



National Association of  
Conservation Districts

# Farm Policy and Conservation Districts

Understanding and Engaging in the Farm Bill

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National Association of Conservation Districts



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# On Deck Today

- About NACD
- Civics 101 Refresher
- Why Care about Policy?
- How to Engage in Federal Policy
- Looking Ahead to 2018
- Q & A



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# National Association of Conservation Districts

As the national voice for all conservation districts, NACD supports voluntary, incentive-driven natural resource conservation programs that benefit all citizens.

**Every acre, every American, every day.**



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# Civics 101 Refresher



Source: [Andrew Bossi](#)



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# Branches of Government



## Legislative

- Makes the laws
- Creates the budget and funds the government



## Executive

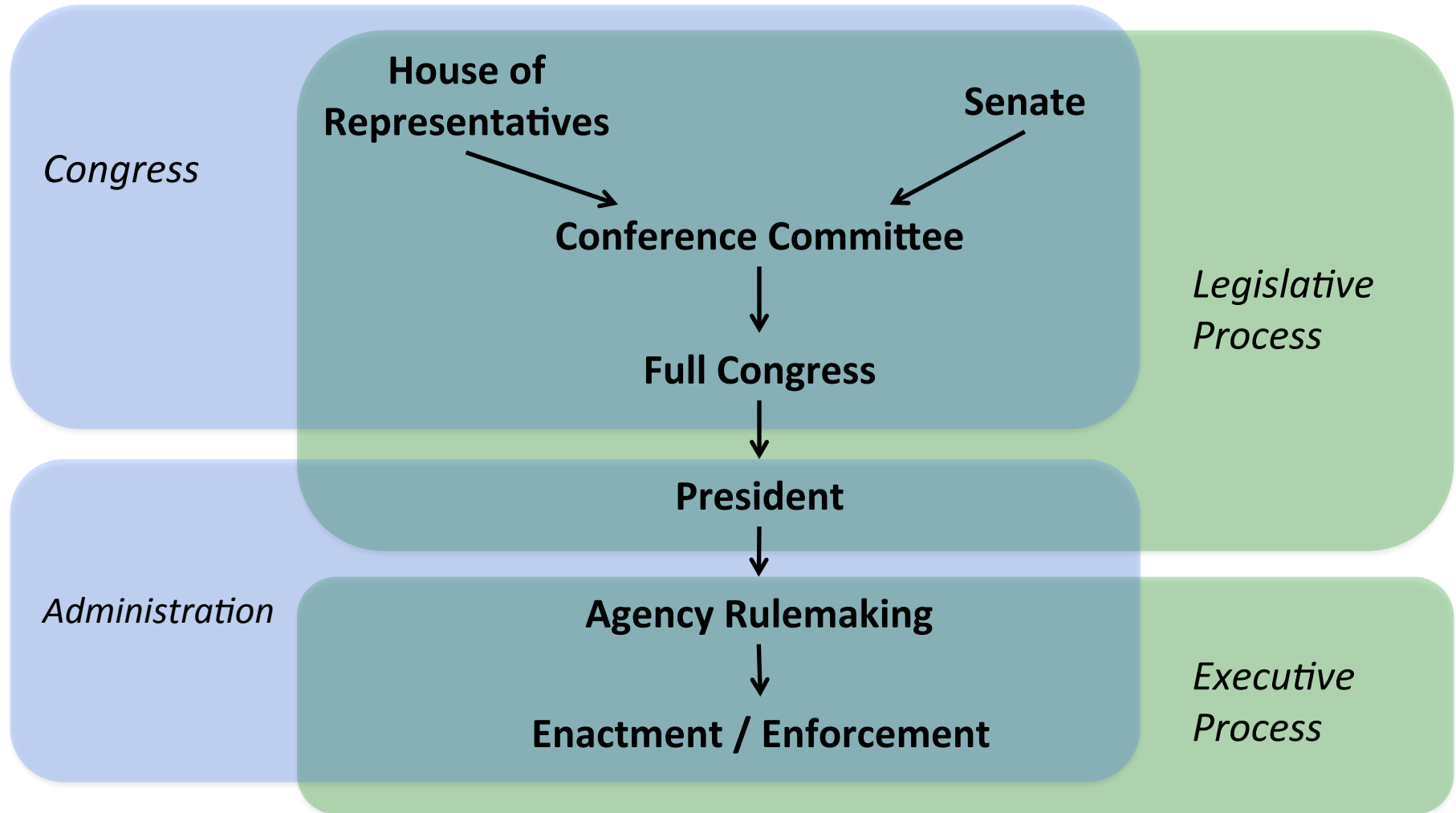
- Carries out the laws
- Writes regulations

Also the Judicial Branch!



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# Policy Making Process







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# Policy Making is Easy, Right?



There are a few important steps  
Schoolhouse Rock missed.

Vox





One more  
thing...

# House Election Results: G.O.P. Keeps Control

Nov. 3, 2010

**194** Democrats

**241** Republicans



Legend: Blue = Dem, Red = Rep, Green = Split, Yellow = No Data

Source: [New York Times](#)



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# Why Care About Policy?





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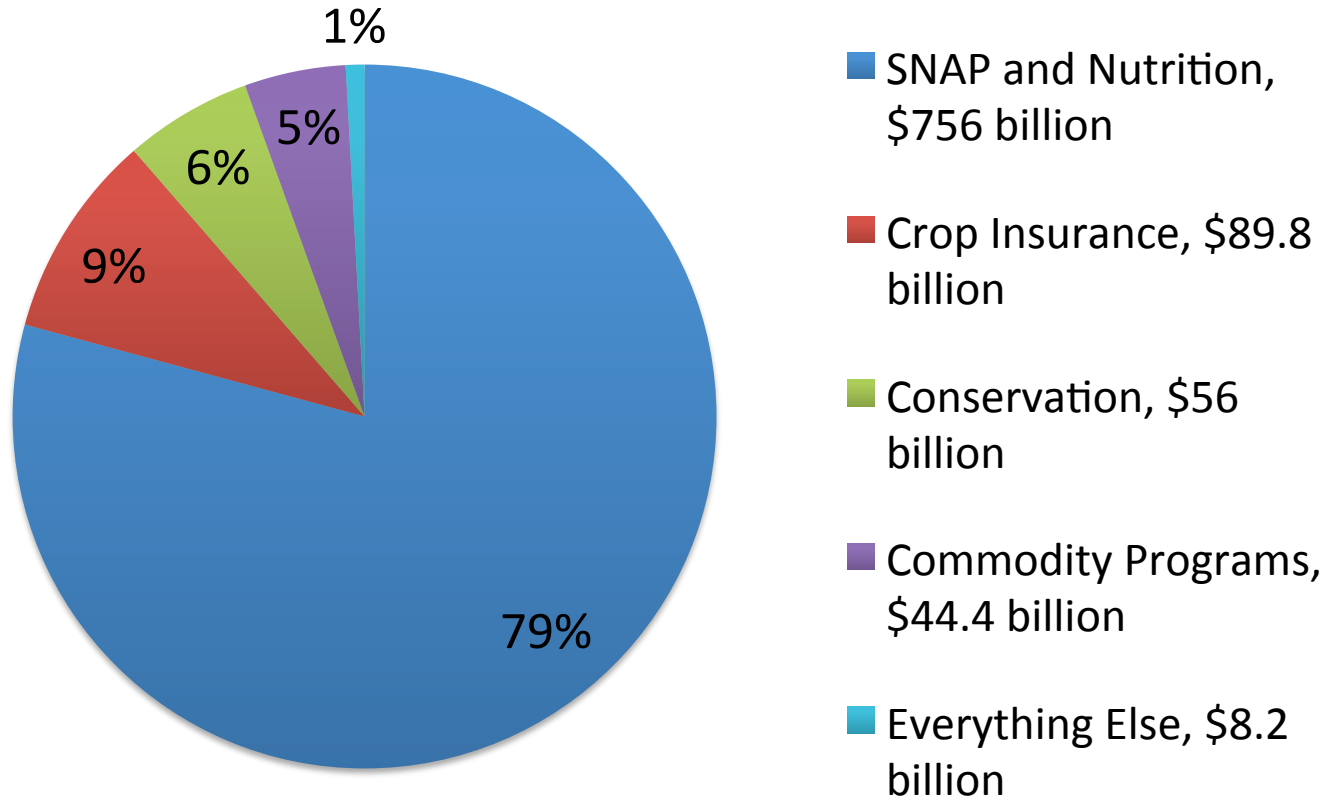
# What is the Farm Bill?

- A collection of laws that govern most of the agriculture and food programs in the US.
- The bill:
  - Creates mandatory spending and programs
  - Authorizes discretionary spending and programs
- Authorized every 5 or so years.
  - The omnibus nature of the bill brings together many groups that wouldn't otherwise collaborate, and stirs fierce competition among others over spending priorities.



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# 2014 Farm Bill Dollars

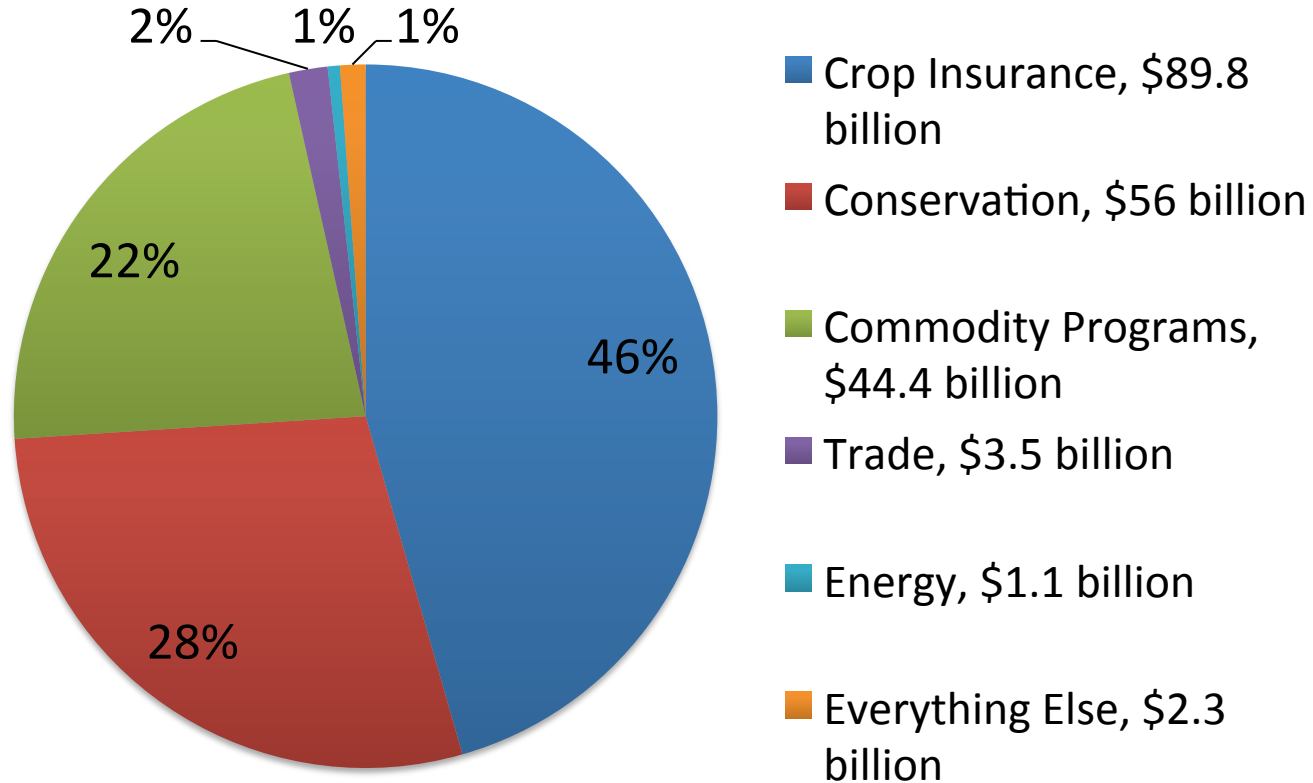


\$956 billion over 10 years (2014-23)



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# 2014 Farm Bill Dollars







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# Appropriations

- The annual budgeting and funding cycle
  - The Budget – How much money Congress can spend each year
  - Appropriations – How Congress decides what to spend money on
- Conservation Programs actually lose funding in this process







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# How to Engage in Federal Policy

- Take advantage of federal resources!
- Provide feedback to USDA
- Tell your story -- to the media, your neighbors, anyone who will listen
- Call or visit your legislators – especially new members!
- Invite your legislators out to the farm or office
- Sign-up for Updates:  
[www.nacdnet.org/get-involved/grassroots-advocacy/](http://www.nacdnet.org/get-involved/grassroots-advocacy/)



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# Key Elements

Effective advocacy is:

- Making your voice heard
- Telling your story
- Building relationships with decision makers and their staff



# Looking to 2018





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# NACD's Farm Bill Priorities

- No Cuts to Conservation Funding
- Support for Technical Assistance
- Repeal SAM/DUNS Requirements
- Remove Conservation Disincentives from the Crop Insurance Program
- Encourage Conservation District Engagement in RCPP



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# Advocate To-Do List

- ☐ Sign up for updates:  
[www.nacdnet.org/get-involved/grassroots-advocacy/](http://www.nacdnet.org/get-involved/grassroots-advocacy/)
- ☐ Use USDA programs – and tell NACD about your experience!
- ☐ Get to know your Members of Congress





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