

Washington D.C. – Today, after working hard for seven months with Congressman Costa, Congressman Cardoza, and a bipartisan group of members on the House Agriculture Committee to craft a farm bill that represents our farmers and ranchers, Congressman McCarthy expressed disappointment that Speaker Pelosi included tax increases on American businesses in the farm bill.

Last night, Congressman McCarthy spoke on the House floor urging the new Democrat leadership to work in partnership and reform the farm bill, which until this week, received bipartisan support. Last week, the House Agriculture Committee passed a carefully crafted farm bill out of Committee, which received unanimous bipartisan support. Unfortunately, the new Democrat leadership did not accept compromise legislation that removed the tax increases, causing 191 members of Congress to vote against final passage of the farm bill, including Congressman McCarthy. In response, Congressman McCarthy issued the following statement:

“For over seven months, the House Agriculture Committee worked in a bipartisan fashion to support our farmers and ranchers. Unfortunately, once the bill was passed out of Committee, Speaker Pelosi chose not to continue this partnership. Instead of thinking of our children, who will compete with countries like China and India for good jobs, Nancy Pelosi chose to increase taxes on American businesses that provide millions of good jobs to Americans. This is not what the American people are looking for.

“On the House Agriculture Committee, I worked hard with my good friends Congressmen Costa and Cardoza to make sure the farm bill included 21st Century reforms that support specialty crops farmers, who produce fruits and vegetables. We passed a balanced farm bill out of Committee, and I expected this bipartisan spirit to continue once the bill reached the floor. Unfortunately, just before it reached the floor, the new Democrat leadership added tax increases on American businesses to the farm bill.

“The Farm Bill is only brought up twice a decade and today’s vote showed that the new Democrat leadership missed a big opportunity to work together. We should have done better for our farmers and job creating businesses. I supported a substitute bill that would have kept this a true farm bill and not a potential job-killing and prosperity-hindering tax hike. Unfortunately, Nancy Pelosi and her colleagues would not accept this compromise, which could have brought us together.”

Twice a decade, Congress renews America’s agriculture policy by passing a farm bill. Today, the farm bill passed the House after House Democrats rejected a compromise that would have stripped the tax increases out of the bill. President Bush has indicated that he will veto the House bill in its current form.