



# CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO

## U.S. SENATOR FOR NEVADA

### *Cortez Masto Priorities Included in the Senate Farm Bill*

**Conservation:** The Senate Farm Bill continues historic investments in land and water conservation. The bill makes no cuts to funding from the conservation title and preserves the largest working lands program, the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), unlike the House bill which cuts nearly \$1 billion from conservation and eliminates CSP.

- Increases investments in the Regional Conservation Partnership Program to leverage an additional \$1 billion in private investments for conservation efforts focused on water quality, drought, and wildlife habitat and in the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program to protect agricultural lands and wetlands.
- Preserves the Desert Terminal Lakes program to preserve Walker Lake.
- Creates a new conservation initiative using data analysis to help farmers get the most out of conservation by identifying the practices that will improve farm productivity and profitability.
- Increases focus on source water protection and soil health initiatives across multiple programs, including planting of cover crops, to help farmers address climate change, water quality, and drought.
- Adds 1 million new acres to the Conservation Reserve Program and prioritizes water quality, wildlife habitat, and grasslands of special significance.

**Tribal Communities:** The Senate Farm Bill secures dozens of priorities for Native American communities in Nevada, and throughout America.

- The bill takes significant steps forward on self-determination activities for Tribes in nutrition and forestry programs.
- Creates a new scholarship program for tribal students attending land grant universities and makes it easier for tribal colleges to access funds to conduct extension activities in tribal communities.
- It also makes it easier for Tribes to access conservation programs, continues to prioritize the protection of tribal communities in rural development programs, makes tribes eligible for local food programs to develop native foods, and encourages tribal participation in international trade delegations.

**Nutrition:** The Senate Farm Bill rejected all of the harmful changes from the House Bill that would have jeopardized food assistance for 2 million people. Currently, SNAP provides 400,000 Nevadans with food assistance – almost 70% of recipients are families with children; 30% are seniors or people with disabilities; and 44% are working families. There are no arbitrary cuts to SNAP benefits, and savings from program integrity measures are reinvested on families in need. Additionally, the bill reduces burdens on tribes and improves the Food Distribution on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) program by:

- Authorizing self-determination demonstration projects to allow tribes to handle procurement for FDPIR themselves, and allowing FDPIR administrative funds to remain available for two years.
- Reducing the matching requirement for administrative funds that tribes must provide
- Allowing FDPIR administrative funds to remain available for two fiscal years.

**Water:** This legislation prioritizes the restoration of water quality and the increase of water quantity in drought-prone regions.

- Creates the new Watersource Protection Program, allowing water utilities to partner with the Forest Service to restore the watersheds that provide drinking and irrigation water for their customers.
- Codifies the Watershed Condition Framework at the Forest Service, which focuses the agency on a holistic approach when restoring degraded watersheds.
- Increases investments in and makes critical reforms to the Regional Conservation Partnership Program to leverage federal investments with private investments to address water quality and drought issues on a watershed scale.
- Prioritizes source water protection and soil health initiatives to reduce nutrient runoff and build resilience to drought.
- Increases flexibility for projects utilizing Watershed Act authorities to address drought and related infrastructure.

**Local Foods:** The Senate Farm Bill creates mandatory permanent funding for local foods, farmers markets, and value added producer grant programs by combining these programs into the Local Agriculture Market Program. The bill also requires

improvement of the Whole Farm Revenue Protection and development of a new local food and greenhouse crop insurance policy.

**Hemp**: The Senate Farm Bill amends the Controlled Substances Act to make hemp production legal and expands the definition of hemp to include oils, extracts and other cannabinoids.

- The bill gives the Secretary of Agriculture oversight of hemp production and requires that States and Tribes develop plans for allowing farm production, testing, and enforcement.
- The bill also creates new crop insurance for hemp producers and expands research of hemp.

**Regulatory Reform**: The Senate Farm bill takes a responsible approach to regulatory reform – focusing on actual problems for farmers and ranchers and avoiding the unnecessary controversies and riders that plagues the House Farm Bill.

- Cuts 40 unnecessary and duplicative programs to focus resources in areas that have the greatest impact.
- Instructs the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture to establish a new category of wildlife habitat restoration projects that, under certain conditions, will not require an exhaustive NEPA analysis.
- Expands the "Good Neighbor" forestry authority to both counties and Indian tribes, thereby allowing more trained professionals to promptly carry out forest health projects on federal lands that border their county or Indian lands.
- Eliminates burdensome reporting requirements that could be placed on farmers participating in farm programs.

**Senator Cortez Masto Advocated for the Following Stand-alone Legislation that has been included in the Senate Farm Bill:**

- S.322, Pet and Women Safety Act - Amends the federal criminal code to broaden the definition of stalking to include conduct that causes a person to experience a reasonable fear of death or serious bodily injury to his or her pet.
- S.1676, B-CROP Act - Provides grants for access to broadband telecommunications services in currently unserved rural areas.

- S.1677, Telemedicine Grants for Substance Abuse – Improves access to grants and loans for evidence-based substance use disorder (including opioid substance use disorder) treatment services in rural areas.
- S.1678, Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program for Substance Abuse - Develops facilities to provide substance use disorder (including opioid substance use disorder) prevention, treatment, or recovery services.
- S.2667, Hemp Farming Act - Provides for State and Tribal regulation of hemp production.
- S.2839, Assist Socially Disadvantaged and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers Act - Improves assistance for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers and veteran farmers and ranchers.
- S.2619, Agricultural Energy Programs Reauthorization Act - This bill promotes clean energy and efficiency upgrades to help rural small businesses and farmers use renewable energy, to lower utility bills and support energy installation jobs. Of most importance to Nevada, it also increases funding for the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) and makes additional technologies eligible for REAP funding – such as Distributed Energy Technologies and Battery Storage Technologies.