

LES AUCOIN
1ST DISTRICT, OREGON



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

June 3, 1981

Dear Colleague:

I will be introducing legislation which makes a significant contribution to providing a healthy diet for low income, elderly, and disabled individuals in our nation. My bill offers a tax advantage to farmers who donate gleaned crops to charitable organizations.

Would you like to join as an original co-sponsor?

This is not a spending bill. It amends the Internal Revenue Code to offer farmers a 10% tax credit against their income taxes for contributions of crops to charitable organizations.

My proposed legislation restores a tax incentive that farmers had until 1969. Prior to 1969, farmers could take a full deduction for the value of contributed crops, but the Congress decided to limit the deduction to the costs that the farmer had incurred in the production of the crop in order to eliminate any incentive that might exist to give the crop away instead of selling it. When contributions of needed goods declined after the passage of the 1969 Tax Reform Act, the Congress restored a tax incentive for corporations, but not for individuals. Since most farmers are not incorporated, equity demands a similar tax incentive for those farmers who donate their crops to charitable organizations.

Gleaning is the process of hand harvesting crops left behind after mechanized harvest or which remain unharvested because of adverse marketing conditions. A large quantity of this food now rots in fields and orchards when it could be taken and distributed to needy individuals. Crops which can be readily gleaned include all fruits, vegetables, berries and nuts.

Legislation similar to this has already been adopted by Oregon and several other states. Its aim, and its result, has been the creation of gleaning and food bank redistribution programs throughout the country.

The success of gleaning programs has been tremendous. In Oregon, for example, over 1 million pounds of produce were gleaned in 1980 and distributed to more than 13,000 individuals. Not only were low-income people the recipients of this food but so were approximately 5000 senior citizens and handicapped individuals.

Let me assure you that this legislation has bi-partisan support. Senator Hatfield will introduce similar legislation in the Senate and we are working together to see that the House and Senate act during this Congress to encourage our nation's farmers to donate gleaned crops to charitable organizations.

If you want to co-sponsor or have any questions, please contact Suzanne Bohn at 225-0855.

With warm regards,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Les AuCoin".

LES AuCOIN
Member of Congress

LA/sb