Washington D.C.- Congressman Steve King (R-IA) today issued the following statement after the lame duck Congress passed legislation appropriating $1.15 billion to fund the controversial and fraud-plagued *Pigford* settlement program. Although estimates suggest that the total universe of black farmers who could qualify for *Pigford* compensation only encompasses 18,000 people, over 94,000 people have submitted claims under the program. The *Pigford* funding request was included in H.R. 4783, the Claims Resolution Act of 2010, which passed the House of Representatives on a 256-152 vote yesterday afternoon. Congressman King voted against the legislation.

"The unaccountable lame duck Congress has irresponsibly voted to spend $1.15 billion on a *Pigford* settlement program that is severely compromised by fraud," said King. **"This means that people who have never farmed and people who have never been discriminated against by the USDA will be receiving tens of thousands of dollars in cash and debt relief simply for having filed a false claim. By ignoring *Pigford* fraud, Congress has allowed the program to change from one designed to address black farmers' discrimination claims to one that now serves as a modern day slavery reparations program. The American people should be outraged by this vote and the new Congress should make an investigation of *Pigford* fraud a top priority."**

#