

Joe Bragger: Giving dairy farmers a voice in policy

Posted on Thursday, Oct 22, 2020

The column below reflects the views of the author, and these opinions are neither endorsed nor supported by WisOpinion.com.

It is no surprise to any dairy farmer reading this that the past five years have been a challenge. The past seven and a half months, however, have brought some of the worst hurdles to cross. It is about time for some good news and I have some to share.

I am excited to share the introduction of the Dairy Pricing and Policy Commission Act of 2020. This was a partnership between Representatives Ron Kind and Mike Gallagher and Wisconsin Farm Bureau.

Agriculture has a long history of being bipartisan and this legislation embodies that same spirit to support our dairy farmers and rural communities.

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)

So what is the Commission all about?

This Act will direct the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture to form a commission consisting of one member of a national consumer organization, three members representing land grant universities, one member representing the food and retail beverage sector, six dairy producers, three dairy processors and two dairy industry experts.

These individuals would be charged with creating legislative, regulatory and market-based policy recommendations to address:

1. Responding to periods of heightened dairy production during low prices by considering better supply chain coordination and market price signals.

2. Enhancing the competitiveness of American dairy producers in world markets.
3. Evaluating and identifying challenges and opportunities for new markets for dairy exports.
4. Ensuring that Federal Milk Marketing Orders and FMMO rule makings are transparent and provide a fair return to producers regardless of the end product for which their milk is used.
5. Ensuring that the competitiveness of dairy products with other competing products in the marketplace is preserved and enhanced.

If you are a dairy farmer, this is a historic opportunity to have our voices heard from the highest levels of leadership to correct some long overdue deficiencies in dairy policy.

If you are a consumer of dairy products, this is an opportunity for families who have chosen to be dairy farmers to have the support they need to update policies that simply don't work anymore.

I ask that my dairy farmer counterparts and supportive consumers call your member of Congress and ask for their support of the Dairy Pricing and Policy Commission Act of 2020. Also, remember to thank Representatives Ron Kind and Mike Gallagher for their instrumental role in introducing and authoring this legislation.

Join me in lifting a cold, delicious glass of milk in a toast to our hardworking dairy farm families!

-Bragger is president of the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation and a Buffalo County dairy farmer.