



TRUE GRIT

Trump praises farmers for grit, self-reliance and foresight

Courtesy American Farm Bureau Federation

President Donald Trump Monday became the first chief executive since George H. W. Bush to address the convention of the American Farm Bureau Federation.

Agriculture thriving under new policies, president says

By **MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI**
Capital Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — President Donald Trump praised American farmers for their grit and self-reliance during his Jan. 8 speech at the American Farm Bureau Federation's convention in Nashville, Tenn.

Trump also commended growers on their foresight in supporting his presidential campaign, which many political analysts regarded as a long shot before his upset victory more than a year ago.

"Oh, are you happy that you voted for me," he said. "You are so lucky that I gave you that privilege."

The crowd seemed to agree wholeheartedly, at one point spontaneously breaking into a chant — "USA! USA! USA!" — after Trump spoke about re-

specting the American flag and the national anthem.

Aside from appealing to their patriotism, Trump reminded farmers of the "regulatory assault" they and other rural working-class Americans experienced before he came into office.

Since then, Trump said he's more than honored his promise to revoke two regulations for every new one enacted.

The rate has actually been 22 repealed regulations for each one imposed, he said.

"Remember, you are forgotten no more," Trump said. "We are fighting for our farmers and we are fighting for our country."

After the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Army Corps of Engineers began rolling back the "waters of the U.S.

rule," which threatened to restrict farming practices, "tough" men and women cried with gratitude, Trump said.

"I gave them back their property. I gave them back their farms. They couldn't use them," he said.

The recent tax reform bill, which lowered the corporate tax rate from 35 percent to 21 percent, also contains provisions that will especially benefit farmers, he said.

For example, growers will be able to deduct the entire cost of a new piece of machinery from their income within one year, Trump said. "That is something I think is going to be the sleeper of the bill."

Doubling the exemption from the estate tax, from \$5.5 million worth of

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Oregon Farm Bureau

Jenny Freeborn, right, meets with Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue. See Page 12 for story.

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- **Farm Bureau members take up immigration reform, farm bill**
- **Oregonian runner-up in Farm Bureau YF&R discussion meet**

Hirst bill seen as too stingy with water



Don Jenkins/Capital Press

Washington Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee Chairman Kevin Van De Wege, D-Sequim, gaveling a hearing Jan. 8 in Olympia.

Environmentalists target outdoor watering

By **DON JENKINS**
Capital Press

OLYMPIA — A Senate committee heard complaints Monday that a Democratic plan to reopen rural Washington to new wells would leave landowners high and dry.

The proposal would cap withdrawals from new wells at 400 gallons a day, compared to

the current 5,000-gallon limit.

Some property owners told the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee that the lower lid would be insufficient for lawns, gardens and animals, a concern shared by the panel's lead Republican, Moses Lake Sen. Judy Warnick.

"I would not want to build a house and have nothing around

it but weeds," she said after the hearing.

The two-hour meeting, on day one of a 60-day session, was the first chance for the public to comment on Senate Bill 6091. The legislation responds to the state Supreme Court's 2016 Hirst decision. The ruling casts doubt on whether landowners can drill wells in some watersheds, unless they prove they won't draw any water from streams.

The Democratic proposal

could reopen basins to more wells, but with less water allowed each new household. The plan also calls for a new \$1,500 fee on wells, trying out metering wells in one watershed and spending at least \$200 million over 10 years for fish projects. By 2023, watershed committees made up of government officials and tribes would draw up permanent rules for regulating new wells.

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Both sides declare victory in 9th U.S. Circuit Court's 'ag gag' ruling

By **SEAN ELLIS**
Capital Press

BOISE — Supporters and opponents of Idaho's so-called "ag gag" law both claimed victory following a recent 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling on the law.

Supporters of the Idaho Agricultural Security Act, which is called the "ag gag" law by opponents, say last week's appeals court ruling on the statute

largely vindicates the purpose of the law.

Although the court ruled the law's ban on secret video or audio recordings is unconstitutional, it upheld most of the remaining provisions in the statute that protect agricultural production facilities, supporters say.

"Almost all of the law got upheld," said Gayle Batt, a former state representative who sponsored the bill in the

Idaho House of Representatives. "The meat of the bill survived."

The bill was crafted by the Idaho Dairymen's Association after video footage of dairy cows being abused was released by an undercover animal activist group. IDA officials said the footage was used to attempt to unfairly damage the dairy's business.

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Gayle Batt, who as a legislator carried the Idaho Ag Security Act in the House, said the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld most of the statute. "The meat of the bill survived," she said.

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