

AFBF Outlines Steps to Ease Regulatory Nightmare

WASHINGTON, D.C., July 14, 2011 – Congress must help alleviate the burden of an ever-increasing array of federal environmental regulations on agriculture, according to Arizona Farm Bureau President Kevin Rogers, who testified today before a House Energy and Commerce subcommittee. Representing the American Farm Bureau Federation, Rogers told the Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy that the breadth and extent of the regulatory challenges facing U.S. agriculture are tremendous.

According to Rogers, the regulations cover a broad range of issues, including: Clean Air Act requirements, Clean Water Act permitting and other requirements, restrictions on pesticides and other farm in-puts and regulatory burdens involving both crops and livestock operations.

“It is no exaggeration to say that the onslaught of federal regulations now confronting farmers and ranchers across America is truly overwhelming,” said Rogers. “A farmer trying to manage his land and his crops knows one thing – the federal government is making it tougher and tougher to make a living from the land.”

While not all regulations can be quantified, some can, explained Rogers, and some are substantial. He outlined the following steps Congress can take to alleviate agriculture’s regulatory burdens:

- The House should adopt language in the House Interior Appropriations bill that incorporates the provisions of H.R. 910, a bill that would allow Congress, not the Environmental Protection Agency, to determine how to regulate greenhouse gases.
- Congress should adopt language that would prevent EPA from regulating agricultural dust, forcing many rural areas into non-attainment status.

- Congress should approve H.R. 2458, which would provide a realistic interval for updating national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS).

“These pieces of legislation effectively balance environmental concerns with those of farmers and ranchers,” said Rogers. “These are critical legislative initiatives that must be pursued.”