

Legislative work encompasses many issues

Agriculture

Crop Insurance

Congressman Nunes opposes a proposed reduction of \$41 million dollars in crop insurance and contacted Secretary Anne Veneman of United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to express his concerns.

Currently, there are only 14 Standard Reinsurance Agreement (SRA) holders operating in the continental US. However, only two of the SRA holders deliver crop insurance in all states. Crop insurance is the USDA's principal means of helping farmers survive a crop loss. The program provides American farmers with more than \$41 billion in risk protection on approximately 220 million acres through about 1.2 million policies. The participation rate for major program crops was approximately 82 percent. Without crop insurance, many farmers would have difficulty obtaining operating loans to plant a crop. Crop insurance has become an integral thread of the financial safety net for rural America. Recently, the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC) and the Risk Management Agency (RMA) proposed to reduce funding for private companies that deliver crop insurance by \$41 million. This will compound existing problems, which has resulted in significant and disconcerting industry consolidation over the past five years. Under the terms of the current SRA, the crop insurance industry has lost five companies since 2002:

The largest writer of crop insurance became insolvent, two other companies merged and two major reinsurance companies pulled out of the crop insurance market.

Family Farms

The Farm Service Agency recently proposed several federal rule changes to streamline regulations under the guaranteed loan program. As part of the new proposed rules, FSA included a definition of "family farm" that excludes producers with more than \$750,000 in gross income. This would end many farmers eligibility for direct or guaranteed loan programs. Farm Services Agency also proposed to clamp down on family members currently involved in a farming operation by limiting the definition of a "family farm operation" to one consisting of husband, wife, parent, child, brother or sister relationships. These changes would negatively impact many family farms in the San Joaquin Valley, undermining access to capital and ending long-standing FSA relationships with hard working farmers. Congressman Nunes opposes the rule changes and communicated his opposition to USDA.

Stone Fruit Trade with Mexico

Mexico is a market of increasing interest to California producers of stone fruits – including peaches, nectarines, plums and apricots. However, Mexico has continually increased the

scope and degree of its phytosanitary restrictions on California's exports to the point where they effectively constitute non-tariff trade barriers.

Earlier this year the industry was finally unwilling to accept the numerous unjustified conditions for a non-fumigation systems approach, and discussions for the 2004 season concluded without an agreement. As a result, all exported stone fruit in 2004 must be fumigated with methyl bromide, a process that significantly reduces the product's market value and shelf-life, particularly for apricots. Recognizing the importance of addressing this matter prior to the 2005 harvest, Congressman Nunes joined other Representatives from California urging swift, decisive action by the United States Department of Agriculture and the United States Trade Representative. Specifically, Mr. Nunes called for the Administration's assistance in developing trade rules that embody a reasonable, scientifically justified approach. In order to achieve such a result, a strong message must be delivered to the Mexican government, including an insistence that sound scientific principles, credible evidence, and other international commitments be the basis for Mexican phytosanitary measures.

Business

Congressman Nunes signed onto a letter supporting the Women's Business

Quick Facts

In May, at the request of constituents, Rep. Nunes flew 11 American flags over the U.S. Capitol