



1212 New York Ave. Street N.W.
Suite 900
Washington, DC 20005
202.525.5717

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VOTE ALERT

Vote Yes on Amendment No. 1 to Reform Broken Sugar Program

On behalf of the R Street Institute, I write to urge your support for Amendment No. 1 to H.R. 2, the Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018, also known as the “farm bill.” A bipartisan effort, Amendment No. 1 was introduced by Reps. Foxx (R-NC), Davis (D-IL), Shuster (R-PA), Blumenauer (D-OR), Chabot (R-OH), Speier (D-CA), Barletta (R-PA) and Kind (D-WI). The amendment mirrors the bipartisan Sugar Policy Modernization Act introduced in Congress late last year. By enacting Amendment No. 1 into law, Congress will finally begin to address our misguided sugar policy.

The U.S. sugar program is broken. It provides a complicated mix of domestic subsidies and import restrictions that artificially raise sugar prices to about twice those in the rest of the world. High prices are a boon to a small number of domestic sugar producers, but they hurt families, bakeries and confectionaries. Likewise, the status quo policy contributes to degradation of the Florida Everglades and damages our trade relations.

Contrary to opponents’ claims, Amendment No. 1 would not be the death knell of domestic support for sugar production. Instead, the amendment would introduce market forces into the sugar program in ways that would ensure no net cost for taxpayers. The amendment would repeal domestic supply restrictions and pave the way for more imported sugar to make its way to willing domestic buyers.

For too long, the domestic sugar program has been a classic tale of rent-seeking, in which a small segment of producers are shielded from domestic and international competition. Congress should begin to pare back this arrangement as part of the farm bill.

Sincerely,

R Street Institute