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83/15

**APPROVED**  
**MAR 15 1976**

THE WHITE HOUSE

ACTION

WASHINGTON

Last Day: March 15

March 10, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: JIM CANNON *[Signature]*

SUBJECT: H.R. 7824 - Agricultural Census

*Posted*  
*3/16/76*

*To Archives*  
*3/16/76*

Attached for your consideration is H.R. 7824, sponsored by Representative Schroeder, which would change the date for the Department of Commerce to compile the censuses of agriculture and irrigation and drainage and would defer until June 30, 1976 the final adoption of a new definition of a "farm" for census purposes.

A discussion of the provisions of the enrolled bill is provided in OMB's enrolled bill report at Tab A.

OMB, Max Friedersdorf, Counsel's Office (Lazarus) and I recommend approval of the enrolled bill.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign H.R. 7824 at Tab B.





EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

MAR 9 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Enrolled Bill H.R. 7824 - Agricultural Census  
Sponsor - Rep. Schroeder (D) Colorado

Last Day for Action

March 15, 1976 - Monday

Purpose

To change the date for compiling the censuses of agriculture and irrigation and drainage and to defer the date to adopt a definition of a "farm" for census purposes.

Agency Recommendations

Office of Management and Budget	Approval
Department of Commerce	Approval
Department of Agriculture	Approval

Discussion

The census of agriculture, which is collected every five years, measures such things as the number of farms, farm acreage, value of farmland, and productivity of harvests and livestock. Currently the Secretary of Commerce is required to take a census of agriculture each October of the years ending in 4 and 9 -- such as 1974 and 1979. The census of irrigation and drainage is collected every ten years in conjunction with the agricultural census to determine such things as the increase in farmland through the use of irrigation.

Section 1 of H.R. 7824, which is identical in purpose to legislation introduced at the request of the Department of Commerce, would (1) change the collection date from October of the year



for which the data is collected to the beginning of the following year; and (2) align the collection of the censuses of agriculture and irrigation and drainage with the collection of the economic census.

There are two major reasons for these changes. First, the October requirement has become obsolete. When the provision was established, not only was it the end of a harvesting season, but it was a good time of the year for enumerators to travel and interview farmers. Now that census forms are answered by mail, statistics can be more accurate if the last two or three months of the year do not have to be estimates.

Second, in order to align the census of agriculture with the economic or business census which is also taken every five years, H.R. 7824 would require the census every four years rather than every five -- for the years 1978 and 1982 -- until it coincides with the economic census in 1982. Thereafter, both the agriculture and the economic censuses would be collected concurrently. With the deletion of the October requirement, the census would be collected in 1979 and 1983 but would relate to the preceding year. H.R. 7824 would also change the date of the census of irrigation and drainage, which is compiled every ten years, to coincide with alternate economic censuses. These changes would enable the Census Bureau to analyze agricultural statistics in light of general economic conditions in the particular year. Further, since farming has become less a subsistence industry and more a capital intensive business enterprise, it is appropriate to collect agricultural data concurrently with the five-year economic census which enumerates data on such business activities as construction, mining, employment and capital investment.

Section 2 of the bill would defer until June 30, 1976 the final adoption of a new definition of a "farm" for census purposes which was jointly announced by the Departments of Commerce and Agriculture on August 12, 1975. The report of the House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service stated that this delay would "give the committees of Congress which have jurisdiction over census and agricultural matters a reasonable opportunity to study the possible effects of the change before the new definition becomes finally effective." The Departments of Commerce and Agriculture have no objection to this provision.

Enactment of this legislation will have no impact on the estimated total cost of the next censuses of agriculture and irrigation and drainage but would result in the cycle of funding for the next censuses to be advanced by one year. The funds required by the legislation for fiscal year 1977 have been included in your budget request. However, there may be a need for additional funds in fiscal year 1976 and the transition quarter for purposes of advanced planning and preparation.

*James M. Fry*

Assistant Director  
for Legislative Reference

Enclosures



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON

March 4, 1976

Honorable James T. Lynn  
Director, Office of  
Management and Budget  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Lynn:

In reply to the request of your office, the following report is submitted on the enrolled enactment of H.R. 7824, "To amend section 142 of title 13, United States Code, to change the date for taking censuses of agriculture, irrigation, and drainage, and for other purposes." This would be accomplished by advancing the year for taking the census of agriculture to 1979 instead of 1980, and, subsequently to 1983 and every 5 years thereafter, and the year for taking the census of irrigation and drainage to 1979 instead of 1980, then 1988 and every tenth year thereafter. Additionally, this bill would postpone until after June 30, 1976 any publication by the Bureau of the Census of a farm definition different from that published with the 1969 census of agriculture.

The Department of Agriculture recommends that the President approve the bill.

This Department is an extensive user of data from these censuses. While the Statistical Reporting Service in this Department no longer relies on the census of agriculture for principal benchmark data, the statistical output of the censuses provides agricultural statistics in greater detail than the programs of this Department, primarily at the county level. The Department also is an extensive user of the economic censuses. Therefore, if the utility and quality of the agriculture census data is improved by being taken concurrently with the other economic censuses, as the Bureau of the Census asserts, then the legislation will be beneficial to the Department. Relative to the continuation of the current statistical classification of farms through June 30, 1976, this will have no bearing on the programs of the Department of Agriculture, because the Department has no plans to utilize a revised definition until a later date.

Sincerely,

*Don Paarlberg*  
Don Paarlberg  
Director, Agricultural Economics



**GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
Washington, D.C. 20230

**MAR 5 1976**

Honorable James T. Lynn  
Director, Office of Management and Budget  
Washington, D. C. 20503

Attention: Assistant Director for Legislative Reference

Dear Mr. Lynn:

This is in reply to your request for the views of this Department concerning H. R. 7824, an enrolled enactment

"To amend section 142 of title 13, United States Code, to change the date for taking censuses of agriculture, irrigation, and drainage, and for other purposes."

The major effect of section 1 of H. R. 7824 is to amend section 142 of title 13, United States Code so as to require the Secretary of Commerce to conduct the next two censuses of agriculture at four-year intervals rather than five-year intervals so that agriculture census data will eventually refer to the same year as economic census data. The following benefits would be achieved:

- a. greater consistency will be achieved in providing statistics on agricultural activities which are comparable to measures of economic activity obtained from the census of manufactures, transportation, wholesale, and retail trade, etc.;
- b. improvements will be achieved in the compilation of farm income statistics and the national economic accounts by providing benchmark statistics in the same year for all sectors of the economy;
- c. the problems of classifying and obtaining accurate coverage of the agricultural operations of business firms will be reduced; and
- d. complete and accurate data can be compiled for each succeeding census of agriculture on the integration of agricultural operations with firms which operate other economic enterprises (manufacturing, wholesale, retail, transportation, etc.), their corporate structures, and their relative size and importance.



The gradual transition to concurrent years for the agriculture and economic censuses will permit an orderly and planned process of adjustments in data collection procedures as well as consultations and evaluations for the purpose of achieving improved statistical and analytical results from the separate censuses. It will also spread the budgetary impact of a temporarily shortened census cycle across a relatively long fiscal period.

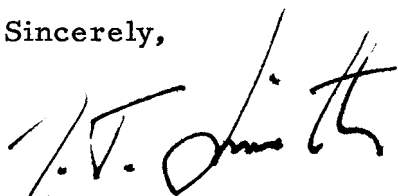
Section 1 also makes conforming amendments to section 142 which provides for a census of irrigation and drainage to be taken in conjunction with the census of agriculture.

Section 2 of H. R. 7824 contains language which defers the final adoption of a new definition of a farm for census purposes until June 30, 1976.

This Department favors section 1 of H. R. 7824 which is for the same purpose as draft legislation submitted by this Department to the 94th Congress. We have no objection to the language in section 2. Accordingly, this Department recommends approval by the President of H. R. 7824.

Enactment of this legislation will have no impact on the estimated total cost of the next census of agriculture, which is currently estimated to be \$39,378,000 over the next six to seven fiscal years. The legislation would result in the cycle of funding for the next census to be advanced by one year. Additional funds in the amount of \$700,000 in 1976 and the transition will be required in order to meet the new schedule.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. V. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

General Counsel



To  
Gandy  
3-9-76  
Johnson



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

MAR 9 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Enrolled Bill H.R. 7824 - Agricultural Census  
Sponsor - Rep. Schroeder (D) Colorado

Last Day for Action

March 15, 1976 - Monday

Purpose

To change the date for compiling the censuses of agriculture and irrigation and drainage and to defer the date to adopt a definition of a "farm" for census purposes.

Agency Recommendations

Office of Management and Budget	Approval
Department of Commerce	Approval
Department of Agriculture	Approval

Discussion

The census of agriculture, which is collected every five years, measures such things as the number of farms, farm acreage, value of farmland, and productivity of harvests and livestock. Currently the Secretary of Commerce is required to take a census of agriculture each October of the years ending in 4 and 9 -- such as 1974 and 1979. The census of irrigation and drainage is collected every ten years in conjunction with the agricultural census to determine such things as the increase in farmland through the use of irrigation.

Section 1 of H.R. 7824, which is identical in purpose to legislation introduced at the request of the Department of Commerce, would (1) change the collection date from October of the year

THE WHITE HOUSE

ACTION MEMORANDUM

WASHINGTON

LOG NO.:

Date: March 9

Time: 545pm

FOR ACTION: Max Friedersdorf  
Ken Lazarus  
Paul Leach

cc (for information): Jack Marsh  
Jim Cavanaugh

FROM THE STAFF SECRETARY

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DUE: Date: March 10

Time: 500pm

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SUBJECT:

H.R. 7824 - Agricultural Census

ACTION REQUESTED:

For Necessary Action

For Your Recommendations

Prepare Agenda and Brief

Draft Reply

For Your Comments

Draft Remarks

REMARKS:

Please return to Judy Johnston, Ground Floor West Wing

No objection -- Ken Lazarus 3/11/76

PLEASE ATTACH THIS COPY TO MATERIAL SUBMITTED.

If you have any questions or if you anticipate a delay in submitting the required material, please telephone the Staff Secretary immediately.

Jim Cavanaugh  
Staff Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 11, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: JIM CAVANAUGH  
FROM: MAX L. FRIEDERSDORF *M.L.*  
SUBJECT: H. R. 7824 - Agricultural Census

The Office of Legislative Affairs concurs with the agencies  
that the subject bill be signed.

Attachments

THE WHITE HOUSE

ACTION MEMORANDUM

WASHINGTON

LOG NO.:

Date: March 9

Time: 545pm

FOR ACTION: Max Friedersdorf  
Ken Lazarus *th*  
Paul Leach *th*

cc (for information): Jack Marsh  
Jim Cavanaugh

FROM THE STAFF SECRETARY

DUE: Date: March 10

Time: 500pm

SUBJECT:

H.R. 7824 - Agricultural Census

ACTION REQUESTED:

For Necessary Action

For Your Recommendations

Prepare Agenda and Brief

Draft Reply

For Your Comments

Draft Remarks

REMARKS:

Please return to Judy Johnston, Ground Floor West Wing



PLEASE ATTACH THIS COPY TO MATERIAL SUBMITTED.

If you have any questions or if you anticipate a delay in submitting the required material, please telephone the Staff Secretary immediately.

K. R. COLE, JR.  
For the President

## AGRICULTURAL CENSUS

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FEBRUARY 11, 1976.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

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Mrs. SCHROEDER, from the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, submitted the following

### REPORT

[To accompany H.R. 7824]

The Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 7824) to amend section 142 of title 13, United States Code, entitled "Census", having considered the same, report favorably thereon with amendments and recommend that the bill as amended do pass.

#### AMENDMENT

The Committee has amended H.R. 7824 by striking out all language after the enacting clause and inserting a new text which is printed in italic type in the bill as reported.

#### EXPLANATION OF AMENDMENT

The Committee amendment to H.R. 7824 is explained in the text of this report.

#### AMENDMENT TO THE TITLE

The Committee has amended the title to reflect more accurately the changes in title 13, United States Code, made by the bill as reported.

#### PURPOSE

Section 1 of H.R. 7824 is designed to improve the census of agriculture of the United States, taken every five years by the Bureau of the Census, by changing the time for taking the census.

Section 2 of H.R. 7824 retains the definition of the term "farm", as that term was used for census purposes from 1959 through 1975, until Congress has a reasonable period to study the possible effect of a new definition.

## COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 7824 was order reported, as amended, by a unanimous voice vote at a regular meeting of the Committee held on January 29, 1976. Prior to that date, the Subcommittee on Census and Population held a public hearing on the bill, September 26, 1975, (Serial Number 94-51), and reported the bill to the full Committee.

## JUSTIFICATION

Under the provisions of the Act of August 28, 1957 (Public Law 85-207; 71 STAT 483), the Bureau of the Census has taken a census of agriculture in the United States every five years, beginning in October, 1959. The reference year—that is, the year for which the agricultural data is provided—is the year immediately proceeding the year in which the census is actually taken. Thus, the agricultural census for 1974 was actually taken in 1975.

H.R. 7824 would change the reference years and the years for taking the census of agriculture to coincide with the economic census of manufacturing, mining, and industry, which is taken every five years and refers to the years the last numericals of which are “2” and “7”, such as 1982 and 1987.

There are two principal advantages of this change. First, the change would provide agricultural data covering the same year as the data compiled in the economic census of manufacturing, mining, and industry, and thereby provide comparable data for evaluation of the Nation’s economic and agricultural status. Second, the change would avoid the heavy workload occurring in the Bureau of the Census when the agricultural census is taken in the same year as the decennial census.

The decennial census involves the enumeration of all inhabitants of the United States and requires the fulltime work of the Bureau and its permanent and temporary employees. By changing the year in which the agricultural census is taken, the workload and manpower capacity of the Bureau can be more effectively utilized and the quality of the agricultural census will be improved.

If H.R. 7824 is enacted, the next census of agriculture will be taken in 1979 (for 1978), thereby permitting adequate planning time and also avoiding any conflict with the 1980 decennial census. After 1983, the censuses will be taken at the 5-year intervals coinciding with the economic census.

## CENSUS DEFINITIONS OF SMALL FARMS

Section 2, as proposed by the committee, would permit a short period for Congress to consider the effect of a recent change in census terminology relating to agriculture.

On August 12, 1975, the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Commerce jointly announced the adoption of a new definition of the term “farm” for census purposes. Under the definition in effect from 1959 until last year, a “farm” included any place which produced agricultural goods selling for at least \$250 in a year, or any place measuring at least 10 acres and producing at least \$50 in agri-

cultural goods. Under the new definition applicable to the recently completed census of agriculture for 1974, a “farm” includes only places which produce at least \$1,000 worth of agricultural goods a year.

The impact of this amendment is not yet known. Because the actions taken to adopt the new definition did not include public hearings, public notice, or an invitation for public comment prior to the announcement of the change, the committee believes that it is in the public interest to enact legislation postponing the effective date of the change for a reasonable period. This period, through June 30, 1976, will give the committees of Congress which have jurisdiction over census and agricultural matters a reasonable opportunity to study the possible effects of the change before the new definition becomes finally effective. At least 300,000 farms—about 13 percent of the total of 2.3 million farms in the United States—would be dropped from the statistical definition if the new definition is used. Although the “family farm” may no longer occupy the important economic position it has in the past, the social and cultural role of the small farm remains important to the Nation. Statistical data including these farms and families as part of the agricultural census may be good public policy.

To permit Congress to have an opportunity to evaluate this problem, section 2 of H.R. 7824 requires the continued use of the small farm definition in the agricultural census reports through June 30, 1976. Additional data based on the new definition may also be included in these reports.

## Cost

H.R. 7824 will not increase the cost of conducting a census of agriculture because the census is already authorized by law and has previously been funded. The enactment of this legislation will change the fiscal years in which the cost is incurred because of the change of dates for taking the census.

The cost for the following five fiscal years is: FY 1977, \$3.5 million; FY 1978, \$9.0 million; FY 1979, \$14.1 million; FY 1980, \$9.0 million, and FY 1981, \$2.9 million.

## COMPLIANCE WITH CLAUSE 2(1)(3) OF RULE XI

With respect to the requirements of clause 2(1)(3) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives—

(A) The Subcommittee on Census and Population is vested under Committee rules with legislative and oversight jurisdiction and responsibility over the subject matter of H.R. 7824 and, as a result of the hearings held on this matter, conclude that the law should be revised in the manner provided under this legislation;

(B) The measure does not provide new budget authority or new or increased tax expenditures within the meaning of section 3 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, and thus a statement required by section 308(a) of that Act is not necessary;

(C) No estimate or comparison of costs has been received by the Committee from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office, pursuant to section 403 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974; and

(D) The Committee has received no report from the Committee on Government Operations of oversight findings and recommendations arrived at pursuant to clause 2(b) (2) of Rule X.

#### INFLATIONARY IMPACT STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 2(1) (4) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee has concluded that the enactment of H.R. 7824 will have no inflationary impact on prices and costs in the operation of the national economy.

#### ADMINISTRATION VIEWS

Following is a letter from the former Secretary of Commerce, Rogers C. B. Morton recommending the enactment of legislation relating to the census of agriculture:

THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE,  
Washington, D.C.

HON. CARL ALBERT,  
Speaker of the House of Representatives,  
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Enclosed are six copies of a draft bill, "To amend section 142 of title 13, United States Code, entitled 'Census'," together with a statement of purpose and need in support thereof.

This proposed legislation has been reviewed by the Department in the light of Executive Order No. 11821 and has been determined not to be a major proposal requiring evaluation and certification as to its inflationary impact.

We have been advised by the Office of Management and Budget that there would be no objection to the submission of our draft bill to the Congress and further, that enactment of this draft bill would be consistent with the Administration's objectives.

Sincerely,

ROGERS C. B. MORTON,  
Secretary of Commerce.

Enclosures.

A BILL To amend section 142 of title 13, United States Code, entitled "Census"

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That section 142 of title 13, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

#### § 142. Agriculture, irrigation and drainage

"(a) The Secretary shall in 1979, then in 1983, and every fifth year thereafter, take a census of agriculture which shall relate to the year immediately preceding the taking thereof.

"(b) The Secretary shall, in conjunction with the census of agriculture directed to be taken in 1979 and in 1988, and each tenth year thereafter, take a census of irrigation and drainage."

#### CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with clause 3 of Rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, changes in existing law made by the bill, as re-

ported, are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in italics, existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

#### SECTION 142 OF TITLE 13, UNITED STATES CODE

#### CHAPTER 5.—CENSUS

\* \* \* \* \*

#### SUBCHAPTER II—POPULATION, HOUSING, AGRICULTURE, IRRIGATION, DRAINAGE, AND UNEMPLOYMENT

\* \* \* \* \*

#### § 142. Agriculture, irrigation, and drainage.

[(a) The Secretary shall, beginning in the month of October 1959, and in the same month of every fifth year thereafter, take a census of agriculture, provided that the censuses directed to be taken in October 1959 and each tenth year thereafter, may, when and where deemed advisable by the Secretary, be taken instead in conjunction with the censuses provided in section 141 of this title.

(b) The Secretary shall, in conjunction with the census of agriculture directed to be taken in October 1959 and each tenth year thereafter, take a census of irrigation and drainage.]

#### § 142. Agriculture, irrigation, and drainage

(a) *The Secretary shall in 1979, in 1983, and in every fifth year beginning after 1983, take a census of agriculture.*

(b) *In conjunction with the census to be taken under subsection (a) of this section in 1979, 1988, and every tenth year beginning after 1988, the Secretary shall take a census of irrigation and drainage.*

(c) *The data collected in each of the censuses taken under this section shall relate to the year immediately preceding the year in which such census is taken.*

○

H. R. 7824

# Ninety-fourth Congress of the United States of America

AT THE SECOND SESSION

*Begun and held at the City of Washington on Monday, the nineteenth day of January,  
one thousand nine hundred and seventy-six*

## An Act

To amend section 142 of title 13, United States Code, to change the date for taking censuses of agriculture, irrigation, and drainage, and for other purposes.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That section 142 of title 13, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:*

**“§ 142. Agriculture, irrigation, and drainage**

“(a) The Secretary shall in 1979, in 1983, and in every fifth year beginning after 1983, take a census of agriculture.

“(b) In conjunction with the census to be taken under subsection (a) of this section in 1979, in 1988, and every tenth year beginning after 1988, the Secretary shall take a census of irrigation and drainage.

“(c) The data collected in each of the censuses taken under this section shall relate to the year immediately preceding the year in which such census is taken.”

SEC. 2. The statistical classification of farms in effect on January 1, 1975, with respect to censuses taken under section 142 of title 13, United States Code, shall be effective through June 30, 1976, and any statistical report issued on or before June 30, 1976, with respect to any such census shall reflect such classification, but may also include additional classifications as deemed appropriate by the Secretary.

*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

*Vice President of the United States and  
President of the Senate.*