract? I don't know if that's possible, but --

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1 with cash rent, I think they can get through that
2 somewhere. I don't know how exactly.

3 MS. BUCK: Ivan, did you want to try to
4 respond to that or just -- should we just capture the
5 question?

6 MR. DOZIER: We can capture the question. But
7 again, the way it's written right now, it just simply
8 states that you have to control the land; you have to be
9 able to control the land for the life of that contract.
10 So, our interpretation right now would be that if, if you
11 gave it up, you're not controlling the land anymore;
12 you're not living up to your part of the contract, whether
13 you were an owner or a tenant.

14 MR. KINSELLA: But there has to be provisions
15 if the land's sold that you can't -- if it's beyond your
16 control, then that -- that's our point. That if some
17 outside intervention, somebody sells the land or whatever,
18 the landowner takes it away from you, there has to be that
19 provision. And I don't see it in here.

20 MR. DOZIER: That's something we'll try to
21 capture. For example, with CRP, people have mentioned
22 that contract can go with a new owner if it's sold. So,

23 we'll try to capture that, see if we can get answers.

24 MR. KINSELLA: But the difference is that CRP

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1 just involves that piece of ground, maybe five acres.
2 This involves your whole operation. You would lose
3 everything. I mean, you would lose the payment of
4 whatever tier you were in on, if you farmed ten acres and
5 the guy takes it away from you, you got a contract on it,
6 you would lose it on your other 2,000 acres, as it's
7 written.

8 MR. DOZIER: Good point.

9 MS. CAVANAUGH-GRANT: I can't say who I
10 represent; I just represent myself. My name's Deborah
11 Cavanaugh-Grant, and I'm from Menard County. I have a
12 question concerning the evaluation component.

13 MR. GRADLE: We don't want to answer those
14 questions.

15 (Laughter.)

16 MS. CAVANAUGH-GRANT: Okay. Just my concern
17 then. Can I give you my concern then? If you look on
18 page six of this piece that you passed out, it talked
19 about environmental performance, evaluation and
20 accountability. It says, "NRCS will endeavor to use CSP
21 as an opportunity to learn more about the benefits and
22 costs that derive from conservation practices. Careful
23 evaluation" -- and it goes on.

24 Then it says that using these enhancement

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1 components -- you know, it's number five of what Ivan went
2 over -- that farmers would be given points or benefits if

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3 they did assessment and evaluation. I just wonder, what
4 formal evaluation process is going to occur because you're
5 talking about a billion dollar program. And I think
6 that's one of the criticisms that's been made about
7 conservation programs through time, is what are the
8 benefits? This is a lot of money to spend, and so is the
9 onus for evaluation and reporting on these programs on the
10 producers? Do you have the capacity as an agency to do
11 that kind of comprehensive evaluation? You know, who is
12 going to do that? That's just my question.

13 MR. DOZIER: Bill said I can go ahead and
14 answer that.

15 MS. CAVANAUGH-GRANT: Oh, good. Thank you.
16 (Laughter.)

17 MR. DOZIER: No, I was just going to say
18 that's just one possible example of an enhancement, an
19 above and beyond thing. Monitoring is one of those
20 things. And some of these people already said they have
21 things set up. This gentleman over here said he already
22 participates in a water quality monitoring system.
23 There's another group that comes out there and does that.
24 That's the kind of thing that we're looking at

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1 as above and beyond, as an example of an enhancement.

2 MS. CAVANAUGH-GRANT: But when you read this
3 piece that you give, it talks about NRCS is going to
4 ground-truth from their predictive models and all of these
5 kind of things. I'm just saying we've spent how many
6 billions of dollars in a federal program, and you're going
7 to do baseline evaluation of all these enterprises, which

8 is great because we'll have a sense of what's on the
9 landscape. And then from any evaluation, if you start at
10 this baseline, and then you would do these things, and
11 then how is that going to be measured, and what type of
12 analysis can be done to say, you know, we spent X amount
13 of dollars, and these are the benefits to the landscape
14 and to the community?

15 That's just my question.

16 MR. GRADLE: So put that in a --

17 MS. CAVANAUGH-GRANT: I have my notebook
18 ready, and we're going to submit that.

19 MS. BUCK: She's got until March 2nd.

20 Any other questions? Oh. Since Mike, the
21 McLean County Farm Bureau manager, is in the building, I
22 just wanted to once again thank him for letting us use
23 this facility, getting us all set up today with this
24 microphone and everything.

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1 So, thank you, Mike.

2 All right. One more comment?

3 MR. TAROCHIONE: I would love -- and these
4 debates may be going on nationally, but I would love to
5 see some debate as regards to funding. We all want to see
6 the program fully funded, but when you look at all the
7 acres of land we have in this country that's agricultural,
8 and 7 billion dollars spread out over ten years, if you
9 start figuring ten years' worth of payments on a per-acre
10 basis across 80 million acres of cropland in the United
11 States, you're talking peanuts as far as, you know, how
12 many acres can be impacted. So -- and it's always going
13 to be tougher -- tough to spend more money on agricultural

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14 programs, but we spend a lot of money already on
15 agricultural programs that have nothing to do with
16 conservation. And I would love to see some debate about
17 rolling a lot of those dollars into a program like CSP.
18 And so we take the 8 billion dollars a year that we
19 already spend, or some fraction of that, and add that to
20 the 7 and, and get more to a system where, in a world
21 economy, where we're rewarding people for conservation
22 practices, which seem to be accepted globally from a trade
23 perspective more so than what we do currently.

24 MS. BUCK: Thank you.

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1 MR. BIELFELDT: I wanted to ask them one
2 question. I was wondering if you would -- do you have any
3 idea who's testing on my farm? Is it a state or --

4 MR. GRADLE: It isn't us.

5 MR. BIELFELDT: Well, I just wondered if
6 anybody had any idea because I thought they said state.

7 MR. HUGGINS: Nature Conservancy is doing
8 that. The Nature Conservancy has a pilot project in that
9 area.

10 MR. BIELFELDT: There is one on Fogwell
11 (inaudible). There's one on our farm.

12 MR. GRADLE: These two people right up here.

13 MS. BUCK: See, I knew we could get you to say
14 something.

15 MR. BIELFELDT: Are you the person who's been
16 out there?

17 MR. HUGGINS: Yeah, we have been to your
18 place.

19 MR. BIELFELDT: You've had coffee. Okay.

20 MR. HUGGINS: Relative to the program and the
21 dollars involved -- and it talks about monitoring. We
22 just got a C2000 grant for \$275,000 to put in monitoring
23 on a demonstration farm. The monitoring that this
24 gentleman's talking about we've been at for five years and

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1 have probably spent \$400,000. This program will not fund
2 monitoring in the way it's written, not monitoring to any
3 competent scientific degree.

4 And so I, I think the intent of the program is
5 wonderful, but it either needs to be scaled in size to
6 where the programs can be demonstrated and monitored, or
7 it needs to be scaled in dollars to where we can get the
8 benefits we talked about.

9 MS. HINGSON: Jack, can you tell the recorder
10 your name?

11 MR. HUGGINS: Oh, I'm sorry. I'm Jack
12 Huggins. I'm with the Nature Conservancy.

13 MS. BUCK: Thanks, Jack.

14 Any other comments? Jim?

15 MR. KINSELLA: Jim Kinsella. I got another 30
16 seconds left. The thing that I think is missing from the
17 program is PR. The public has spent a lot of money on
18 this, supposedly. Agriculture is under a hit right now as
19 far as funding. You hear every night in Washington, the
20 news is we're spending all this money on agriculture, so I
21 think it needs to have a lot of PR.

22 I traveled with Bill Richards for about three
23 days a couple weeks ago, and his idea is -- he had a lot
24 of good ideas, but one of them is a good PR move would

1 make -- a Tier III farmer would be or farm would be a
 2 Master Conservationist or Master Conservation Farm. Put
 3 signs up. Let the public know that the money they're
 4 spending is going to good use. And I can envision signs
 5 along the highway of "Master Conservation Farm" that would
 6 be some return for the investment they're putting in.

7 So, I think we haven't done a very good job of
 8 putting the benefits of the program out to the public
 9 that's paying for it.

10 MR. GRADLE: You said we needed a lot of PR.
 11 Could you define "a lot"?

12 MR. KINSELLA: We need a lot more PR, I guess,
 13 maybe.

14 MR. GRADLE: Positive PR?

15 MR. KINSELLA: Positive PR, I guess.

16 MR. GRADLE: Throw a number out.

17 MR. KINSELLA: A number?

18 MR. GRADLE: We got a recorder. She would
 19 love to capture it all.

20 MR. KINSELLA: I don't know. Maybe, at the
 21 beginning, at least 5 percent. Is that what companies
 22 spend, Lance?

23 MR. TAROCHIONE: We're tight. We probably
 24 don't spend that much.

1 MR. KINSELLA: I'm not a market person, but if
 2 you're spending --

3 MR. GRADLE: You're the best marketer we got

4 in this room.

5 MR. KINSELLA: A portion of that money, I
6 think, ought to go to public relations on the program
7 because the public is paying for it. We're not paying for
8 it; the public's paying for it. And it's an ag -- right
9 now it's presented as an ag program, and we got these ag
10 forums, but the public knows nothing about what we're
11 talking about. Thank you.

12 MS. BUCK: I think that's a great idea, more
13 money for public relations. Sorry.

14 Any other comments, things that haven't
15 surfaced over the last hour?

16 MR. COVENTRY: I think I have ten seconds
17 left. I grew up in Shelby County. I've never been a
18 farmer, but I've been surrounded by farmers all my life.
19 I remember Shelby County being crisscrossed -- every
20 section of land was crisscrossed with trees, and that was
21 just before the war. And some time soon after the war,
22 somebody said something about food being a weapon, and all
23 the trees disappeared. And where were we then, and where
24 are we now? And how did we get here, and who drove us?

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1 MR. FISHER: I got five seconds. I go along
2 with Jim. Butch Fisher with Douglas County. We need more
3 money for PR. We got -- we need to get the passion back
4 in it. CSP can do it, folks, because it will reward the
5 best and motivate the rest, and that's all it is. We
6 don't want to take one farmer out and bring him up. We
7 tried that before, and all they did was shoot arrows at
8 him. But if we bring the concept of conservation, tillage
9 especially -- and I hate to say it -- but no till, you

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10 know, be what -- but if we can bring those up to a level
11 that all the other farmers want to, then that has to be
12 done through PR. We need to get out there because we got
13 too many coffee shops, too many people bad -- downplay
14 conservation, and we need to bring that up.

15 So, we've got it here, folks, if we can just
16 put some money. 10 percent, I'd say at least 10 percent
17 of the -- whatever we're putting into it needs to go to
18 PR. And get a good company to do it.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. BUCK: Thanks.

21 MR. RUTHERFORD: Jim Rutherford again. I
22 probably shouldn't even make this comment, but we talked
23 about soil and -- saving the soil and clean the air and
24 clean the water, but I think probably down the road one of

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1 our biggest things we need to look at nationwide is the
2 amount of water we have available. And any practice that
3 we have or can promote in recharging the subsurface
4 waters, underground aquifers through wetlands and so forth
5 -- and I realize this is a major problem in McLean County
6 and other counties surrounding, with land selling for
7 \$45,000 an acre and developing wetlands, but any type of
8 practice that we can promote that will help promote
9 quantity of water in the future as well as quality I think
10 would be a plus.

11 MS. BUCK: Thank you. Anybody else?

12 MR. BIELFELDT: I got one more statement. In
13 our drainage district, we got one farmer that wants to put
14 a lake out on his farm. And we've been discussing it, and

15 he's planning -- hoping to. I don't know where he's
16 supposed to -- who he has to see about getting payment
17 (sic) on it or anything. But as president of my drainage
18 district, he wants to build a -- you know, our district,
19 over our tile. And I haven't never gave him permission
20 yet. I don't even know who he has to go through, whether
21 he has to get permission from somebody to build a lake on
22 his farm or how that works.

23 Do you folks have anything on that?

24 MS. BUCK: We'll just capture that question.

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1 MR. RUTHERFORD: I'm not sure that this is --
2 what Mr. Bielfeldt was talking about is basically on the
3 topic we've been talking about now, but I think his
4 concern is that the ILICA is having a field day in the
5 eastern part of McLean County this year, and the landowner
6 is going to build a lake. And as far as I know, he would
7 have to get permission -- if he did anything to the
8 subsurface tile which is owned by the drainage district,
9 he would have to have permission to do that, and that
10 would be --

11 MR. BIELFELDT: He asked for my permission. I
12 haven't given it to him.

13 MR. RUTHERFORD: This is something that he
14 will have to contact you.

15 MS. BUCK: Sounds like you need to go down to
16 the NRCS office and have a talk.

17 All right. If everybody is done -- we can
18 take a break, get a drink, use the facilities, and if you
19 still have something you want to come back and speak to an
20 empty room, if that's safer for you, feel free.

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21 But unless anybody else -- I don't want to
22 keep you here any longer than necessary, so let's give
23 this back to Bill and let him close things out.

24 Do you want to close things out?

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1 MR. GRADLE: I guess so. I'd like to thank
2 the McLean County Farm Bureau again for hosting us here
3 today, and I would also like to thank each and every one
4 of you who gave us comments. For those who didn't give
5 comments, we appreciate your presence, and I'm sure you
6 had a reason for not commenting. I talked to some of you
7 before you came in here; I know the reasons why.

8 But, you know, as we said earlier, we really
9 weren't here to debate funding. The actual rule is
10 published right now, the rule is actually the agency
11 position, so we really, other than sitting here
12 attentively listening to your comments -- and I really
13 again do want to thank you for those comments because they
14 are going to help us mold a better program, formulate a
15 better program. That's the only way that -- without your
16 input, we'd be missing the mark.

17 We are having these listening sessions all
18 over the country. There was ten national ones scheduled,
19 and every state's really having at least one, other than
20 those ten. So, I think we're going to gather some pretty
21 good comments from across the country.

22 And again, you know, we're trying to implement
23 a nationwide program. And there's always something that
24 doesn't quite fit in any particular state no matter where

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1 you are. But we're committed, Chief Knight's committed to
2 get us the best possible program he can. And I think with
3 your help, we can see it through.

4 Thank you very much. Thank you very much to
5 our reporter and have a safe trip home. Thank you.

6 MS. BUCK: If you did bring written comments
7 and want to drop them in the box on your way out, we'll
8 make sure we spelled everything right and got everything
9 correct.

10 (whereupon, the proceedings were concluded at
11 2:35 p.m.)

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1 STATE OF ILLINOIS :
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3 COUNTY OF PEORIA :

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I, JENNIFER E. JOHNSON, CSR, RMR, CRR, and
Notary Public in and for the County of Tazewell, State of
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Illinois, do hereby certify that the foregoing transcript
of proceedings is true and correct to the best of my
knowledge and belief;

That I am not related to any of the parties
hereto by blood or marriage, nor shall I benefit by the
outcome of this matter financially or otherwise.

JENNIFER E. JOHNSON
License #084-003039
CSR, RMR, CRR
Notary Public, State of
Illinois at Large

My Commission expires May 8, 2005.