



U.S. SENATOR MARK UDALL

Armed Services, Energy and Natural Resources, and Intelligence Committees

February 4, 2014

Udall-Championed Provisions in 2014 Farm Bill Will Strengthen Colorado Communities, Create Jobs, Reduce Wildfire Risks

Long-Awaited Bipartisan, Deficit-Reducing Farm Bill Supports Colorado's Way of Life

Mark Udall, a longtime champion of Colorado's rural communities, welcomed the U.S. Senate's passage today of a long-awaited bipartisan and deficit-reducing Farm Bill. The legislation includes critical support for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program — which [Udall has championed](#) — and initiatives that keep food affordable for thousands of Colorado families.

"I was proud to have led the fight to include funding for the PILT program in the 2014 Farm Bill and to end the fiscal uncertainty for rural communities across Colorado," **Udall said**. "This victory is a down payment on our commitment to rural communities. Congress must step up and pass [my bipartisan bill to permanently fund the PILT program](#). Colorado communities and local leaders expect nothing less."

[The PILT program](#) issues federal payments to local governments to help offset losses in property taxes due to nontaxable federal land within their jurisdictions. The program's payments compensate these communities for their support and for foregoing tax revenues from these federal lands. The PILT program [provided Colorado counties with nearly \\$32 million in the 2013 fiscal year](#).

Udall also heralded the Farm Bill's inclusion of several [fire-safety, firefighting and wildfire-prevention ideas he championed](#).

"Modern mega-fires threaten entire communities and watersheds across Colorado. These common-sense and cost-effective wildfire mitigation provisions will ensure that Colorado has every tool it needs to protect homes and lives," **Udall said**. "Partisan games have left these ideas in limbo for years, but today common sense prevailed. I am proud to have worked with Coloradans by my side to turn these ideas into reality."

Udall's wildfire-safety and firefighting provisions include:

- Doubling the U.S. Forest Service's annual funding for bark-beetle treatments to \$200 million;
- Permanently reauthorizing for the Stewardship Contracting Program, which Colorado companies use to create jobs, reduce wildfire risks, and turn the problem beetle-killed trees into profit;

- Expanding and permanently reauthorizing Good Neighbor Authority, which will allow state and federal agencies to work collaboratively across boundaries to reduce wildfire risks; and,
- Allowing the U.S. Forest Service to lease up to five new modern large air tankers to combat wildfires.

Udall, [a champion for Colorado's agricultural and livestock producers](#), has [tirelessly worked over the past two years to pass a five-year Farm Bill](#). Udall has [repeatedly pushed Congress to take up a five-year extension of the Farm Bill](#) to give certainty to the agricultural producers, rural communities, foresters and others who rely on it for their livelihoods and ways of life.

###