



# Conservation and Crop Insurance: Lessons from the Agricultural Act of 2014

United States Senate Committee on  
**AGRICULTURE  
NUTRITION  
& FORESTRY**



# 2014 Farm Bill

- \$23 Billion saved
- \$16 Billion from Commodity title
- Eliminate Direct Payments
- Significant Expansion of Crop Insurance
- Crop Insurance Title included new provisions for cotton, rice, specialty crops, and conservation compliance

# Today

1. How did conservation compliance come to pass?
2. What lessons can we learn from debate over conservation compliance in 2014 Farm Bill?
3. What is the political coalition of the future for the federal crop insurance program?

# Timeline of the 2014 Farm Bill

2011



**May 2011**

*Senate's 1st  
Hearing on Farm Bill*

**Nov 2011**

*Joint Select  
Committee for  
Deficit Reduction  
"Super Committee"*

1<sup>st</sup>

**June 2012**

*Senate Passage  
of 2012 Farm Bill*

**April 2012**

*Senate Cmte Markup  
of 2012 Farm Bill  
House Cmte Markup  
of 2012 Farm Bill*

3<sup>rd</sup>

2<sup>nd</sup>

**Jan 2013**

*1-year extension of  
most Farm Bill  
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4<sup>th</sup>

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**July 2013**

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of 2013 Farm Bill  
(No nutrition title)*

**Feb 7, 2014:**  
President  
Obama Signs  
Farm Bill into  
law.

**Jan 2014**

*House Passes  
Conference Report  
Senate Passes  
Conference Report*

5<sup>th</sup>

## 2012 Senate Floor Votes

- Coburn-Durbin: 750K AGI test
  - ✓ Passed 66-33 (60 vote threshold)
- Thune: 750K AGI test with study as a trigger
  - ✗ Failed 44-55 (60 vote threshold)
- Gillibrand: SNAP with \$2 billion crop insurance offset
  - ✗ Failed 33-66
- Feinstein: insurance for food-safety
  - ✓ Passed 76-23
- Merkley: crop insurance for organics
  - ✓ Passed 63-36
- Chambliss: proto-conservation compliance
  - ✓ Passed 52-47

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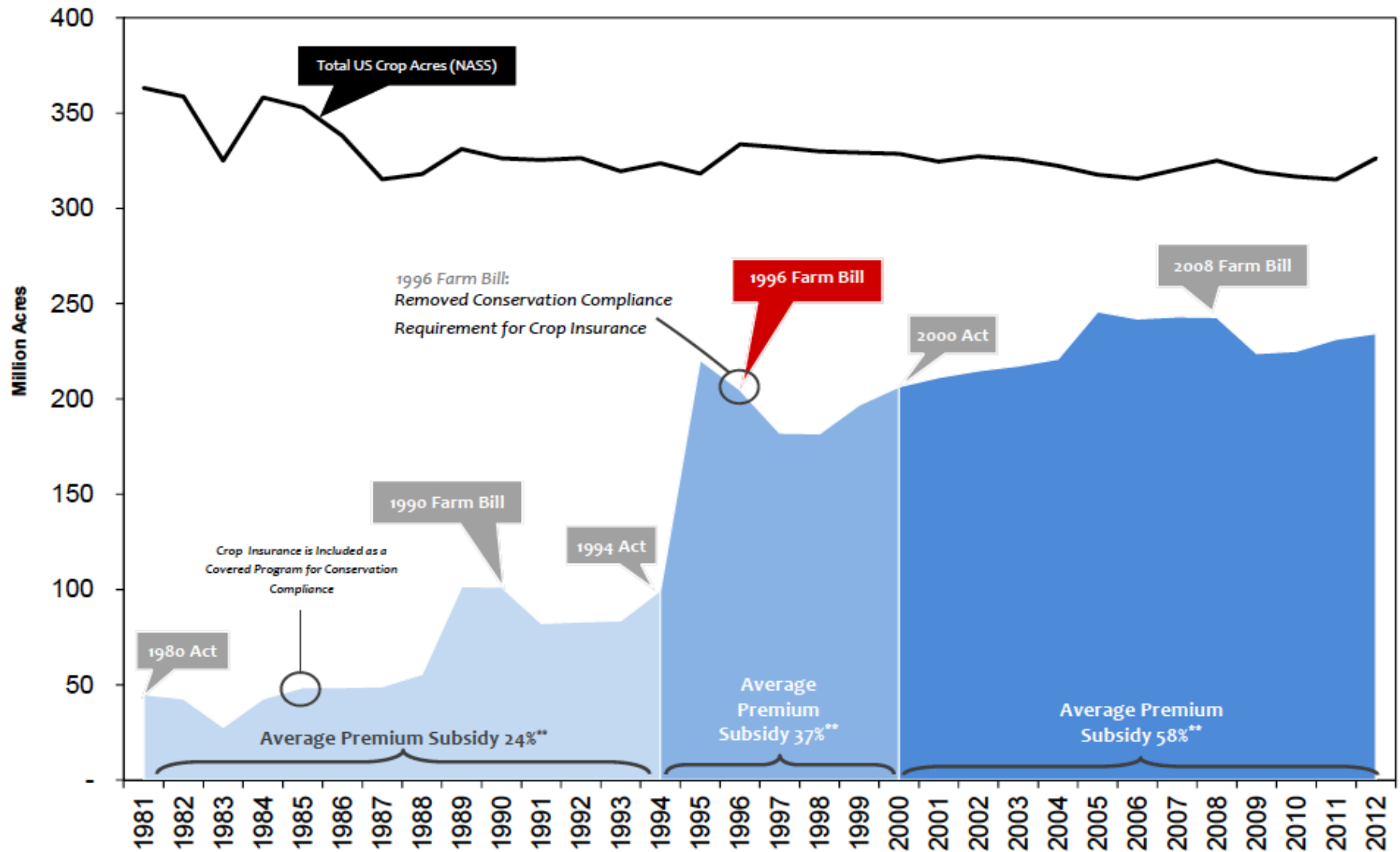
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# New Compliance Coalition

- May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013 –Coalition of 31 farm, conservation, and crop insurance groups support conservation compliance under certain conditions AND in return for opposing amendments that would weaken crop insurance.
- Signers included:
  - American Farm Bureau
  - National Farmers Union
  - American Soybean Association
  - National Corn Growers Association
  - Cotton Council
  - USA Rice
  - Southern Peanut Council
  - American Association of Crop Insurers (AACI)
  - Crop Insurance Reinsurance Bureau (CIRB)
  - Ducks Unlimited
  - Pheasants Forever
  - National Wildlife Federation
  - The Nature Conservancy
  - World Wildlife Fund

# Crop Insurance Participation & Conservation Compliance



\* Includes all insurance plans and delivery types except pasture, rangeland, and forest.

\*\* Does not include subsidies associated with CAT or Group Risk policies.



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- Gillibrand: Increase SNAP with cuts to Crop Insurance
  - ✗ Failed 26-70
- Coburn-Durbin: 750K AGI test
  - ✓ Passed 59-33
- Feinstein/Coburn: elimination of tobacco premium subsidy
  - ✗ Failed 44-52
- Hagan: \$50 million for Crop Insurance Fraud Fund
  - ✓ Passed 94-0

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# More groups weigh in...

- October 11, 2013 – a revised farm and conservation coalition urges House members to reject AGI amendment....
- October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2013 - 278 Groups write to support compliance and sod saver....

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# For the future...

- Was this a marriage of political convenience or of enlightened self interest?
  - Clearly enlightened self-interest provide a more durable, long-term coalition...
- Will crop insurance maintain it's exulted political status?
- What policies or changes are needed to bring a broader coalition, including conservation groups to

Thank you.

Questions?