



COMPETITIVE ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

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September 29, 2023

Mr. John Venrick
20561 Wild Horse Ranch Rd
Rollins, MT 59931

Dear Mr. Venrick,

A few weeks ago, I wrote to tell you about the Biden administration's \$15 billion slush fund.

It's called the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC). It has no employees. It operates through the various regulatory bodies at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). It is governed by a board of directors appointed by the president. All of them are from the USDA.

The agriculture secretary has broad powers and discretion to use the CCC budget. (Do you remember electing him? I don't.)

Biden is using the CCC as part of his "whole-of-government" approach to address climate change. The administration has developed a program within the CCC called "Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities".

This "partnership" gives money to people and organizations that are spending a fortune to develop expensive "green" technologies that almost certainly will *not* affect the climate—but will make food even more expensive than it is today.

Politico reports, "The Biden administration hopes the influx of cash will produce an impressive feat: turning some farmers, generally a conservative group, around on Biden." ... [Biden] also signed into law the Inflation Reduction Act, which will grow the incentive-driven climate-ag space by nearly \$20 billion."

"That's enough investment to turn the agricultural lobby around on Biden..."

Mr. Venrick, Biden's playing politics with America's farmers, and he's using your tax dollars to do it.

Before I say more, let me thank you for your past support of CEI. Thanks to people like you, CEI can fight for less regulation, more freedom, and fairness for all. CEI

has battled decades of climate alarmism and anti-energy policies that constrict energy supplies and raise prices. Thank you.

If you put “Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities” into a search engine, you will find links to countless government websites, agricultural industry publications, environmental groups, and universities applauding the program.

It should be controversial for any agency—or person—to have so much control over so much money. But it’s not. Until CEI started talking about this slush fund, no one was talking about it! No one in Congress. No one in the policy world. Certainly not the media.

CEI exposed this slush fund, and now people, even *Politico*, are talking about it. And they see this going even further. The USDA is using this taxpayer-funded scheme to “entice” the private sector to invest in “climate-smart” technologies.

This means they want corporations to take their “Environmental, Social, and Governance” investments, also known as “ESG,” even further—even if it puts millions of stockholders at risk.

CEI is best positioned to do something about it.

Biden’s USDA slush fund is the very definition of abusive government spending. It is also a symptom of a more significant problem—the regulatory state.

As you know, CEI has been fighting the regulatory state since 1984. We have a deep knowledge of the regulatory agencies. We understand how rules and regulations are written. It allows us to be strategic.

We know precisely when and how to speak up and say NO.

The agencies are supposed to implement laws passed by Congress. Instead, the agencies *interpret* the laws written by Congress in the way that best suits them. Then, they write rules and regulations that you and I are forced to follow.

The regulatory state holds hearings for its regulations and allows comment periods with deadlines.

Very few people take advantage of these opportunities to stop the regulatory state, which is why it can impose regulations at will. But we show up. CEI has already testified eight times before Congress and submitted expert comments on 11 regulatory issues this year.

(What is your experience with the regulatory state? Would you share your story with us? There is space to use on the reverse of the enclosed reply form.)

We publish an annual snapshot of the federal regulatory state called Ten Thousand

Commandments each year. It is a survey of the size, scope, and cost of federal regulations and how they affect American consumers, businesses, and the economy at large.

Written by CEI's Fred L. Smith Fellow in Regulatory Studies Wayne Crews, it shines a light on the large and under-appreciated "hidden tax" of America's regulatory state. This year will be the 30th edition. (When I say CEI knows the ins and outs of the regulatory agencies, I mean it.)

CEI also leads the Cooler Heads Coalition. Doing so helps maintain cohesion with free-market allies on major energy and environmental issues. We sign letters to Congress together. Each of us is stronger by standing together.

Coalitions led by CEI were instrumental in defeating ratification of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, defeating enactment of the 2009 Waxman-Markey cap-and-trade bill, and convincing President Trump to withdraw from the 2015 Paris Climate Treaty.

Policymakers use our report, Free to Prosper: A Pro-Growth Agenda for the 118th Congress. Some members of Congress know what we're up against and have come to us asking for help.

We're always here to help. We also take what we know to Congress.

One thing we know for sure: Congress can restrain the USDA slush fund through the appropriations process. The powers granted to the secretary of agriculture can be pulled back and have been in the past. It's time to do it again.

As I said earlier, only a few people are talking about the USDA slush fund or how it's being used to promote the Biden administration's climate agenda. Or how Biden is playing politics with America's farmers and investors. A bill has made it out of the agriculture subcommittee but may not get the attention it needs.

I need your help to make sure members of Congress know about it.

CEI will help ensure that they do something about it.

It won't be easy. Biden's spin doctors have spun this well. They won't say this is an environmental program. They say it is a marketing effort.

They say the "Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities" will "expand markets." They're subsidizing the development of new, very expensive technologies that won't touch climate change but will make food more expensive.

I'm already shocked at the price of groceries. I am sure you are, too!

With your continued support of CEI, we can help end the USDA slush fund. CEI's knowledge of the regulatory state is unrivaled. Our understanding of the environmental

movement is also well-earned.

Because CEI understands both policy problems, we can stop the USDA slush fund and so much more. But I need your help.

Mr. Venrick, please send another gift back to me at CEI today. Your gift of \$25, \$50, or even \$75 or more will help CEI:

- Address many of America's long-term problems by getting rid of destructive regulations and stopping new ones.
- Continue fighting burdensome climate change proposals that cost a fortune and promise little, if any, effects on the climate.
- Ensure Congress understands it can restrain the USDA slush fund through the appropriations process.

Please send your most generous gift back to me at CEI today.

Mr. Venrick, you've been a tremendous help to CEI. Thank you!

Sincerely,



Kent Lassman
President and CEO

PS: Biden is using the USDA slush fund to promote his climate change agenda. He's playing politics with America's farmers, and he's using the taxpayer-funded \$15 billion USDA slush fund to do it. Congress has the power to stop this. CEI has exposed this issue—and the \$15 billion slush fund—and people have started talking about it.

You can help CEI fix this and so much else, but I need your help.

Mr. Venrick, please send a gift of \$25, \$50, or even \$75 or more back to me at CEI today. I'll put your dollars to work immediately.

Thank you very much for your past support of CEI.