FARM BUREAU ARKANSAS

May 9, 2025

The Honorable John Boozman
Chair
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry
555 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry
425 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Brad Doyle Opening Statement

Dear Chairman Boozman & Ranking Member Klobuchar:

Thank you, Chairman Boozman, Ranking Member Klobuchar, and members of the Committee.

It is an honor to be here this afternoon. On behalf of Arkansas Farm Bureau, and its over 180,000 members, I would like to say how incredibly proud we are of Chairman Boozman and his leadership. Mr. Chairman, thank you for all you do for Arkansas producers, and American agriculture.

My name is Brad Doyle. I am a third-generation farmer in Poinsett County, Arkansas. Along with my wife Joyce, we farm rice, soybeans, and wheat. Our family has been farming this land for over 100 years. We also run our family business, Eagle Seed, a seed production resource that provides soybean, rice, corn, and wheat seed to farmers across the U.S. and Canada.

The United States is home to the most affordable, reliable, and abundant food supply in the world. Many of your constituents dedicate their lives to the land, providing the knowledge, labor, and financial investment necessary for the United States to remain a world leader in food and fiber production.

In recognition of the risk and responsibility placed on American farmers, Congress has invested in agriculture for over 90 years. The first farm programs created by Congress were a direct response to the Dust Bowl and the Great Depression. During another period of true crisis for production agriculture in the mid-1980s, Congress passed the first unified farm bill that combined land retirement conservation programs with crop insurance and commodity support programs. American row crop farmers are facing another historic breaking point.

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As this Committee has heard over the past several months, the current state of the U.S. agricultural economy reveals a widening and unsustainable gap between the prices farmers are paid for their products and the prices they must pay to produce them.

Crop farmers, like me, have been hit especially hard. According to USDA's Farm Sector Income Forecast, inflation-adjusted crop cash receipts have declined since 2022 by $67 billion — or 22%, while input costs for essentials like seed, chemicals, repairs, and taxes remain at near record levels.

Farmers today are caught between collapsing commodity prices and stubbornly high production costs. Despite recent improvements in risk management tools like crop insurance and ad hoc government assistance, the disparity between prices received and prices paid has widened dramatically, threatening the financial viability of farms across the nation.

Unless structural changes are enacted — through a modernized farm bill that provides commodity support that reflects the cost of production, enhanced risk management tools, meaningful investment in trade and strengthened conservation support — the United States risks irreversible damage to its agricultural foundation.

The conservation title, the focus of today's hearing, provides financial and technical support for farmers and ranchers who voluntarily implement conservation practices.

Let me give you an example.

In 1985, Joyce's father saw a need to build the first reservoir on the farm, where he took 100 acres out of production. In 2019, Joyce and her brothers started plans to apply for an EQIP funded project to build another 45-acre reservoir on the opposite end of the farm to help with irrigation pumping capacity. Irrigation timing and the management of excess water on a flat rice and soybean farm are critical to crop production.

The project was completed in 2023 with a cover crop plan in place for 2024.

With limited funds available, it is critically important to formulate a plan, get on the waiting list, and follow the detailed criteria to allow the local NRCS office to support and fund such a project.

The demand for these programs consistently outpaces available funding, leading to a need for more robust support in future farm bills. In the 2018 farm bill, conservation programs accounted for only 7% of the total farm bill spending. As Congress works to develop the next farm bill, the inclusion of additional funds, namely those allocated to agriculture conservation in the Inflation

Reduction Act would allow more producers to implement conservation practices ensuring healthy farmland for generations to come.

Finally, it is critically important that our Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Services offices remain open and available to meet the needs of your constituents. These centers provide essential programs and support that American farmers and ranchers rely on daily.

American farm families urgently need durable, forward-looking policy solutions, like updating reference prices in ARC and PLC to reflect today's actual production costs; expanding crop insurance options that better protect against margin loss; increasing funding for working lands conservation programs like EQIP and CSP; and modernizing disaster assistance to deliver timely, predictable relief. These actions are not just policy upgrades — they are necessary investments in the long-term profitability, resilience, and future of American agriculture.

Again, it is an honor to be before you this afternoon, and I look forward to answering your questions. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Brad Doyle
Arkansas Producer
Arkansas Farm Bureau Board Member