

Agriculture, conservation and energy issues are extremely important to Iowans. The Fifth District ranks first in the nation for swine and egg production, second in the nation for corn production, third in the nation for the production of soybeans, and we rank fourth in the nation for the market value of ag products sold each year. In addition, our production of various sources of renewable energy makes the Fifth District an important part of our nation's domestic energy supply. Agriculture is a major part of our economy and our communities in Iowa, and federal agricultural policy has a significant impact on the day-to-day lives of Iowans. All new wealth comes from the land, and we need to add value to those resources as close to the corn stalk and bean stubble as we can.

In 2008, as a member of the House Agriculture Committee, I helped write the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, commonly known as the Farm Bill. The Farm Bill is set to be renewed in 2012, and as a senior Member of the House Agriculture Committee, I will play an active role in this legislative process. The 2012 Farm Bill will likely include major changes and reforms to a variety of programs like crop insurance, livestock programs, nutrition programs and conservation programs. I understand the important influence that good conservation practices can have on the future of a farming operation. I also know that the federal crop insurance program and federal policy related to livestock production play a significant role in helping farmers and producers manage the many risks and challenges associated with the work they do. As the House Agriculture Committee considers changes to these programs in the upcoming Farm Bill, I will ensure that the farmers and producers from the Fifth District have a voice at the table.

I also believe it is important that the Fifth District remain a leader in wind energy, ethanol and biodiesel production. In order to become energy independent, we need to increase the size of the domestically produced energy pie by pursuing an all of the above domestic energy policy. Doing so will help to decrease our dependence on foreign sources of energy, and as the founding co-chair of the Ag Energy User's Caucus, I work hard to advance legislation to do just that.