

, **DC** – Congressman Joe Courtney today announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture confirmed eastern Connecticut dairy farmers will receive critical support because of The American Taxpayer Relief Act, which the House passed on January 1, 2013. The bill contains a nine-month extension of the 2008 Farm Bill, ensuring that all dairy producers participating in the Milk Income Loss Contract program (MILC)—a program that compensates farmers when milk prices fall below a certain level—will have their contracts automatically extended until Sept. 30, 2013. Eligible producers therefore do not need to re-enroll in MILC.

The measure also included language that provides retroactive MILC payments from the time the Farm Bill expired in September 2012 until passage of the extension. September payments will be automatically sent out in February. Congressman Courtney [sent a letter](#) to House Speaker John Boehner and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid in September urging both leaders to extend MILC payments at the higher levels to protect farmers.

“I look forward to continuing to work with USDA to ensure dairy producers who were negatively impacted by House Republicans’ inaction on the Farm Bill receive the benefits they deserve,” **said Congressman Courtney.**

“As a member of the House Agriculture Committee, I will work to shape a five-year Farm Bill that provides robust protection for our dairy farmers, while also reducing risk exposure to the nation’s taxpayers.”

Congressman Courtney is the co-chairman of the Congressional Dairy Farmers Caucus, and is the first member of the Connecticut House delegation to serve on the Agriculture Committee since Henry Stevens in the 59th Congress more than 100 years ago.

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