

**Testimony of Agriculture Committee
Chairman Frank D. Lucas
House Administration Hearing on Committee Budgets
March 1, 2011**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to speak with you today. I appreciate Ranking Member Collin Peterson joining me to outline our Committee's proposed budget for the next two years. As you all know, we have a long and proud history of bipartisan cooperation, and I plan to continue that spirit of cooperation as we proceed with the work of the Committee in the 112th Congress.

In addition to bipartisanship, the Agriculture Committee has a strong history of fiscal responsibility. The modest spending and cooperative nature of our Committee spans back more than two decades, under the control of both parties.

Even though we have a significant workload ahead of us this Congress, we are proposing a budget reduction for the 112th Congress. The resources provided to us will allow us to proceed with a very aggressive, robust oversight agenda as outlined in our oversight plan.

We plan to conduct oversight hearings – both here and across the country – on a wide variety of issues including USDA's GIPSA regulation as well as EPA's regulations on Atrazine, spray drift, dust, and watersheds just to name a few.

In addition, we will have an extensive series of oversight hearings on Dodd-Frank implementation. Over the past several months, the CFTC and other federal financial regulators have been engaged in writing unprecedented new regulations over the derivatives markets. Since September alone, the CFTC has issued 39 new rule proposals involving thousands of pages of regulation. By comparison, before Dodd-Frank, the CFTC average only about five rules per year. We will keep a watchful eye on these regulations as they move forward to make sure that they do not impose unnecessary or undue regulations on our financial system and economy.

Finally, we will utilize our resources to begin the process of writing the 2012 Farm Bill. We plan to conduct a comprehensive audit of all the farm programs through an extensive series of hearings this year. This will be a top to bottom examination of how the farm programs are working. We want to know if the programs were implemented as intended by Congress, which programs are duplicative, and whether the programs have outlived their usefulness.

We also intend to do a series of Farm Bill hearings across the country. Taking the Committee into the field is an invaluable part of the process of writing farm bills. We have 23 new members on our Committee and feel that it important to expose them to as much as possible about the farm bill programs before we write the next Farm Bill.

Mr. Chairman, we truly have our work cut out for us this Congress. But we firmly believe that we can accomplish all of this on fewer resources than we had in the last Congress. We greatly appreciate your consideration of our budget request. Please let us know if we can provide you any additional information.