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7 USC 8790.

**SEC. 1617. SIGNATURE AUTHORITY.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—In carrying out this title and title II and amendments made by those titles, if the Secretary approves a document, the Secretary shall not subsequently determine the document is inadequate or invalid because of the lack of authority of any person signing the document on behalf of the applicant or any other individual, entity, general partnership, or joint venture, or the documents relied upon were determined inadequate or invalid, unless the person signing the program document knowingly and willfully falsified the evidence of signature authority or a signature.

(b) **AFFIRMATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Nothing in this section prohibits the Secretary from asking a proper party to affirm any document that otherwise would be considered approved under subsection (a).

(2) **NO RETROACTIVE EFFECT.**—A denial of benefits based on a lack of affirmation under paragraph (1) shall not be retroactive with respect to third-party producers who were not the subject of the erroneous representation of authority, if the third-party producers—

(A) relied on the prior approval by the Secretary of the documents in good faith; and

(B) substantively complied with all program requirements

**SEC. 1618. MODERNIZATION OF FARM SERVICE AGENCY.**Deadline.  
Reports.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall transmit to the Committee on Agriculture and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate a report prepared by a third party that describes—

(1) the data processing and information technology challenges experienced in local offices of the Farm Service Agency;

(2) the impact of those challenges on service to producers, on efficiency of personnel, and on implementation of this Act;

(3) the need for information technology system upgrades of the Farm Service Agency relative to other agencies of the Department of Agriculture;

(4) the detailed plan needed to fulfill the needs of the Department that are identified in paragraph (3), including hardware, software, and infrastructure requirements;

(5) the estimated cost and timeframe for long-term modernization and stabilization of Farm Service Agency information technology systems;

(6) the benefits associated with such modernization and stabilization; and

(7) an evaluation of the existence of appropriate oversight within the Department to ensure that funds needed for systems upgrades can be appropriately managed.

7 USC 8791.

**SEC. 1619. INFORMATION GATHERING.**

(a) **GEOSPATIAL SYSTEMS.**—The Secretary shall ensure that all the geospatial data of the agencies of the Department of Agriculture are portable and standardized.

(b) **LIMITATION ON DISCLOSURES.**—

(1) DEFINITION OF AGRICULTURAL OPERATION.—In this subsection, the term “agricultural operation” includes the production and marketing of agricultural commodities and livestock.

(2) PROHIBITION.—Except as provided in paragraphs (3) and (4), the Secretary, any officer or employee of the Department of Agriculture, or any contractor or cooperator of the Department, shall not disclose—

(A) information provided by an agricultural producer or owner of agricultural land concerning the agricultural operation, farming or conservation practices, or the land itself, in order to participate in programs of the Department; or

(B) geospatial information otherwise maintained by the Secretary about agricultural land or operations for which information described in subparagraph (A) is provided.

(3) AUTHORIZED DISCLOSURES.—

(A) LIMITED RELEASE OF INFORMATION.—If the Secretary determines that the information described in paragraph (2) will not be subsequently disclosed except in accordance with paragraph (4), the Secretary may release or disclose the information to a person or Federal, State, local, or tribal agency working in cooperation with the Secretary in any Department program—

(i) when providing technical or financial assistance with respect to the agricultural operation, agricultural land, or farming or conservation practices; or

(ii) when responding to a disease or pest threat to agricultural operations, if the Secretary determines that a threat to agricultural operations exists and the disclosure of information to a person or cooperating government entity is necessary to assist the Secretary in responding to the disease or pest threat as authorized by law.

(4) EXCEPTIONS.—Nothing in this subsection affects—

(A) the disclosure of payment information (including payment information and the names and addresses of recipients of payments) under any Department program that is otherwise authorized by law;

(B) the disclosure of information described in paragraph (2) if the information has been transformed into a statistical or aggregate form without naming any—

(i) individual owner, operator, or producer; or

(ii) specific data gathering site; or

(C) the disclosure of information described in paragraph (2) pursuant to the consent of the agricultural producer or owner of agricultural land.

(5) CONDITION OF OTHER PROGRAMS.—The participation of the agricultural producer or owner of agricultural land in, or receipt of any benefit under, any program administered by the Secretary may not be conditioned on the consent of the agricultural producer or owner of agricultural land under paragraph (4)(C).

(6) WAIVER OF PRIVILEGE OR PROTECTION.—The disclosure of information under paragraph (2) shall not constitute a waiver of any applicable privilege or protection under Federal law, including trade secret protection.

**SEC. 1620. LEASING OF OFFICE SPACE.**

Deadline.  
Reports.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Agriculture and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate a report that describes—

(1) the costs and time associated with complying with leasing procedures of the General Services Administration relative to the previous independent leasing procedures of the Department of Agriculture;

(2) the additional staffing needs associated with complying with those procedures; and

(3) the value added to the leasing process and the ability of the Department to secure best-value leases by complying with the General Services Administration leasing procedures.

7 USC 8792.

**SEC. 1621. GEOGRAPHICALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS AND RANCHERS.**

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY.—The term “agricultural commodity” has the meaning given the term in section 102 of the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978 (7 U.S.C. 5602).

(2) GEOGRAPHICALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMER OR RANCHER.—The term “geographically disadvantaged farmer or rancher” has the meaning given the term in section 10906(a) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 2204 note; Public Law 107-171).

(b) AUTHORIZATION.—Subject to the availability of funds under subsection (d), the Secretary may provide geographically disadvantaged farmers or ranchers direct reimbursement payments for activities described in subsection (c).

(c) TRANSPORTATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), the Secretary may provide direct reimbursement payments to a geographically disadvantaged farmer or rancher to transport an agricultural commodity, or inputs used to produce an agricultural commodity, during a fiscal year.

(2) PROOF OF ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive assistance under paragraph (1), a geographically disadvantaged farmer or rancher shall demonstrate to the Secretary that transportation of the agricultural commodity or inputs occurred over a distance of more than 30 miles, as determined by the Secretary.

(3) AMOUNT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the amount of direct reimbursement payments made to a geographically disadvantaged farmer or rancher under this section for a fiscal year shall equal the product obtained by multiplying—

(i) the amount of costs incurred by the geographically disadvantaged farmer or rancher for transportation of the agricultural commodity or inputs during the fiscal year; and

(ii)(I) the percentage of the allowance for that fiscal year under section 5941 of title 5, United States Code,

**SEC. 6304. PERSONS NOT LAWFULLY PRESENT IN THE UNITED STATES.**42 USC 1490e  
note.

Aliens who are not lawfully present in the United States shall be ineligible for financial assistance under this subtitle, as provided and defined by section 214 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 1436a). Nothing in this subtitle shall be construed to alter the restrictions or definitions in such section 214.

**SEC. 6305. LIMITATION ON USE OF AUTHORIZED AMOUNTS.**42 USC 1490e  
note.

None of the amounts authorized by this subtitle may be used to lobby or retain a lobbyist for the purpose of influencing a Federal, State, or local governmental entity or officer.

## TITLE VII—RESEARCH AND RELATED MATTERS

### Subtitle A—National Agricultural Re- search, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977

**SEC. 7101. DEFINITIONS.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4)—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) through (E) as clauses (i) through (v), respectively;

(B) by striking “(4) The terms” and inserting the following:

“(4) **COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The terms”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) **INCLUSIONS.**—The terms ‘college’ and ‘university’ include a research foundation maintained by a college or university described in subparagraph (A).”;

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (5) through (8), (9) through (11), (12) through (14), (15), (16), (17), and (18) as paragraphs (6) through (9), (11) through (13), (15) through (17), (20), (5), (18), and (19), respectively, and moving the paragraphs so as to appear in alphabetical and numerical order;

(3) in paragraph (9) (as redesignated by paragraph (2))—

(A) by striking “renewable natural resources” and inserting “renewable energy and natural resources”; and

(B) by striking subparagraph (F) and inserting the following:

“(F) Soil, water, and related resource conservation and improvement.”;

(4) by inserting after paragraph (9) (as so redesignated) the following:

“(10) **HISPANIC-SERVING AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The term ‘Hispanic-serving agricultural colleges and universities’ means colleges or universities that—

“(i) qualify as Hispanic-serving institutions; and

“(ii) offer associate, bachelors, or other accredited degree programs in agriculture-related fields.

“(B) EXCEPTION.—The term ‘Hispanic-serving agricultural colleges and universities’ does not include 1862 institutions (as defined in section 2 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7601)).”;

(5) by striking paragraph (11) (as so redesignated) and inserting the following:

“(11) HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTION.—The term ‘Hispanic-serving institution’ has the meaning given the term in section 502 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1101a).”; and

(6) by inserting after paragraph (13) (as so redesignated) the following:

“(14) NLGCA INSTITUTION; NON-LAND-GRANT COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The terms ‘NLGCA Institution’ and ‘non-land-grant college of agriculture’ mean a public college or university offering a baccalaureate or higher degree in the study of agriculture or forestry.

“(B) EXCLUSIONS.—The terms ‘NLGCA Institution’ and ‘non-land-grant college of agriculture’ do not include—

“(i) Hispanic-serving agricultural colleges and universities; or

“(ii) any institution designated under—

“(I) the Act of July 2, 1862 (commonly known as the ‘First Morrill Act’; 7 U.S.C. 301 et seq.);

“(II) the Act of August 30, 1890 (commonly known as the ‘Second Morrill Act’) (7 U.S.C. 321 et seq.);

“(III) the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (Public Law 103-382; 7 U.S.C. 301 note); or

“(IV) Public Law 87-788 (commonly known as the ‘McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Act’) (16 U.S.C. 582a et seq.).”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 2(3) of the Research Facilities Act (7 U.S.C. 390(3)) is amended by striking “section 1404(8) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103(8))” and inserting “section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103)”.

(2) Section 2(k) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 450i(k)) is amended in the second sentence by striking “section 1404(17) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103(17))” and inserting “section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103)”.

(3) Section 18(a)(3)(B) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2027(a)(3)(B)) is amended by striking “section 1404(5) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103(5))” and inserting

“section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103)”.

(4) Section 1473 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3319) is amended in the first sentence by striking “section 1404(16) of this title” and inserting “section 1404(18)”.

(5) Section 1619(b) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 5801(b)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “section 1404(17) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103(17))” and inserting “section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103)”;

(B) in paragraph (5), by striking “section 1404(7) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103(7))” and inserting “section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103)”;

(C) in paragraph (8), by striking “section 1404(13) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103(13))” and inserting “section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103)”.

(6) Section 125(c)(1)(C) of Public Law 100-238 (5 U.S.C. 8432 note) is amended by striking “section 1404(5) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103(5))” and inserting “section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103)”.

**SEC. 7102. NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH, EXTENSION, EDUCATION, AND ECONOMICS ADVISORY BOARD.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1408 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3123) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “31” and inserting “25”; and

(B) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

“(3) MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES.—The Advisory Board shall consist of members from each of the following categories:

“(A) 1 member representing a national farm organization.

“(B) 1 member representing farm cooperatives.

“(C) 1 member actively engaged in the production of a food animal commodity, recommended by a coalition of national livestock organizations.

“(D) 1 member actively engaged in the production of a plant commodity, recommended by a coalition of national crop organizations.

“(E) 1 member actively engaged in aquaculture, recommended by a coalition of national aquacultural organizations.