EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

May 15, 2018
(House Rules)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 2 - Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018

(Rep. Conaway, R-TX)

The Administration supports H.R. 2, the Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018, and appreciates the work of House Agriculture Committee Chairman Mike Conaway (R-TX) and Members of the House Agriculture Committee to pass a farm bill in a manner that provides certainty to our Nation's farmers, ranchers, and foresters and enacts common-sense work requirements as part of the overall requirements for eligibility for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. The Administration believes that work reforms like those in H.R. 2 are a critical component of any multi-year farm bill reauthorization.

Since taking office, President Trump has made modernization of our Nation's antiquated welfare system a priority. Through the Executive Order entitled "Reducing Poverty in America by Promoting Opportunity and Economic Mobility," issued on April 10, 2018, the President has placed an emphasis on ending dependency and promoting work—goals that will ultimately benefit millions of Americans. To that end, by including strong work requirements for able-bodied participants in SNAP, H.R. 2 takes a major step toward the President's vision of welfare reform. These reforms would require adult SNAP participants who are able to work to do so. It would also provide services that help individuals find work and encourage self-sufficiency. In contrast to previous farm bills that have contained minimal reforms to SNAP work requirements, H.R. 2 is clearly a step toward meaningful welfare reform.

The Administration also appreciates that the bill contains many of the SNAP recommendations from the President's Fiscal Year 2019 Budget, including fixing SNAP eligibility loopholes that allow individuals with assets or incomes above the intended limits to participate. We look forward to continued discussion about ensuring that increases to earned income deductions do not expand eligibility to households that are not already eligible.

Additionally, the Administration appreciates that the bill reduces overly generous payments for participating in the Conservation Reserve Program, eliminates the Conservation Stewardship Program, and pursues management and regulatory reforms on public lands.

The Administration would like to highlight several concerns with H.R. 2. The Administration believes the bill should not increase spending over the five-year authorization or the ten-year baseline of the bill. The Administration is also concerned that the bill does not include additional reforms to improve the cost-effectiveness of farm and conservation programs that were proposed in the President's Fiscal Year 2019 Budget. The Administration would support a reform of the Title II food aid program through the farm bill that would maximize resources in responding to global food crises and promoting food security.

The Administration supports a multi-year farm bill that provides long-term certainty to rural America and promotes regulatory and spending reforms across farm and nutrition programs. Overall, H.R. 2 is a positive step in that direction.

If H.R. 2 were presented to the President in its current form, his advisors would recommend that he sign the bill into law.

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