

U.S. Rep. Kind: Introduces bipartisan bill to make alternative energy options affordable for Wisconsin's dairy farmers

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WASHINGTON - Today, U.S. Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI) and U.S. Rep. Tom Reed (R-NY) introduced the Agricultural Environmental Stewardship Act, bipartisan legislation that will provide tax incentives for farmers and rural electric cooperatives who invest in biogas technology.

“Wisconsin’s dairy farmers fuel our state’s overall economy to the tune of \$43.4 billion a year,” said Rep. Ron Kind. “By providing these tax incentives, we are making it more affordable and accessible for Wisconsin dairy farmers to pursue biogas technology and ensuring they can continue to create jobs and grow their businesses, while protecting our natural resources. It’s just commonsense.”

“We must help our dairy farmers find a cost-effective way to use processes that are environmentally friendly,” Rep. Tom Reed said. “This tax credit will make these new technologies more affordable and the use of such methods will benefit our communities.”

“This measure recognizes the value that biogas systems can have for dairy producers of all sizes as they continuously improve their sustainability nationwide,”

said Jim Mulhern, President and CEO of NMPF. “The creation of this new investment tax credit also addresses the value of nutrient recovery technologies, which can transform manure into fertilizer for crops and bedding for cows. These technologies are important, but expensive. This bill will help farmers incorporate these new technologies into their operations, for the benefit of everyone.”

“The reintroduction of the Agricultural Environmental Stewardship Act by Congressmen Ron Kind (D-WI-03) and Tom Reed (R-NY-23) will help incentivize investment in digester and nutrient recovery technologies. This bill will assist farmers and agricultural producers in addressing environmental challenges such as nutrient run off and farm odors while simultaneously creating marketable commodities. We see this as a significant boost to the on-farm economy,” said Patrick Serfass, Executive Director of the American Biogas Council (ABC).

The Agricultural Environmental Stewardship Act promotes investment by allowing biodigesters to qualify for an energy tax credit that is on-par with the 30% tax credit for solar energy. This will allow for Wisconsin dairy farms to finally have affordable access installation of biodigesters on their farms, significantly reducing the upfront cost. Farms will now be able to use digesters or other biological, chemical, thermal, or mechanical processes to make biogas that is at least 52% methane, this will add an immediate new revenue stream to the farm and dramatically decrease pollution and runoff issues.