



News Release

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"Connecting Cows, Cooperatives, Capitol Hill, and Consumers"

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NMPF Welcomes Addition of Republican Congressional Cosponsor Mike Simpson for Foundation for the Future Dairy Policy Package

ARLINGTON, VA – Congressman Mike Simpson of Idaho's second district, a senior Republican from one of the largest dairy states, announced today he will be a cosponsor of the draft legislation incorporating the key elements of NMPF's Foundation for the Future program.

The National Milk Producers Federation hailed this development as "an important step in demonstrating the bipartisan, national scope of the effort to reform dairy policy," according to NMPF President and CEO Jerry Kozak.

While not yet formally introduced, the dairy reform package text has been released by the House Agriculture Committee's Ranking Democratic Member, Collin Peterson (D-MN): http://democrats.agriculture.house.gov/inside/Legislation/PETEMN_001_xml_071111.pdf. The legislative language is termed a discussion draft, rather than a bill, as it now allows members of Congress to view the language, prior to it being formally introduced as a bill. Peterson, along with Simpson, will now be seeking additional cosponsors, of both parties, to cosponsor and introduce the legislation once Congress returns from its August recess after Labor Day.

According to the Idaho Dairymen's Association, the state trade group for dairy farmers, Simpson's support of the Foundation for the Future legislation is evidence of his commitment to the economic well-being of Idaho's dairy producers.

"Congressman Simpson understands how important the dairy sector is to Idaho, and how much our farmers need a better safety net than what current federal policy offers," said Mike Roth, President of the IDA, and a farmer from Jerome, ID. "The approach he's supporting allows us, as the third-largest dairy state, to have real economic protection, while still enjoying the opportunity to grow in the future."

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California's Milk Producers Council, another western trade group of dairy farmers, also praised Simpson for joining Peterson in backing the legislation.

"As a member of both the Budget and Appropriations Committees in the House of Representatives, Congressman Simpson understands how critical it will be to do more with less in terms of farm program spending in the future. That's why his endorsement of this approach to creating new dairy policy is important beyond just the farm sector," said Rob Vandenheuvel of the Milk Producers Council.

Kozak said that NMPF will continue working with Peterson and Simpson to build support for the legislative draft so that Congress can take it up for consideration as soon as possible after its August recess concludes.

The National Milk Producers Federation, based in Arlington, VA, develops and carries out policies that advance the well being of dairy producers and the cooperatives they own. The members of NMPF's 31 cooperatives produce the majority of the U.S. milk supply, making NMPF the voice of more than 40,000 dairy producers on Capitol Hill and with government agencies. For more on NMPF's activities, visit our website at www.nmpf.org.