

ROLE PROFILE Farm Bureau

Class: Poli 109

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Role profile for the American Farm Bureau Federation (Farm Bureau)

Part 1 ... Individual/Organization Profile

- Organization Background

- Name: American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF), commonly "Farm Bureau"

- Founded: 1919

- Type: National agricultural lobbying organization with affiliates in all 50 states and Puerto Rico

- Membership: Represents about 2 million farm families; ~95% of U.S. farms are family-operated

- Lobbying / Political Activity

→ In 2024, Farm Bureau spent approximately \$1.31 million on federal lobbying; in 2023, \$1.45 million

→ Major focus areas: Farm Bill programs, agricultural trade, water and environmental regulation, renewable energy, rural development

- Number of years active

→ 106 years (founded in 1919)

- Issues Farm Bureau is best known for

→ Advocating for farm subsidies and crop insurance in the Farm Bill

→ Fighting against burdensome environmental regulations, particularly climate/GHG reporting rules

→ Promoting agricultural trade and opposing tariffs that harm U.S. farmers

→ Supporting rural infrastructure and energy policies that benefit agricultural communities

- Prominent donors / funding sources

→ Member dues (state and county Farm Bureaus)

- Farm Bureau-affiliated insurance companies
- Support from agricultural industries (agribusiness, food producers, livestock groups)

- Ideology

- Economic: Strongly pro-free market agriculture but supports farm subsidies and crop insurance as safety nets
- Social: Leans conservative on rural and cultural issues; advocates for immigration reform policies that address farm labor shortages
- Environmental: Supports voluntary conservation and sustainability programs but resists regulatory mandates that raise production costs for farmers

Part 2 ... Constituent Profile

- Economics

- Agriculture directly contributes ~\$222 billion to the U.S. GDP (0.8%), but the full food/ag supply chain contributes about \$9.5 trillion (roughly one-third of GDP)
- There are ~1.88 million farms in the U.S.
- Gross farm income and net farm income are forecast to increase in 2025

- Demographics

- About 95% of farms are family-owned
- Average age of U.S. farmers: ~57 years
- Roughly 30% are "beginning farmers" (in business less than 10 years)
- Farmers are disproportionately located in rural and suburban areas, with highest concentrations in the Midwest, Great Plains, and Central Valley of California

- Urban/rural breakdown

- Constituents are overwhelmingly rural, with some suburban representation tied to agribusiness and food distribution

- Politics

- Farm Bureau members lean conservative; historically align more with Republican positions on trade, regulation, and rural issues

→ However, Farm Bureau maintains bipartisan relationships in Congress because the Farm Bill requires cross-party coalitions

- Three specific issues important to constituents

→ Federal Farm Bill programs (crop insurance, subsidies, rural development)

→ Environmental regulation (climate policies, water rights, PFAS liability)

→ Trade and export markets for U.S. agricultural products

- Constituents' general positions

→ Economically: Favor support for family farms, crop insurance, and trade expansion

→ Socially: Tend to hold traditional/conservative values, but support for immigration reform exists due to farm labor needs

→ Environmentally: Favor voluntary conservation incentives, skeptical of federal mandates, but increasingly engaged in climate-smart agriculture