



2024

# NATIONAL GRANGE

## *Policy Book*

Containing Policy Statements,  
Resolutions and Present Policy  
adopted at the  
**157th Annual Convention  
of the National Grange**



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**Policy Book  
of the  
National Grange  
of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry**

*Updated via Delegate action at the  
157<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention  
Niagara Falls, New York  
November 14-18, 2023*

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## THE GRANGE MISSION



The Grange strengthens individuals, families and communities through grassroots action, service, education, advocacy and agricultural awareness.

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## STATE OF THE GRANGE ADDRESS (EXTERNAL ADDRESS)

Delivered by Betsy E. Huber, National Grange President

Tuesday, Nov. 14, 2023

The National Grange in Washington, DC has had an excellent year and I can truly say that we are recognized as the trusted voice of rural America. Associations are contacting us to ask our stance on issues and companies are asking us to help them get their information to the grassroots because they know we are the only group that reaches rural areas with a message that people will trust. Thanks to Legislative Director Burton Eller for his tireless efforts on our behalf.

### FUNDING THE GOVERNMENT

As 2022 and the 117th Congress came to a close in late December, after lengthy negotiations Democrats and Republicans agreed on a final bipartisan compromise in the form of a \$1.7 trillion omnibus government funding bill. In doing so, Congress was able to avoid a government shutdown for a few months and increase spending on both non-defense discretionary programs and defense funds.

In addition, a number of provisions were included of particular interest to the National Grange and rural America, such as the Growing Climate Solutions Act, which would establish USDA regulated voluntary carbon credit markets for farmers, and the SUSTAINS Act, which would allow private entities to fund conservation projects with matching support from USDA, both of which the National Grange supported. The omnibus bill also includes funding increases for agricultural research, disaster relief targeted towards agriculture, and increases in foreign food aid purchases.

Important healthcare and telecommunications provisions affecting rural America were also included. The spending bill included key extensions of the Federal Communications Commission's spectrum auction authority, and Medicare flexibilities which have allowed for the increased use of telehealth. Funding for Medicare support was also provided for vaccines, mental health coverage, and opioid abuse programs, and for hospitals at risk of closure, many of which exist in rural America.

As the year 2023 unfolded, a new Congress took office with a new look. The House now is narrowly under Republican control, though no Republicans seem to be in control of the chaos. Following a lengthy process to elect a new Speaker of the House, Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) was chosen. As part of this process, McCarthy had to make significant changes at the request of more conservative members of his party, in general, decreasing the power of Republican leadership and increasing the power of individual members to block or slow down legislation, as we saw last month with the last-minute vote to avoid a government shutdown and the subsequent removal of Speaker McCarthy. We can expect another nail-biter this week as the shutdown deadline nears again.

Debt Limit was the top issue for the first half of 2023. The debt limit is a cap set by Congress on the amount of money which the federal government is authorized to borrow in order to meet ongoing fiscal obligations. The debt limit does not control future or new spending by the federal government, it only controls borrowing to meet existing spending authorized by Congress. Should the Congress have failed to raise the debt limit before the cap was hit in early June, the federal government would default on its fiscal obligations, certainly causing serious economic turmoil.

After months of back-and-forth negotiations, in early June President Biden signed into law the Fiscal Responsibility Act, which included spending caps and cuts, and raised the federal debt limit until January first, 2025, moving the issue until after the 2024 election cycle. Addressing a potential fight looming in the Farm Bill process, the legislation also broadened work requirements for (SNAP) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program beneficiaries, increasing the work requirement age to 55. However, it also expanded exemptions to work requirements for veterans, homeless people, and former foster youth who are eligible for SNAP. The bill also claws back previous spending which had been allocated to the IRS to increase tax enforcement. Finally, the act required the Department of Education to restart federal student loan repayments, which had been paused by executive order since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Last fall the Federal Communications Commission released new broadband availability maps meant to more accurately show actual broadband coverage across the country. Almost 350,000 challenges were received to the maps and they are again being revised.

In addition to inaccurate maps, other barriers such as rights-of-way access, slow permitting, and pole attachment fees are slowing rural broadband deployment projects. High speed internet rollout to rural America is being delayed as cable companies and electric utilities battle over who pays when new utility poles are needed for internet services. The poles are owned by electric or phone companies that often aren't receiving public money to build out broadband. Broadband providers need access to these existing poles to run their broadband lines. Pole owners need to be compensated for "make ready" costs such as moving existing wires or replacing poles. Internet providers say they are experiencing high fees and foot-dragging from pole owners. The Federal Communications Commission has drafted but not released mediation guidelines that would help solve this problem. The National Grange has petitioned the FCC several times this year to release the document. Until these barriers are mitigated, rural broadband is at risk of falling behind for the funding provided in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

The Department of Commerce has announced it will distribute high speed broadband deployment funds to all states from the \$42.5 billion Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) program. BEAD was created in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and is administered by Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). All states will receive allocations, and total funding for broadband deployment across the country now stands at almost 1 billion dollars. We remain vigilant to ensure that these funds are spent to reach the unserved first, then the underserved. The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) provides eligible households \$30 per month toward internet bills plus \$100 to purchase devices. ACP will run out of funds by early 2024. The National Grange is urging Congress to extend funding which will allow more rural families to access the internet and allow those already on the program to continue while Congress and

internet providers seek a more permanent funding solution. We are currently working to inform Americans, especially in rural areas, about this program under an FCC grant and we hope your Grange is assisting in this effort.

## **AGRICULTURE**

### WOTUS

In May, the Supreme Court handed down a landmark decision that greatly narrows the scope of the Clean Water Act as interpreted by the federal government. This long-awaited WOTUS ruling says the law only regulates wetlands when they are “as a practical matter indistinguishable from waters of the United States.” The EPA and Army Corps of Engineers needed to rewrite their WOTUS rule that went into effect in March to reflect this new guidance.

On August 28 the Agencies eliminated the “significant nexus” test that all nine Supreme Court Justices rejected, but ignored other concerns raised by the Justices, 27 states, and farmers across the country about the rule’s failure to respect private property rights and the Clean Water Act. The updated rule leaves in place much of the overreach that agriculture and many others have been opposing, including the agencies’ vague “relatively permanent” standard.

### Foreign Ownership of Farmland

Foreign entities own 37.6 million acres of U.S. agricultural land which includes forest, crop and pastureland. More states are becoming concerned as farmland is sold to foreign buyers. Foreign countries with the largest shares of U.S. land ownership are Canada followed by Netherlands, Italy, United Kingdom, Germany and China. Two bills have been introduced in Congress to address the issue.

Just before adjourning for their August recess, the Senate overwhelmingly voted 91-7 to bar investors from China, Russia, North Korea and Iran from buying more than small amounts of U.S. farmland. The measure also adds USDA as an ex officio member of the Committee on Foreign Investment in the U. S. The House Financial Services Committee has passed a similar bill.

### Right to Repair

The John Deere Company and several other manufacturers have signed a memorandum of understanding with the American Farm Bureau that could enable farmers and ranchers to repair their own equipment. Though the MOU has no legal standing, it agrees to provide access to parts, tools, software and documentation to equipment owners and their independent mechanics to perform repair and maintenance on their equipment. About 70% of the ag equipment sold in the U.S. is now under the same umbrella of agreement.

### Cattle Pricing

The bipartisan Cattle Price Discovery and Transparency Act has been reintroduced in the Senate by Fisher (R-NB), Tester (D-MT), Grassley (R-IA), and Wyden (D-OR) as original sponsors. The bill establishes minimum levels of fed cattle purchases made through pricing mechanisms such as negotiated cash, negotiated grid, stockyards, and other accepted trading systems. It also establishes a public library of marketing contracts, requires packers to report the numbers of cattle to be delivered for the next 14 days, and other provisions intended to create total transparency in cattle markets. National Grange policy supports the provisions of this legislation.

### Transforming Our Food System

The Biden administration plans to spend over \$2.5 billion on a new “food transformation network.” Major elements of the plan include \$650 million for meat and poultry processing projects, \$600 million to improve the food supply infrastructure, and \$300 million for organic farming transition. Additional projects will target the creation of regional food business centers, reducing food deserts, reducing food loss and waste, and help for fruit and vegetable growers to comply with food safety regulations. Several of these points address Grange policy recommendations.

### Climate-Smart

The USDA is releasing funding for agricultural producers and forest owners to participate in voluntary conservation programs and adopt climate-smart practices. The money, made available through the Inflation Reduction Act, will be allocated to four programs administered by USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service which accepts applications for its programs year-round in a competitive process.

### Dairy

The bicameral, bipartisan Dairy Pride Act has been reintroduced in Congress in an effort to combat the practice of labeling non-dairy products using dairy names. Cosponsors say the Dairy Pride Act will require non-dairy products made from seeds, plants, and algae to no longer be mislabeled with dairy terms such as milk, yogurt or cheese. Meanwhile, the FDA has acknowledged the problem of nutritional differences and has drafted recommendations to prevent consumer confusion about the nutritional makeup of plant-based milk alternatives. Unfortunately, the guidelines are voluntary, still permit the use of the term “milk” on plant-based products, and have not yet addressed labeling of cheese and yogurt.

Earlier this year, USDA received requests from milk producers and dairy processors to address problems with the way they are compensated through federal milk marketing orders. Milk marketing orders were created about a century ago to establish minimum prices paid to farmers in a particular region and to ensure payments to farmers are accurate and timely. Hearings began in late August on various milk pricing issues and will continue for 129 days. It’s been 15 years since the formulas for make allowances, which are rough estimates of the cost to turn raw milk into finished dairy products, have been changed, but 23 years since Class I fluid milk prices have been adjusted. We hope these hearings will result in fairer compensation for dairy farmers.

### Agriculture Research

The National Grange joined other food, agriculture, conservation and environmental groups to strongly urge Congress to support funding of priority items including agricultural research, agriculture extension education, agriculture economics, research facilities, innovation, conservation, export promotion and development, disease control and prevention, pest control and more. The Grange is concerned that U.S. public food and agriculture research funding has fallen by a third since 2002. Cutting edge research is critical to America’s competitiveness and national security.

The bipartisan America Grows Act, S.1628, would increase funding for agricultural research by 5 percent annually on an inflation-adjusted basis at the four main ag research and statistical agencies at USDA for the next 10 years. The National Grange and the coalition expressed our support for the Act in a letter to the Senate and House Agriculture and Appropriations Committees.

#### "Made in the USA"

A proposed new rule would allow voluntary "Product of the USA" or "Made in the USA" label claims to be used on meat, poultry and egg products only when born, raised, harvested and processed in the United States. The change would alter the current language which allows for meat derived outside the U.S. to bear a "Product of the USA" label if it is processed in an American facility. National Grange policy has long supported such requirements.

#### Supreme Court Upholds California's Proposition 12

California's animal housing law, known as Proposition 12, bans the sale in California of pork from facilities across the country that use sow gestation crates. The nation's hog farmers had sought to overturn the law, arguing it violated the Constitution's Commerce Clause. In divided opinions, the Supreme Court disagreed and left the California law in place. Once again agricultural processes and methods are being dictated by consumer preference, not science.

#### Commodity Checkoffs

Commodity checkoffs are programs established by agriculture producers and operated under the supervision of USDA that are responsible for promotion and marketing of the commodities they represent and for conducting research for new uses of those commodities. The 22 current checkoff programs represent diverse products from blueberries to cotton to milk to Christmas trees and are all funded through mandatory fees paid by the producers of each commodity. Checkoff programs can be established or dismantled through producer referendums. These programs have always been tangled in politics. Proponents argue that the research, promotion and marketing efforts they fund are important to keeping producers competitive. Opponents say they question whether the money from mandatory fees producers pay is spent properly. New restrictions on checkoff programs have been proposed in the Opportunities for Fairness in Farming (OFF) Act introduced in the Senate. Most of the requirements proposed in this act are covered by current law governing checkoff programs; the exception is the prohibition for checkoff boards to contract research and promotion work to organizations that also lobby Congress or federal agencies. In late September, an amendment to the FY24 ag spending bill to bar USDA from operating commodity checkoff programs was soundly defeated on the House floor. This could be considered a test vote leading into checkoff program discussions in the upcoming farm bill.

#### Farm Bill

The current farm bill was set to expire at midnight September 30 and today there is still no new legislation in sight to authorize a new farm bill for the next five years. But because 2023 crops are covered by the expiring farm bill, there's been no rush in Congress to move a new farm bill quickly. Several sections such as SNAP, commodity supports, conservation programs, and crop insurance are in statute as permanent legislation for mandatory spending regardless of congressional appropriations through the end of the calendar year. Commodity prices in general are good right now so producers have not been pushing lawmakers for immediate action on the commodity title. However, members of the agriculture committees are acutely aware that authorization for these titles expires at the end of December. Without new legislation, that's when Depression-era laws governing commodity supports kick in which would cause chaos in the markets.

## **HEALTH CARE**

#### National Grange Cancer Survey

Cancer is the second most common cause of death in the United States after heart disease. A new study by the National Grange with data analytics firm Xcenda finds that compared to urban areas, rural communities have overall higher rates of cancer incidence, late-stage diagnoses, and mortality than their urban counterparts. Unfortunately, the urban-rural disparity in cancer mortality has been widening over the past decade. The study reveals that people in rural areas are less likely to get preventive health screenings than those who live in cities and suburbs. Some of the reasons are a lower percentage of workers with jobs that offer health insurance, higher poverty rates, or the simple barrier of a lengthy drive to reach a health center that offers cancer screenings such as mammograms and colonoscopies. The Grange will use this data from our survey to urge rural citizen access to and Medicare coverage for new technologies such as multi-cancer early detection tests.

A total of 1,592 letters went from the National Grange headquarters to members of Congress and staff in support of the Medicare Multi-Cancer Early Detection Screening Coverage Act in both the House and Senate. The Act would require Medicare to pay for a new procedure that is capable of detecting many types of cancers with a simple blood draw in the early stages of the cancer's development. In the letters, we referenced our recent survey that found cancer deaths in rural areas are 14% higher than urban areas and late-stage diagnoses of lung and colon cancers are significantly higher in rural communities. Detecting cancer early means more treatment options and higher success rates, saving many lives.

#### Drug Pricing

Insurance companies use middlemen known as Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) to decide what medicines people can get and how much people must pay for these medicines. These middlemen operate with little transparency and accountability. The top three PBMs-- CVS Caremark, OptumRx, and Express Scripts -- control 80% of the entire prescription drug market. PBMs often bill health plans more than what they pay to the pharmacy for medicines and pocket the difference. PBMs may also require patients to pick up prescriptions at pharmacies the PBM owns or has a financial relationship with.

The Senate Health, Education Labor, and Pensions Committee has passed the Pharmacy Benefit Manager Reform Act by a bipartisan vote of 18-3. The Act would increase transparency, mandate that rebates paid by drug makers be passed directly to patients, and ban spread pricing (the practice of charging payers like Medicaid more than is paid to the pharmacy for a medication and keeping the "spread"). The National Grange, joined by 30 interested groups, sent the House Health Subcommittee leadership a strong letter of support for another bill, the Protecting Patients Against PBM Abuse Act (H.R. 2880). The Grange has long urged oversight of PBMs as one way to reduce the price of prescription drugs.



### Rural Mental Health

Bipartisan legislation, the Farmers First Act of 2023 has been introduced to reauthorize the Farm and Ranch Stress Network in the farm bill, add more services, and increase funding from \$10 million to \$15 million. New funding would go toward hiring competent counsellors and creating support groups who understand the unique challenges of farmers and ranchers. The Grange strongly supports this bill and is pushing to expand the Agri-Stress Network from its current seven states to nationwide coverage. The Helpline is a 24-7 dedicated hotline manned by trained farm, ranch and rural life professionals.

In addition, the bipartisan and bicameral Grange-supported National Agricultural Crisis Hotline Act has been introduced. National Grange partner Rural Minds was quoted at the bill's introduction, stating "This life-saving resource will provide those in agriculture with 24/7 access to help from trained responders who can relate to the challenges facing farmers and ranchers, speak their language, and provide assistance specific to their state of residence."

### Access to Alzheimer's Treatment

Earlier this year, the National Grange joined the fight to make breakthrough Alzheimer's treatments available to all and covered by Medicare. We filed a statement with the leadership of the House Ways and Means Committee and its Health Subcommittee for their hearing on Examining Policies That Inhibit Innovations and Patient Access. We also joined 50 cosigners on a letter to Congress to urge Medicare (CMS) to expand access to these approved treatments. The Grange cited a University of Iowa study that found agricultural workers are almost 50% more likely to develop the disease than the general population, and an Emory University survey that found rural areas see nearly twice the Alzheimer's death rate of urban regions.

I had an editorial published in the Kansas City Star and spoke on a panel on a program on The Hill stating that Medicare coverage rules for breakthrough Alzheimer's treatments discriminate against rural Americans and should be reversed. Medicare had only covered beneficiaries enrolled in studies run exclusively in a limited number of urban medical centers. Medicare has since approved coverage of these new drugs when the physician agrees to gather information for a registry.

### Make Fall Vaccines Available

The National Grange filed letters to the CDC and FDA administrators to request them to make the newest COVID vaccine available as soon as possible as we approach the fall and winter seasons. The officials were urged to approve the latest COVID, RSV, and flu vaccines in time for the mid-September vaccine clinic sponsored by the Northeast Granges at the huge Eastern States Exposition (Big E) in West Springfield, MA. They did so, and we were among the first in the nation to deliver the new COVID vaccine on September 15th.

### Preserve AM Radio in Vehicles

The National Grange, several farm and rural groups, and the National Association of Farm Broadcasters are urging Congress to enact the AM Radio for Every Vehicle Act (S. 1668, H.R. 3413). Some electric vehicle manufacturers are already eliminating AM radio from these models. The Emergency Alert System depends on AM radio. It offers residents struggling with poor or non-existent cellular and broadband coverage a chance to stay connected. Farmers and ranchers depend on AM radio for information about weather, markets, ag news, ag commentary, and local events. There are 4,470 AM stations across the country and over a third of these stations broadcast agricultural programming. We've gotten a lot of publicity from this issue.

## **INTO 2024**

### Politics

Washington will almost certainly be a political quagmire in 2024. The Presidency, the house and a third of the Senate are up for election. The Senate is ripe for the Republicans to regain control but only if they present electable candidates. The House has a razor thin Republican majority this term but the political chaos now among the House Republicans opens the door for Democrats to gain the House majority in the 2024 election. The Presidential race promises to be somewhat bizarre. None in the field of Republican candidates are gaining much traction at this point against former President Trump for the Republican nomination. What effect will Mr. Trump's legal problems have on his electability? President Biden seems to have a lock on the Democratic nomination, but he's worried about third party candidates jumping into the race. Also, public opinion polls recently indicate the general electorate does not favor Biden running for a second term.

### The Economy

Regardless of what we hear from Washington, the economy is not doing very well at the down-home level. Rampant inflation and high interest rates are squeezing the average citizen. Even with reported job growth, most businesses are still having trouble hiring qualified employees who want to work.

### Health Care

The National Grange will spend much of its time on health care next year. New legislation to authorize Medicare and Medicaid to pay for cutting edge immunizations, therapies and cures seems to take forever to get on Congress' agenda. Polls show residents of rural and small-town America are older, sicker, less insured and farther from medical care than their urban counterparts. This will add to the Grange's challenges to secure sufficient health care for its members and their communities.

### Telecommunications

The Grange will continue its long-time priority commitment to deploy high speed internet to the last mile of country road. We have made great strides in the past two years. With all the public and private funds dedicated to connecting all Americans, our challenge for 2024 will be to assure the unserved are connected first, the underserved are connected next and then everyone else.

### Agriculture

The farm bill will dominate the agriculture space in 2024. There won't be much new money to fund all the wish lists so there will be winners and losers. The Senate and House agriculture committees have traditionally been able to craft farm bills in a bipartisan manner and committee leadership has vowed to do the same this time. But passing a new farm bill may not be easy due to differing priorities between the House and Senate.

On October 3rd, Virginia Tech released its Global Agricultural Productivity Report which states that “only by working together will agricultural productivity meet demand.” In the interest of time, I will just quote their six recommendations, but the report is well worth reading.

1. Invest in public agricultural research & development and extension services
2. Embrace science- and information-based technologies and practices
3. Improve the infrastructure and market access for agricultural inputs and outputs
4. Cultivate partners for sustainable agriculture and improved nutrition
5. Expand and improve regional and global trade
6. Reduce postharvest loss and food waste

All of these recommendations make sense and are policies that the Grange can support. I encourage you all to consider how your Grange and you personally can plan food for the future by working on these goals.

### **WHAT IS THE GRANGE?**

We don't hear that as much around Washington as we did a few years ago. You can see that our two-man team, now one-man team, has been working hard for you and extremely busy over the past year.

We will work to ensure that the Grange profile continues to rise throughout 2024. As we engage even deeper into policies that affect agriculture, food, health care, telecommunications, rural life and much, much more, the Grange is becoming recognized as the trusted voice of rural America.



## COMPLETE INDEX OF RESOLUTIONS & ACTIONS

AGRICULTURE			
RES #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
101	CA	Affordable Water Rates for Agricultural Use in Food Deserts	Policy Statement
102	CA	Agrivoltaics	Policy Statement
103	CA	American Food Security & Small To Medium Sized Farmer Support	Covered by 124- PA
104	CA	Continuing Support for Right to Repair	Present Policy
105	ID	Ag Education	Present Policy
106	ID	Supporting Swift Delisting of Grizzly Bear	<i>Transferred to Conservation</i>
107	IL	Farm Equipment Repair Costs	Present Policy
108	IL	Preventing Animal Cruelty at Mexican and or Charrerria Rodeos	State Issue
109	IL	Saving Prime Farmland from Solar Invasion	State Issue
110	IL	US Farmland Against Foreign Ownership	Covered by 124- PA
111	MD	Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC)	Adopted
112	MD	Dairy Policy	Adopted
113	MD	Farm Bill	Policy Statement
114	MD	Farm Bill Conservation Funding	Policy Statement
115	MD	Farm Bill Research Title	Policy Statement
116	MD	Nutrition	Present Policy
117	MT	Ban Foreign Countries From Buying U.S. Farmland	Covered by 124- PA
118	NC	Indemnity Provisions for Plants	Adopted
119	NJ	Federal Farm Bill Priorities	Adopted
120	NJ	USDA Organic Foods	Adverse
121	NY	Promoting Agriculture Safeguards and Security (Pass) Act	Covered by 124- PA
122	OK	Crop Insurance	Adopted
123	OR	Increase Agricultural Items Allowed for Farm Direct Marketing	State Issue
124	PA	Amend Agricultural Foreign Disclosure Act – Foreign Farmland Ownership	Adopted
125	PA	Cannabis – Federal Government - Banking	<i>Transferred to Labor, Judiciary, &amp; Transportation</i>
126	PA	Cannabis Regulations - Remove from Schedule One Drug	<i>Transferred to Labor, Judiciary, &amp; Transportation</i>
127	PA	Proposed French Creek National Wildlife Refuge	Adopted
128	A	Safe, Practical, Clean Energy Solutions	Policy Statement
129	TX	Feral Swine Eradication and Control Program	Adopted
130	WA	Food Insecurities	Covered by 124- PA
131	CA	Cannabis Banking	<i>Transferred to Labor, Judiciary, &amp; Transportation</i>
132	CA	Integration of Hemp Into the Cannabis Supply Chain	Policy Statement
133	OH	Foreign Land Purchases	Covered by 124- PA
134	OH	Support of H.4.1437	State Issue
135	VT	Upholding the Standard of Identity for Dairy	Present Policy

136	VT	Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act	Present Policy
		Hemp/Cannabis Study Committee report	Adopted

AUDIT & BUDGET			
RES #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
201	CA	Divestment of Russian Assets and Accounts	Covered in NG Investment Policy
202		Compensation for Elected Officers	Adopted
203		Covered Expenses for Officers and Delegates	Adopted
601	CA	National Grange Building Ownership	<i>Transferred from Grange Growth Adverse</i>

CITIZENSHIP & TAXATION			
RES #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
301	CA	Condemnation of Russian Federation Actions In Ukraine	Adverse
302	CA	Congressional Stock Trading	Present Policy
303	CO	Senate and House of Representative Term Limits	Present Policy
304	CT	Artificial Intelligence	Adopted
305	CT	Maintaining Options for Consumer Use of Computer-Based Technology	Adopted
306	ID	Federal Rainy-Day Fund	Withdrawn
307	ID	Protect Our Most Vulnerable Citizens	Adopted
308	MI	The US Dollar is the Main Currency	Adopted
309	MI	United States Postal Service	Adopted
310	MN	Support of The US Constitution	Adverse
311	MT	Term Limits For State And Political Office	State Issue
312	NJ	Federal Energy Policy Costing Families and Country	Adverse
313	NJ	Safety Requirement – AM Radios in New Vehicles	Withdrawn
314	NY	Cash as Payment	Covered by 308-MI
315	NY	Junk Fee Prevention Act	Adopted as amended
316	NY	Peer-To-Peer Payment Apps	Adopted as amended
317	NY	Protecting Your Genetic Data	Adopted
318	NY	Stop Stolen Valor for Service-Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business Contractors Act (S1469)	Policy Statement
319	NY	Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Program Reform	Adopted
320	NY	The Import Security and Fairness Act	Adopted
321	OR	Responsible Use of Facial Recognition Software Tools	Rejected
322	PA	Cannabis – Schedule One Drug – VA Benefits	Adopted
323	WV	Removal of History	Present Policy
324	WV	Voting Rights	State Issue
325	OH	Central Bank Digital Currency	Policy Statement
326	OH	Federal Pension Guarantees	Adopted
327	IN	Pork Barrel Spending	Rejected
328	IN	Stock Act	Present Policy

CONSERVATION			
RES #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
106	ID	Supporting Swift Delisting of Grizzly Bear	<i>Transferred from Agriculture Present Policy</i>
401	ID	Helium	Adopted
402	NY	Deep Seabed Mining	Withdrawn
403	NY	Northern Long-Eared Bat	Withdrawn
404	WA	Federal Funding for Forest Management	Adopted
405	WA	The Proposed Removal of the Lower Snake River Dams	Adopted
406	ID	Coal Fired Pizza Ovens	Withdrawn
407	OH	Property Rights	State Issue
408	CA	Replanting Giant Sequoia Seedlings	Adopted
409	CA	Support Legislation and Education on Prescribed Fire and the Establishment of Prescribed Burn Association (PBAS) for Landowners	Present Policy
507	MN	Support of Clean Drinking Water	<i>Transferred from Education &amp; Health State Issue</i>

EDUCATION & HEALTH			
RES #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
501	CA	Family Farm & Small Business Exemption Act	Policy Statement
502	CT	Healthcare Security	Adopted
503	CT	Student Loan Correction	Withdrawn
504	DE	Disclosure of Inactive Ingredients in Prescription Medication	Adopted
505	ID	Support End Diaper Need Act	Adopted
506	MD	National Cancer Prevention and Early Detection Month	Policy Statement
507	MN	Support of Clean Drinking Water	<i>Transferred to Conservation</i>
508	NJ	Environmental Protection Agency Guidance	Withdrawn
509	NJ	Red Dye #3	Covered by 510-NY
510	NY	Ban Red #3 Dye	Adopted
511	NY	Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act Of 2018	Adopted
512	NY	High Levels of Caffeine in Energy Drinks	Adopted
513	NY	Improving the Food and Drug Administration's Human Food Program	Withdrawn
514	NY	Keeping Health Data Private	Policy Statement
515	NY	Lithium-Ion Battery Safety	Policy Statement
516	NY	Medicare Coverage for Diabetic Sensor/Reader Appliance	Adopted
517	NY	National Agricultural Crisis Hotline Act	Adopted as Amended
518	NY	Preventing Maternal Deaths Reauthorization Act	Adopted as Amended
519	NY	The Ensuring Access to Lifesaving Drugs Act	Adopted
520	OR	Medicare Coverage for Multi-Cancer Early Detection Screening	Present Policy
521	PA	Affordable Child Care in Rural America	Policy Statement
522	TX	Expansion of Mental Health Care	Adopted
523	WA	Basic Dental Coverage Through Medicare	Present Policy
524	WA	Mental Health Issues Amongst Veterans	Policy Statement
525	WA	Standardization of Food Sell Date Usage	Adopted
526	OH	PFAS's Forever Chemicals	Present Policy

527	IN	Prescription Ads	Withdrawn
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GRANGE GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT			
RES #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
601	CA	National Grange Building 1616 H Street NW, Washington DC Ownership	<i>Transferred to Audit &amp; Budget</i>
602	CO	Social Activities	Policy Statement
603	IA	7th Degree Format	Adopted
604	IA	Banquet and Evening of Excellence	Withdrawn
605	MD	National Grange to partner with Comfort Cases	State issue
606	MD	Update Language and Songs of 1st-4th Degree Work	Adopted
607	ME	Nonsmoking National Grange Events	Policy Statement
608	MT	Honoring Veterans	Withdrawn
609	NY	National Grange Youth and Junior Departments	Adopted
610	OR	Disposition of Resolutions at National Grange	Rejected
611	PA	Documentation of Sixth and Seventh Degree	Adopted as Amended
612	VT	Contest Entries from Affiliate Members	Withdrawn

GRANGE LAW			
RES #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
701	CA	Cannabis In Digest	Adverse
702	CO	Amending of National Grange Digest Regarding Interest Earned on Custodial Accounts	Adverse
703	CT	Assembly of Demeter Titles	Policy Statement
704	DC	Add Youth Member to Executive Committee/Board of Directors	Withdrawn
705	DC	Counting Granges With Fewer Than 13 Members In Total For Delegate Representation To National Grange	Withdrawn
706	DC	Defining the Judicial Laws and Authority, As Well As the Parliamentary Laws and Authority of the High Priest of Demeter and the Assembly of Demeter	Rejected
707	DC	Strike Jurisdiction Of Subordinate Granges	Adopted
708	DC	Strike Requirement For Permission To Join As Associate Member	Adopted
709	DC	Strike Requirement To Wear Pin Or Regalia At Grange Meeting	Withdrawn
710	IA	National Grange Hiring Authority	Adverse
711	ID	Duties of the Secretary	Covered by 719-WA
712	MA	Subordinate Secretary Membership Reports	Withdrawn
713	MD	National Dues for Junior Grange Members	Adopted
714	MT	Preserving The Seventh Degree	Policy Statement
715	NJ	Payment of Junior Grange Dues	Adverse
716	NY	Changing the Name of Associate Grange Membership	Adverse
717	RI	Junior Grange Membership - Change in The National Grange By-Laws	Referred to Committee
718	RI	Scott Sherman	Rejected
719	WA	Duties of the Secretary	Adopted
720	WV	Grange Representation	Withdrawn
721	VT	Change in Wording of Fourth Degree Opening Prayer	Adverse

722	Committee	Proposed Changes to the Fifth Degree Manual	Adopted
723	Committee	Digest Change for Number of Granges to Charter a Pomona Grange	Rejected
724	Committee	Digest Change for Pomona Grange Reporting to the State Grange	Rejected
725	Committee	Proposed Changes to the Digest for Pomona Granges	Adopted as Amended

LABOR, JUDICIARY & TRANSPORTATION			
RES #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
125	PA	Cannabis – Federal Government - Banking	<i>Transferred from Agriculture</i> Adopted
126	PA	Cannabis Regulations - Remove from Schedule One Drug	<i>Transferred from Agriculture</i> Rejected
131	CA	Cannabis Banking	<i>Transferred from Agriculture</i> Adopted as Amended
801	CO	High Visibility Clothing	Policy Statement
802	CO	Posting of Vehicle Fuel Taxes	Policy Statement
803	MN	Classification For Ambulance Services	Rejected
804	OK	Fossil Fuel	Present Policy
805	OR	Supreme Court Code of Conduct	Policy Statement
806	PA	Tax Incentives for Vehicle Purchases	Adopted
807	RI	School Bus Cameras	Withdrawn
808	OH	Adverse Effect Wage Rate	Present Policy
809	IN	Electric Car Fuel Supply	Adverse

## POLICY STATEMENT

Agriculture is, as always, a foundation of America's economy, providing directly or indirectly through value-added processing, and is \$1.264 trillion of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP). For over 150 years, the National Grange has been working to improve agriculture in America and the welfare of those who work the soil or care for the creatures of the field. Our roots are in agriculture, and our future is tied to our faith in the perennial cycle of planting and harvest.

Conservation of our soil, water and air quality remains a priority for the Grange, keeping in mind that all pertinent regulations should reflect local conditions. A key component of the future security of our water supply for both domestic and agricultural uses is the ability to store it. Challenges from environmental groups and climate change have brought progress in that area to a standstill. The Grange reaffirms its request to fund Conservation programs at adequate levels. The National Grange will continue to promote water storage projects that benefit agricultural and domestic needs while appropriately safeguarding fish and wildlife safety concerns. The NG encourages reviewing and revising existing water rate structures to ensure fair and affordable pricing, specifically tailored to agricultural activities in urban and rural food deserts. The Grange opposes the expansion of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) current authority to regulate our water supply. We oppose proposed changes to expand the definition of Waters of the United States (WOTUS). We believe that the US Army Corps of Engineers should have jurisdiction only over navigable waters, as defined in the 1972 Clean Water Act, and non-navigable waters should be subject only to state Department of Natural Resources & Natural Resources Districts regulations.

Agricultural producers have been leaders in protecting the environment. The National Grange urges Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) agencies to implement Nutrient Management Plans (NMPs). Good soil health, including proper nutrient management, is a priority, and we encourage all farmers to develop and follow a Nutrient Management Plan to ensure that no more nutrients are applied than are needed to grow the crop. As computer technology becomes more integral to farming and the equipment used, we encourage the use of precision agricultural technologies to benefit the environment and improve farm operational efficiency. The National Grange should engage in public relations efforts to showcase the work and leadership of farmers and ranchers in adapting to and utilizing best management practices. We support the research and development of alternative fuel sources for agricultural use that will help to reduce greenhouse gases.

The National Grange encourages the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and State Departments of Agriculture to continue programs like the Farmers to Families Food Box Program. These programs enabled the purchase of foods that would have potentially been destroyed. The National Grange recognizes that other additional challenges facing producers is the fluctuation in commodity prices coupled with ever-rising cost of inputs and the yearly increases in property taxes. We will continue to work on solutions to help minimize their impact on the agriculture sector.

The COVID-19 pandemic helped us realize the need for local processing of our food supplies of beef, pork, poultry and dairy. More regional or local processing would have helped offset the devastating losses caused by the shutdown of large food processing plants. Closing down one plant, even for a few weeks, backs up production across the country, crashes prices paid to farmers and leads to huge surpluses at the farm and severe meat shortages for the consumer. The National Grange endorses the plans to fund the "Food Transformation Network" which will target the creation of regional food business centers, reducing food deserts, reducing food loss and waste, and help for fruit and vegetable growers to comply with food safety regulations.

The National Grange continues to monitor issues concerning GMO-related (Genetically Modified Organisms), Genetically Engineered (GE) and Bioengineered (BE) food production and labeling.

We endorse the recommendations of the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation titled "Gene Editing for the Climate: Biological Solutions for Curbing Greenhouse Emissions, concludes with a set of policy recommendations urging governments around the world to accelerate the development and deployment of gene-edited climate solutions by acting to:

- Eliminate unscientific regulatory burdens and barriers that hinder the development of safe gene-edited products.
- Increase investment in research and development (R&D) priorities such as advancing Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats (CRISPR) tools, enhancing photosynthesis, and improving methods to measure soil carbon.
- Improve coordination of existing R&D efforts within the United States and around the world.
- Expand incentives that will spur the rapid adoption of novel gene-edited technologies.

The National Grange supports voluntary labeling of Genetically Modified products. We further request that the National Grange Legislative Director share the latest reliable research on this subject with State Granges on a continual basis. As consumers become more concerned about where and how their food is produced, the National Organic Program (NOP) has become more popular. The National Grange supports the continued growth and federal support for the NOP, in order to meet the increasing consumer demand for organic food products.

Support for Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) is a long-standing position of the National Grange and is favored by consumers. We support food labeling programs that provide clear information about country of origin and processing, so that consumers can make informed choices about the food they feed their families. We believe that a food that is labeled "Product of the USA" shall be both born, grown and processed in the USA.

Food safety continues to be a significant issue for Americans in light of the ever-increasing amount of our food that is imported. We believe the responsibility for all food safety inspection should fall under one federal agency, preferably the US Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The Growing Climate Solutions Act would create a USDA system for certifying third-party verifiers and technical assistance providers. Farmers and ranchers could receive assistance and incentives for implementing practices which reduce carbon emissions on their operations. In addition, they could sell excess carbon credits to commercial firms who exceed their carbon emission cap.

Healthy pollinator populations are critical to food production in the US. We are pleased that the USDA has information available to assist first-time beekeepers in learning how to begin production. The National Grange supports ongoing efforts to preserve proven pollinators' health practices, while identifying new pesticide crop treatments that are not harmful to pollinator's

populations. Although Neonicotinoids are a critical component of seed treatments, their misuse via over-the-counter products has resulted in their increasing presence in water and wetlands. Their toxic effect on pollinator's populations has reached the point where we feel it is time to consider designating Neonicotinoids as a restricted use pesticide. We support additional education efforts designed to inform producers as to the toxic nature of Neonicotinoids that are present in treated seeds and the positive aspects of having untreated seeds available for planting.

The use of drone or UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) technology is rapidly becoming an important tool for agricultural production. However, privacy concerns have arisen as drones have become more popular. The National Grange supports the implementation of developed FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) regulations governing the use of drones, and will continue to work with USDA, FAA and other agricultural organizations to address issues related to drone use as they pertain to agriculture.

The National Grange continues to support extensive research by our Land Grant Colleges and Universities into both short-term and long-term effects on the environment and on human nutrition, of all new crops, whether Genetically Modified or traditionally bred. One of the major issues facing animal agriculture in our country are the efforts by certain "Animal Rights" groups to define "Humane Treatment" of animals.

***The National Grange supports states' rights to regulate agricultural production practices, but limit states' rights to standards that are science based and will not substantially interfere with interstate or export commerce.***

The National Grange should work together with other like-minded groups, to ensure that sound science is used in determining humane treatment of animals. The National Grange strongly supports agriculture education at all levels, including agriculture science as well as Cooperative Extension Service, and encourages the partnership between 4-H, FFA, Grange Youth Fair Program and Cooperative Extension Service to draw on and develop leadership abilities. Adequate funding of Extension must be continued and increased if we wish to ensure the availability of innovative practices and new tools beneficial to agriculture and society. We support educational programs, such as Farm to Table or Farm to School, that teach the importance of proper diet and nutrition. It is more critical now than ever to help consumers understand the basic food system, where their food comes from, and what, if any, genetic alteration was integral to its development. It is vital that we encourage the younger generation to enter into farming. We support programs or policies that will enhance the ability of young farmers to be successful as they pursue production agriculture as an occupation. Opportunities exist to expand agricultural tourism as an additional source of income for farm families. The National Grange urges government at all levels to remove unnecessary laws and regulations and work to pass legislation to limit liability exposure that hampers the expansion of agricultural tourism. As production agriculture becomes more dependent on computer technology, access to high-speed internet has become critical to farming and marketing activities. High-speed internet access is also critical to the agricultural operations that desperately need it to enable their high-tech precision farming equipment that is used to grow crops using less water, seed, fertilizer and pesticides. The National Grange strongly supports expanded funding efforts necessary to develop high-speed internet access in rural area that are currently underserved.

The 2018 Farm Bill provided additional funding to help close the existing gap between feed costs and average milk prices. This, along with restructured premium rates, benefited small-to-medium sized dairy producers. The National Grange also appreciates the establishment of a new Foot and Mouth vaccine bank. These improvements and other provisions designed to provide equitable treatment for all commodities on all farm sizes in all regions of the country need to continue to be addressed. The National Grange also strongly supports retaining adequate levels of financial support for the USDA Risk Management Division and the Federal Crop Insurance Program (FCIP), so that coverages accurately reflect cost of production and provides adequate price protection; yet ensure that premiums remain affordable. Disaster Relief programs are also a critical component of farm income safety nets. We also strongly urge that provisions are made to adequately address the needs for a reliable source of seasonal as well as year-round farm labor. Bills have been introduced, but none have been able to advance through Congress. This lack of action has been frustrating because the need for an affordable and adequate work force remains a critical agriculture issue. While many issues were resolved by the 2018 Farm Bill, plenty of challenges still remain to be addressed like more mental health programs for production agricultural workers, and the broadened work requirements for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program).

We urge continued work on the new Farm Bill in a timely manner but appears at this time there will be a one-year extension granted to create a new Farm Bill. Failure to adopt a new Farm Bill before it expires would cause chaos in the markets.

While the National Grange continues to support Commodity Checkoff Programs, questions remain whether there is sufficient oversight relating to whether checkoff dollars are being properly used. We support additional efforts to ensure checkoff funds are properly spent.

The National Grange continues to support the principle that only those foods from mammalian sources should be allowed to use the term "milk." The FDA (Food and Drug Administration) should not allow the labeling of nutritionally-inferior plant or artificial substitutes as "milk," "yogurt" or "cheese". The USDA must retain the authority to regulate the emergence of the efforts to grow cultured protein ("meat") in a laboratory setting. The Grange supports the principle that the term "meat" can only be used to describe animal protein derived from harvested production livestock, poultry, seafood or wildlife, wild or domestic. We firmly support the clear and accurate labeling of all non-meat alternatives to reduce consumer confusion at the market shelf.

Small farm operations have dwindled over the last 50 years and small farms and farmers fail when bureaucracy and regulations become burdensome. The United States Department of Agriculture classifies a small farm to have \$350,000 or less of gross income per year and a demographic of farm operators exist where a more realistic annual income for them is \$150,000 per year. We encourage the USDA to reevaluate the income threshold levels for the classification of small, medium and large farm operations and if necessary, adjust them to be more reflective of the range of income levels in the agriculture sector.

Milk prices to the farmer have failed to keep up with inflation, while production costs have continued to climb. The Grange must continue to work to educate consumers on the positive qualities of whole milk and lowering the unacceptable level of waste of our food that currently occurs on a daily basis in this country. Education efforts such as these will lead to more demand for our domestically-produced milk, thus leading to higher prices for our producers. Less waste of food will make more food available for government-assistance food programs.

Food security includes everyone having enough to eat of course, but it also involves farmers earning enough to stay in business; government not overregulating normal agricultural practices; advancements in scientific research and reliance on sound

science not popular opinion. It includes reducing food waste, preparing for, and adapting to climate change, water and soil conservation, and animal welfare. There is great concern that foreign governments, individuals and other entities are purchasing agricultural land, endangering not only food security but also national security. We urge that this issue be addressed. Food security was identified by National Grange delegates several years ago as a top priority and it will continue to be a focus in the coming years.

We were excited that the White House held a Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health after more than 50 years, but production agriculture needs to be part of the conversation, both the nutrition side and the production side. We see local food initiatives such as farm markets, farm to school programs, and local processing and butchering expanding to meet a growing demand. The food as medicine concept will expand as more research is conducted on the effect of diet, particularly on chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, etc. As demands on agriculture increase, the need for adequate funding for mental health issues is necessary.

Individual incomes in developing countries are rising, leading to changes in diet that will increase demands on the world's food supply even as population growth adds its inevitable impact. The National Grange supports new and progressive trade pacts that lower trade barriers and promote fair trade. Farmers prefer fair trade for their products rather than government payments.

National Grange encourages the recycling of all twine and netting and supports educational programs to educate farmers and other users of twine products for the proper disposal of twine to prevent the endangerment of raptors and wildlife.

National Grange urges the federal government to give preference to domestically grown horticultural products for display in domestically located US government-owned facilities and buildings.

National Grange encourages all State Granges to be aware of government regulations on agri-tourism in their state and to work to stop the reclassification of value-added and agri-tourism buildings to commercial buildings.

Cooperative nonpartisan effort is the "Grange way," and an understanding of the direct relationship between science and the natural world. The words written by National Master Oliver Wilson in 1919 are appropriate today, in that the time has come to simply classify agriculture as one of the great industries that make up our economic structure, and the need to treat agriculture as a vital part of that structure. Over one hundred years later we are still facing the same struggle, still selling products at less than the cost of production. We have the choice- pay the farmer a fair price or import our food. "No nation can prosper whose agriculture deteriorates." We endorse the Global Agricultural Productivity Report from Virginia Tech released October 3rd, 2023, which states that "only by working together will agricultural productivity meet demand."

The National Grange supports the use of agrivoltaics in conjunction with agricultural land and supports efforts to develop responsible regulations governing such efforts, that would result in minimizing the amount of Class I-VII soils allowed for this dual-use. The National Grange continue to support its current policies on clean energy but also include:

- Supporting regulations that ensure the safety and viability of farmlands, rural areas and the people, animals and wildlife that live in or transit the area.
- Support studies and recommendations that can help assure that animals and wildlife are not compromised in any way and are protected from long term exposure.
- Support bonding to protect landowners and the corrections to the land that may need to be made at the end of the lease.
- Support environmentally safe options that avoid hazardous materials that are not recyclable.
- Support regulations that ensure the safety of consumers and utility workers when adding stored energy into the power grid.

*Covers 115-MD; 128-PA; 101-CA, 102-CA, 113-MD, 114- MD, 132-CA; Covers portions of the President's External Address*

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127	PA	Proposed French Creek National Wildlife Refuge	Adopted
129	TX	Feral Swine Eradication and Control Program	Adopted
		Hamp/Cannabis Study Committee Report	Accepted

## ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS

### *111-MD – Dairy Margin Coverage*

WHEREAS: the current Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) program has been crucial for the survival of many dairy farms in recent years; therefore be it

RESOLVED: the National Grange urges Congress to continue the Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) program in the next Farm Bill, amending it to allow updated production history and to make adjustments to the feed cost side of the margin that more adequately reflect market conditions.



### **112-MD – Dairy Policy**

WHEREAS: there's an old saying, "only 5 people know how milk is priced in the US, and 4 of them are dead!" The Federal Milk Marketing Order system (FMMO) was designed to create orderly milk marketing and price transparency. There are 11 regional orders, as well as unregulated portions of the country. Most regional orders use Multiple Component Pricing (MCP), except for Southeastern, Appalachian, Florida, and Arizona. There are 4 classes for milk pricing:

Class I is fluid milk.

Class II is soft products, such as ice cream, cottage cheese, and yogurt.

Class III is hard cheeses.

Class IV is butter and non-fat dry milk (NFDM).

WHEREAS: Price differentials adjust the price paid to farmers in the different regions.

WHEREAS: The make allowance is an estimate of what it costs to transform milk into a finished dairy product. It is used by the U S Department of Agriculture (USDA) to set monthly minimum prices that processing plants must pay for components, in cheese, butter, NFDM, and dry whey. The system is designed to guarantee that processing plants can make a profit but does NOT do the same for dairy farmers. The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) and National All-Jersey have made proposals to reform the federal order system.

WHEREAS: the Class I mover caused unlimited risk to dairy farmers on the downside during the recent pandemic, but limits those benefits to farmers on the upside; and

WHEREAS: barrel cheese is used to determine the price of protein in Multiple Component Pricing (MCP) formula, but has been an inaccurate indicator of the value of cheese; and

WHEREAS: the milk component factors in the dairy pricing formula have not been increased since 2000 but these components have increased in the milk produced during that time period causing producer milk to be undervalued for Class I milk in MCP orders and all 4 classes in the remaining orders; and

WHEREAS: the increased cost of transportation has created disorderly market conditions in milk marketing; and

WHEREAS: 4 regional milk marketing orders do not utilize multiple component pricing meaning that water has the same value as protein and other non-fat solids and the value of skim milk is higher than is currently being paid to farmers in those 4 milk marketing orders; therefore be it

**RESOLVED: the National Grange supports efforts to reform the Federal milk Marketing order to:**

- **return the Class I mover in the dairy pricing scheme to the previous "higher of" instead of the current average of" designation;**
- **discontinue the use of barrel cheese in the component price formula;**
- **add unsalted butter should to the product price survey in the Class IV pricing formula;**
- **make milk component factors for protein and solids-not-fat (SNF) in Class III and Class IV skim milk price formulas more accurately reflect current values;**
- **update the Federal Milk Marketing Order Class I price differential to accurately reflect current costs of delivery;**
- **update the make allowance in the dairy pricing formula and seek authority in the new Farm Bill to review and update the make allowance more frequently, possibly every 2 years;**
- **extend the reporting limit for non-fat dry milk (NFDM) and dry whey in federal dairy pricing formulas from the current 30 days to 45 days;**
- **extend multiple component pricing (MCP) to all parts of the country.**

### **118-NC – Indemnity Provisions for Plants**

WHEREAS: the Federal government in certain cases have demanded farmers destroy plants that have been tested for various diseases beyond their control; and

WHEREAS: farmers and agriculture plant nurseries are at risk of not only loss of income but potential loss of their farming enterprise; and

WHEREAS: plants or produce have never before been given indemnification by the Federal government against losses beyond their control; and

WHEREAS: animal agriculture producers have been given indemnity for losses; therefore be it

**RESOLVED: that National Grange supports federal funding to provide indemnification for specialty crop producers and produce farmers against loss through no fault of their own for causes such as disease and various viruses, chemical contamination, radioactive fallout, etc.**

### **119-NJ – Federal Farm Bill Priorities**

WHEREAS: the Federal Farm Bill historically contains within it the spending priorities for the nation's agricultural industry, including nutritional programs that are interconnected with agriculture; and

WHEREAS: "Specialty Crops" is a catchall phrase for most crops outside of the "Big Five" commodity crops is inadequate to describe the farm products most often purchased fresh by consumers at retail outlets (items like blueberries, lettuces,

peaches, cucumbers, etc.) often leaving consumer and even members of Congress debating agriculture programs confused about what “Specialty Crops” means; and

WHEREAS: aquaculture is a sector of agriculture that is growing in importance and its products are equally beneficial for good nutrition as are crops currently referred to as “Specialty Crops”; and

WHEREAS: a broad array of agriculture trade associations representing United States growers and shippers are continuing to work on achieving mutual objectives for the Farm Bill and assuring a common platform across regions, commodities and other interests, including allies in support of the production of “specialty crops”; and

WHEREAS: as roughly 80 percent of Farm Bill funding is directed toward nutrition programs, both in school feeding and community-feeding efforts, states work closely with the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service to support a number of feeding programs that bring nutritious products to children, the elderly and those in need, while simultaneously creating deeper connections between farmers and those feeding programs by directing more locally grown agriculture products into them; and

WHEREAS: funding for these feeding programs can be stretched by ensuring, whenever possible, that products be bought locally first, regionally second and nationally and internationally as a last resort, thereby cutting the associated transportation costs, especially in times of rising fuel prices; and

WHEREAS: the approach of the federal government toward relying on subsidized crop insurance premiums as a farmer’s sole protection from the devastation of severe weather events – including hurricanes, other persistent flooding rains, hail, extreme heat, drought or any other extreme weather, as well as market loss due to quality and low prices – appears to be increasing rather than decreasing, since it is a way of addressing a farmer’s losses without the additional expense of direct ad-hoc payments; and

WHEREAS: federal crop insurance programs, in which premiums paid by farmers are subsidized with federal funds, receive their authorizations and operating parameters through the Farm Bill; and

WHEREAS: Specialty Crop growers also would benefit from a similar approach to help subsidize their crop-insurance premium payments; and

WHEREAS: public colleges of agriculture, including the Land Grant university system, face unprecedented facilities challenges, attempting to conduct 21st century research in buildings that were constructed 60 to 70 years ago, and the Farm Bill can be one of the vehicles by which federal funding to address those challenges can be directed to facility needs of those agriculture colleges; and

WHEREAS: the Farm Bill, along with some recently passed legislation regarding economic recovery and supply chain issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic, will have funding targeted toward enhancing smaller, independent processors of meat and other livestock products to ensure a more reliable supply chain for such products; and

WHEREAS: the Farm Bill can include funding for projects to bring reliable broadband to the rural areas of the country, which is desperately needed by farmers to enable them to keep pace with technological advances in both producing and marketing agricultural products; therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** that the National Grange urge the Congress of the United States to include within the next Farm Bill the following:

- Additional funding and other support for Specialty Crops, as well as a shift in Specialty Crop support to create more market based payments and giving serious consideration to changing the term “Specialty Crops” to something that more accurately conveys the agricultural products currently covered under that definition;
- Adding aquaculture products to the general heading of “Specialty Crops” (or any new name for those products designed to help the public further understand what is included under that heading);
- Greater attention to conservation of farmland in states experiencing development pressures, especially those where development is centering on the building of massive warehousing operations on farmland, which erodes the farmland base and creates vastly more impervious cover than other types of development;
- Reviewing the multiple definitions of “rural” in the USDA’s Rural Development programs to ensure that they focus on the importance of agriculture to a given geographical area, not simply the number of people living in those areas;
- Examining the role that federal subsidies for crop insurance premiums can play in encouraging more farmers to secure such coverage to help them overcome weather, disease, pest, and other damage, thus reducing the reliance on ad-hoc disaster payments funding by the federal government;
- Reauthorizing and providing robust funding in the Farm Bill for the Research Facilities Act in order to address the facilities needs of colleges of agriculture, including the Land Grant university system, as advocated by the Association of Public Land Grant Universities and Federal Research Facilities.

### **122-OK – Crop Insurance**

WHEREAS: Federal Crop insurance is not keeping up realistic revenues that allow farmers to protect their “true cost” for crop output; therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** that National Grange be in favor of Federal Crop insurance raising guaranteed revenues to match the annual rate of inflation for farm expenses in crop production.

#### ***124-PA – Amend Agricultural Foreign Disclosure Act – Foreign Farmland Ownership***

WHEREAS: foreign investors own 35.2 million acres of US farmland; and

WHEREAS: some foreign farmland acquisition (Texas) and attempted acquisition (North Dakota) is located near US military bases raising questions of our military security because of potential spying and electronic sabotage; and

WHEREAS: a large national pork producer and owner of hog-producing farms is owned by a foreign firm; and according to the Center for Strategic and International Studies' Global Food Security Program, it increased pork exports to that country even while US consumers were facing supply chain problems during the COVID crisis; and

WHEREAS: the 1978 Agricultural Foreign Disclosure Act which requires foreign investor reporting relies on self-reporting and has not had any USDA enforcement action since 2015. Therefore, be it

**RESOLVED: that the National Grange supports amending the Agriculture Foreign Disclosure Act to:**

- **Declare that enhanced regulation of foreign ownership of U.S. farmland is a matter of national military and food security.**
- **Prohibit foreign ownership of U.S. farmland within 50 miles of any U.S. military base or installation.**
- **Ban or restrict ownership to no more than 10 percent of shares in any U.S. food production, processing, or distribution by a foreign entity with attempted purchases vetted by USDA working in conjunction with the US Commerce Department and US Department of Homeland Security.**
- **Amend the 2023 Farm Bill to provide a dedicated funding source from the Department of Homeland Security necessary to make the Agriculture Foreign Disclosure Act law operational and enforceable; and be it further**

**RESOLVED: that the Secretary of Agriculture be made a standing member of the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) to consider agricultural needs when making determinations affecting national security, and require an annual report to Congress from the United States Department of Agriculture on the risks posed by foreign takeovers of United States businesses engaged in agriculture.**

#### ***127-PA – Proposed French Creek National Wildlife Refuge***

WHEREAS: the US Fish and Wildlife Service are proposing to make the French Creek Watershed a Wildlife Refuge; and

WHEREAS: this proposal takes in over 790,000 acres of prime farmland and covering the area from Chautauqua, New York to Erie, Crawford, Mercer, and Venango Counties in Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS: if this goes into effect, it will also take land off the tax rolls and have a major impact on agriculture, business, and the economy; and

WHEREAS: if this goes into effect the tax burden will fall on those left behind to make up the difference; therefore be it

**RESOLVED: that the National Grange strongly oppose the establishment of the French Creek Wildlife Refuge by the United State Fish & Wildlife Service and communicate opposition to elected officials.**

#### ***129-TX – Feral Swine Eradication and Control Program***

WHEREAS: feral swine cause hundreds of millions of dollars in property damage; and

WHEREAS: a bipartisan bill in the US Senate would make permanent the successful Feral Swine Eradication and Control Pilot Program to control feral swine; therefore be it

**RESOLVED: that the National Grange urge federal lawmakers to make permanent the Feral Swine Eradication and Control Pilot Program or support similar legislation that may be introduced and increase the amount of available funding.**

### **Hemp and Cannabis Study Committee Report**

During the 2022 National Grange Convention a motion passed to create the National Grange Cannabis/Hemp Study Committee. The committee was tasked with the review of the National Grange's current policy on Hemp and Cannabis and how it fits as an Agricultural Crop in our policy based on current scientific information.

Currently, the mention of Cannabis, in any form, is included in the National Grange Policy four times. They are as follows:

#### **From the Miscellaneous Section of the Agriculture Policy:**

The National Grange supports the production of industrial hemp when production is done within the guidelines of applicable state and federal laws.

#### **From the Medical Research/ Awareness Section of the Education and Health Policy:**

The National Grange encourages legitimate scientific studies on the risks and benefits of the use of medical marijuana in the treatment of disease.

#### **From the General Law Section of the Labor, Judiciary, and Transportation Policy:**

The National Grange recommends that there be no changes in the federal laws that currently ban the production and sale of marijuana in the United States.

#### **From the Alcohol, Tobacco, Controlled and Toxic Substances Section of the Education and Health Policy:**

The use of steroid and other stimulants, unless prescribed for medical reasons, should be made illegal in all competitive sports and the National Grange supports having heavy penalties imposed upon the violators. We also support legislation banning the sale of synthetic marijuana and synthetic cannabinoids regardless of their chemical composition or the name they are sold under.

This final mention, dealing with the synthetic forms of marijuana and cannabinoids, which are specifically not agricultural products, therefore falls out of the scope of the committee.

The committee consisted of the following members: Vince Scholten, California, Dave Roberts, Connecticut, Wayne Campbell, Pennsylvania, David Allen, North Carolina, Gene Lohrman, Indiana, and Susan Herod, California. Additionally, President Betsy Huber, and National Grange Legislative Assistant Sean O'Neal offered valuable guidance to the committee.

The committee met via Zoom several times during 2023. The committee decided to focus on two areas, education and resolution development.

The committee decided to target the education effort by developing a presentation that could be shared at Regional Conferences. Vince Scholten developed a PowerPoint presentation that he presented live at the Western Regional Conference, and virtually at the Hemp & Cannabis Workshop hosted by the Connecticut State Grange Lecturer's Department. David Allen presented an expanded version of the PowerPoint at the Eastern Regional Conference.

As the committee progressed with their work, they worked through a wide variety of opinions concerning Hemp and Cannabis, with various opinions based on different life experiences, worldviews, and community influences. Areas that committee members discussed included the following:

- Legalization of Marijuana
- Protection for people who use legally purchased products
- Removal of financial restrictions
- Hemp definition modification

### **Legalization of Marijuana**

Current federal law includes Marijuana in Schedule I of the Controlled Substance Act, which means the cultivation (or manufacture), possession, and distribution of marijuana are illegal except for the purposes of sanctioned research. Schedule I substances are considered to have a "high potential for abuse" with "no currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States."

The current National Grange Policy states: The National Grange recommends that there be no changes in the federal laws that currently ban the production and sale of marijuana in the United States. Therefore, any support of the legalization of Marijuana would necessitate a reversal of current National Grange Policy.

Suggested resolutions that would support this stance include:

- Remove marijuana from the Controlled Substances Act and create a system for state level marijuana regulation.

This suggestion would completely remove Marijuana from the federal government's regulation. A point of clarification is that Marijuana is listed in Schedule I. Cannabis is not listed in Schedule I. Hemp is specifically excluded from Schedule I.

- Ask the Federal Government to reschedule marijuana from Schedule I into Schedule III of the Controlled Substances Act.

Re-scheduling Marijuana would mean that substance has the following description: 'The drug has a potential for abuse less than the drugs in schedules 1 and 2. The drug has a currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States. Abuse of the drug may lead to moderate or low physical dependence or high psychological dependence.'

If marijuana were to be included in schedule III, it would not change the fact that recreational use of marijuana would remain illegal, for it would still be a controlled substance. The primary difference would be that there would be a recognition of an accepted medical use.

This would be consistent with the National Grange Policy which states, 'The National Grange encourages legitimate scientific studies on the risks and benefits of the use of medical marijuana in the treatment of disease.'

- Establish a Commission on the Federal Regulation of Cannabis to study a prompt and plausible pathway to the Federal regulation of cannabis.

There has been legislation, entitled the PREPARE Act of 2023, introduced specifically covering this issue. It has been referred to several committees, but the prognosis for passage is doubtful.

### **Protection for people who use legally purchased products**

Pursuant to the marijuana policy gap between the Federal Government and the various states, there exists a contradictory atmosphere on some Cannabis products. This is most easily exhibited by a person buying a substance which is legally sold in one jurisdiction, and then travelling into another jurisdiction while still possessing that substance. The person has, simply through a change in geography, become a criminal.

Suggested resolutions that are associated with this issue include:

- Prohibit the Department of Veterans Affairs from denying a veteran any VA benefit due to participation in a state-approved marijuana program.

There is currently legislation specifically addressing this issue; it has been referred to committee.

- Require the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to regulate food containing cannabidiol (CBD) derived from hemp as a food additive. (The FDA has determined that food containing added CBD cannot be sold in interstate commerce.)

There is currently legislation specifically addressing this issue; it has been referred to committee.

### **Removal of financial restrictions**

Suggested resolutions that are associated with this issue include:

- Create protections for financial institutions that provide financial services to cannabis-related legitimate businesses and service providers for such businesses.
- Provide a safe harbor from penalties or other adverse agency action for insurance companies that provide services to cannabis-related legitimate businesses in jurisdictions where such activity is legal.

Currently, because marijuana is a Schedule I controlled substance under the CSA, financial institutions and their directors, officers, employees, and owners might be subject to criminal and administrative sanctions for providing financial services to marijuana businesses, even if those marijuana businesses operate in states that have legalized certain marijuana-related activities. Although DOJ and FinCEN (U.S. Department of the Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network) have issued guidance on the interplay of federal marijuana laws and discordant state legalization efforts, many financial institutions have been unwilling to provide financial services to state-authorized marijuana businesses because of the legal risks under federal law.

There is legislation specifically addressing both issues that have been introduced.

### **Hemp definition modification**

The current definition of Hemp is 'The plant species *Cannabis sativa* L. and any part of that plant, including the seeds thereof and all derivatives, extracts, cannabinoids, isomers, acids, salts, and salts of isomers, whether growing or not, with a total delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol concentration of not more than 0.3 percent on a dry weight basis.' The 0.3% threshold differentiation between Hemp and Marijuana, both from the *Cannabis* plant, comes from Dr. Ernest Small, a Canadian scientist, who initially defined the 0.3% threshold in his 1976 study, *A Practical and Natural Taxonomy for Cannabis*, as a means of distinguishing higher-THC-containing cannabis from those with lower THC quantities. This figure was based on many years of real-world cannabis plant use patterns. It was not derived from THC's potential for abuse or intoxication.

A 2002 article, by Dr. Small and a colleague, states that 1.0% THC is considered to be the level around which THC has the potential to intoxicate. A THC content of 1.0% is still way below the average "street" marijuana (which often has 5%-25% THC) or medical cannabis (which frequently has 5%-30% THC). This is the data cited by Congress in its 2019 fact sheet on hemp.

Suggested resolutions that are associated with this issue include:

- Modify the definition of hemp to raise the tetrahydrocannabinol (THC, the psychoactive component of marijuana) limit from 0.3% to 1%.

There is legislation specifically addressing this issue that has been introduced.

There is precedent for this change as many countries have modified their definition of Hemp to reflect 1% THC.

## **PRESENT POLICY - AGRICULTURE**

### *Agricultural Exports & Embargoes*

1. The National Grange encourages its members to work through their commodity export promotion organizations on increasing the producers' participation in export market development. We strongly support retaining the present system of private enterprise and cooperatives in export sales. We continue to support government export credit programs, including blended credit, and propose the establishment of a revolving export credit fund. We further support the formation of a national marketing federation of regional marketing cooperatives to cover all agricultural export commodities and better serve the world's markets. We encourage all segments of the agricultural community to increase their private investment in export market development for American agricultural commodities.
2. The National Grange supports legislation or administrative action that will continue to maintain and increase the exporting of agricultural commodities. We recommend new emphasis on cash sales for agricultural products along with aggressive exportation of high value-added products. Consideration should be given to greater participation by the USDA in the administration and distribution of American food-aid programs.
3. The National Grange urges the Grain Inspection Service of the USDA to take all necessary steps to insure only grain of the quality specified in the purchase be moved into the export markets.
4. The National Grange supports increasing market development programs conducted through the USDA and AID (Agency for International Development) with emphasis on financing and development of the infrastructure of recipient countries to facilitate the receiving and distribution of U.S. agricultural products.
5. The National Grange will oppose restrictions being placed on imports into the United States that could result in retaliatory action being taken against U.S. agricultural exports by the exporting country. We recommend that further legislative and/or administrative actions be taken to enhance the exportation of U.S. agricultural commodities. We strongly support keeping the authority to determine national agricultural export policy in the U.S. Department of Agriculture. We support all efforts to maintain the sanctity of export contracts. We support monitoring and full public disclosure of information concerning sales to foreign countries. We support negotiations to eliminate all tariff and non-tariff trade restrictions against United States' agricultural exports.
6. The National Grange will oppose any attempt to embargo, restrict or otherwise burden the export of logs or any other privately grown agricultural commodity by a complete or partial ban, quota, or tax of any nature.

7. The National Grange supports swift implementation of the Taft-Hartley Act's provisions against workers who refuse to load agricultural commodities for export.
8. The National Grange supports developing agricultural trade with Cuba. We seek means whereby Cuba might be extended loans and/or credit to purchase U.S. agricultural products.

#### *Agricultural Imports*

1. The National Grange supports strict enforcement of laws regulating the importation of harmful species of plants and animals. We further support measures which will require tighter oversight and control at port of entry and market outlets in an effort to control the importation of exotic fowl, pet birds, and the establishment of procedures for the treatment of imported cargoes to prevent the importation of plant or animal insects or diseases.
2. The National Grange supports legislation that would require the USDA to certify that food products coming into the USA for human consumption have not been grown or treated with products that are not currently registered for use on food products in the United States.
3. The National Grange does not approve of using inspections, grading, health, and sanitary or labeling standards as non-tariff barriers to trade. We do support placing import quotas and/or import tariffs on agricultural commodities as a means of protecting domestic markets from seasonal and over trend market penetration surges. We urge Congress and the President to investigate dumping of food products from other countries to the US market that affect the agriculture industry in the United States. We insist that all imported agricultural products, including value-added commodities, meet the same strict inspection, unapproved pesticide residues, grading, and labeling standards as domestically produced products and that these standards be strictly enforced, and the country-of-origin supply certification that the imported product is free of harmful diseases and pests. We specifically recommend that all imported products be labeled with the name of the country of origin until the consumer purchases it. We further support the elimination of all export subsidies on agricultural products imported into the United States or the imposition of countervailing duties to offset the subsidy value.
4. The National Grange supports strict enforcement of existing countervailing duties to offset the subsidy value on certain agricultural and timber products being imported from Canada to protect the agriculture and timber industries in states along the Canadian border.
5. National Grange supports continued restrictions on imports of animals, meat, meat products and bone meal into the United States from any country having Mad Cow Disease until sound scientific data proves it is safe.
6. To allow for the consumers' right to know where their food comes from, the National Grange supports country-of-origin labeling for beef, pork, lamb, fish, and shellfish that is compliant with World Trade Organization (WTO) trade rules.

#### *Agriculture Trade Policy*

1. The Grange must continue to work for sound trade agreements for agriculture by encouraging the Administration and Congress to aggressively ensure that American farmers achieve access to all markets covered by trade agreements. The National Grange opposes non-transparent, non-amendable fast-track pacts which are not open to debate by our legislative bodies.
2. The National Grange supports the dairy industry being adequately represented in World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations.
3. The National Grange supports the permanent appointment of a Chief Agricultural Negotiator in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative. We support the strong representation of U.S. agricultural interests in all negotiations regarding U.S. trade relations, and to ensure that the cost of research and development is not born solely by the American farmer.
4. The National Grange continues to work for an adequate food supply for the entire world. We encourage increased food production in developing countries. To that end, we support an international food program that provides for the support of all nations in a cooperative endeavor to meet current and projected food needs in deficient areas and ensure that food will be available and efficiently distributed. All nations should give more support for research, education and development of programs designed to improve the capability of farmers in food deficient areas to meet more of the food needs of their people.
5. The National Grange supports the development of a consistent policy on the use of sanctions by the U.S. government. The Grange opposes trade embargoes as a first choice of action, but should all choices fail, short of military action, and a trade embargo becomes the only alternative, the Grange urges the federal government to embargo all products - agricultural, industrial and technical - instead of specific agricultural commodities. If sanctions become necessary as a tool of foreign policy, then sanctions should be used only as a consequence of multilateral sanctions.
6. In any new trade negotiations or discussions in re-opening any existing trade pacts, the National Grange strongly supports the inclusion of policy to protect state laws, including defense of such laws by the proper authorities in any trade court.
7. The National Grange insists that representatives of USDA and the Department of Homeland Security be present at all Free Trade negotiations to ensure that an adequate supply of domestically produced dairy products be maintained. Congress should diligently scrutinize all Free Trade Agreements to protect agriculture production in the event of serious food shortages caused by natural disaster, disease or terrorism before voting the Trade Agreement "up or down."
8. The National Grange insists that trade pacts require all imported products from signatory countries, not just agricultural products, meet the same strict standards as domestically produced goods for environmental protection, residue, labeling and worker safety. These standards must be strictly enforced.
9. The National Grange believes trade pacts should not cede judicial power to foreign tribunals, such as the World Trade Organization, not bound by the Constitution and laws of the United States.

### *Anti-Trust Issues*

1. The National Grange recommends that Congress investigate the possibility that very large corporations that own and operate livestock/poultry slaughtering plants as well as very large livestock/poultry feeding facilities are violating anti-trust laws. We question whether or not those firms are engaged in price manipulation resulting from their control of an extremely large portion of the market; their lack of competitive bidding because of the regionally specific location of the slaughtering plants that are owned by these corporations and their access to their own large numbers of fed animals or poultry in their own feeding facilities. If any firms are found to be in violation of anti-trust laws, the Department of Justice or the Federal Trade Commission should take the necessary action to uphold the laws.
2. The National Grange calls on the Federal Trade Commission to investigate the agricultural supply, agricultural transportation, grain handling, pricing policies and the potential anti-competitive marketing practices of all large corporations in the food processing and food marketing industries. We oppose the concentrated growing, marketing and distribution of agricultural production by large corporations other than farm cooperatives in the US. We call upon the Federal Trade Commission to investigate the pricing policy of the food industry and anti-competitive marketing practices, such as the purchasing of shelf space and product location that places new and less expensive generic brands at a marketing disadvantage. We express deep anti-trust concerns regarding the control of the U.S. seed supply to both Congress and the Department of Justice and urge both to conduct a close review of acquisitions and mergers.
3. The National Grange urges the Secretary of Agriculture to appoint a study committee composed of representatives from farm organizations, commodity groups, and integrators to study the terms of grower contracts to determine fairness to both parties and their acceptance by lending institutions. We further support better nationwide reporting of price and contract information, including forward contract prices, and on-going studies of the relationship between farm gate prices and retail prices. We urge the USDA to fully fund these efforts.
4. The National Grange urges continued awareness of issues related to the electronic trading of grain and other agricultural production. We urge the imposition of necessary regulations on Internet trading of grain where appropriate to protect the farmer.
5. The National Grange opposes any effort to exempt commodity check off funds from being subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to continue transparency.

### *Biotechnology Policy, Research and Application to Agriculture*

1. The National Grange supports a federal policy to allow the use of biotechnology in agriculture. We recognize that genetic engineering of plants and animals has already had a positive impact on increasing the availability of food; decreasing the environmental impact of agriculture and creating foods that are safer, longer-lasting, more nutritious and better tasting. We further support continued research on biotechnology and genetic engineering, including further scientific research into non-human cloning. We support an approval process for genetically modified plants and animals that utilizes science-based decision making to assure the safety of agricultural products. To that end, the National Grange philosophically supports the efforts of National Science Foundation (NSF) concerning their Plant Genome Initiative.
2. The National Grange supports legislation that provides that patented plants and livestock that have been developed through biotechnology (gene-splitting, cloning, genetic engineering, etc.) will be made available to farmers by provisions that will not result in a concentration of the patented livestock in the hands of a few large firms and will not interfere with their availability to all farmers.
3. The National Grange urges the FDA, EPA, USDA and other national farm organizations to publicize the safety of GMOs to help reduce the resistance to the use of this technology providing correct and scientifically verified information on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) to news media and other outlets to enhance the availability of truthful information and ultimately provide more information to the world community. The Grange supports a voluntary GMO-free labeling certification program regulated by USDA and urges that the USDA Certified Organic label automatically qualify as GMO-free.
4. The National Grange supports ongoing educational efforts by the Cooperative Extension Service that address growing concerns about GMO genetic material drift to non-GMO plants.
5. All National Grange policy language addressing Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) and/or Genetically Engineered (GE) be considered to also include items labeled as Bioengineered (BE). (2022)

### *Chemicals for Agriculture: Weed, Pest and Predator Control*

1. The National Grange urges the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to consult with state, industry, and user groups when developing policy and regulations that relate to pesticide industries. The National Grange also urges the EPA to use a reasonable approach in carrying out the provisions and requirements of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act. We recommend relying on impartial scientific research data that is based on the normal human consumption patterns of a product before suspending or canceling the use of a particular chemical. We urge more review and study of a chemical before the public is advised that an agricultural chemical may be harmful to their health. We support increased research and education being done by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and EPA to improve integrated pest management, including comprehensive strategies to minimize weed resistance issues. To that end, we support full funding of the USDA's Pesticide Data Program. We further recommend that Congress provide additional funds for Land Grant Colleges and Universities to be more actively involved with biological pest control research.
2. The National Grange supports efforts to provide information to growers and farmers on actions that can be taken when adverse public statements are made questioning their use of agricultural chemicals that are legally registered with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). We support legislation that would allow producers and handlers to seek criminal and punitive damages from people or organizations that disseminate false or unsubstantiated information that causes

punitive harm to a grower or handler of an agricultural product, including seeking equal media time. We further seek legislation that would protect a farmer from criminal or civil liability regarding that farmer's use or disposal of an EPA registered and approved herbicide or pesticide in accordance with the manufacturer's printed instructions.

3. The National Grange supports the reasonable and practical use of agricultural chemicals as well as reasonable and practical standards for reentry to fields or areas treated with agricultural chemicals. We continue to support the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to establish a certification program that encourages herbicide applicators to use best management practices to prevent damage to adjacent property. We continue to support adequate funding for increased research by all appropriate government agencies to develop, improve, and disseminate information on alternative or sustainable agriculture. We continue to support educational programs for farmers on the safe use and disposal of agricultural chemicals, including their containers, in an environmentally safe way.
4. The National Grange supports certification and re-certification programs for all restricted use pesticides. All applicators of restricted-use pesticides should be certified in the application of restricted-use pesticides.
5. The National Grange opposes increased requirements for recertification of private and commercial pesticide applicators licenses.
6. The National Grange supports allowing the continued and appropriate use of the following farm chemicals: 2-4-D for weed control; triazines as a crop protectant any chemicals found to be effective in controlling fire ants. We further encourage the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to reevaluate their restrictions on certain pesticides that are used for grasshopper control so that a more effective environmental control program may be offered to farmers and ranchers.
7. The National Grange supports legislation that provides increased and continuous funding for the Inter-regional Research Project Number Four (IR-4) minor-use pesticides program. We recommend streamlining the approval process for minor use pesticides by reducing the cost and time necessary for registration or re-registration.
8. The National Grange utilizing new technologies for determining food safety based on the negligible risk standard. We specifically urge the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to use sound scientific data based on actual use of pesticides and agricultural chemicals and by providing a transition period for agriculture to adjust to the withdrawal of an approved pesticide.
9. The Cooperative Extension Service and the State Departments of Agriculture, in cooperation with retail and wholesale dealers of lawn and garden pesticides, should conduct special pesticide application classes for homeowners to ensure the proper use and disposal of unused chemicals and their containers. The sale of lawn and garden pesticides should be monitored closely by local and state authorities to ensure that restricted-use pesticides are not sold to uncertified applicators.
10. The National Grange opposes the EPA classifying plants as a pesticide based upon genetic engineering.
11. All fertilizer manufacturers using toxic, heavy metal, chemical or radioactive wastes should be required to list those components on the package label.
12. The National Grange will support a high priority program for the control of noxious weeds on all lands, ~~[including]~~ such as: Witchweed, Tartarian, Honeysuckle, Russian or Autumn Olive, ~~[and]~~ Multiflora Rose, Amaranth and Thistle. The National Grange supports Integrated Pest Management Programs and other safe alternatives to Glyphosate use.
13. The National Grange urges the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to continue funding for the control of invasive species such as: the Asian Gypsy Moth, Pine Beetle, Tussock Moth, ~~[and]~~ the Asian Long Horned Beetle, and Spotted Lantern Fly. We support additional funding and legal authority to restrict the importation of foreign pests into the U.S. We urge USDA to alert the general public to the potential threat that foreign insects pose to our native species.
14. The National Grange supports legislation allowing farmers, ranchers and others to protect their property from predators, including endangered species.
15. The National Grange urges Congress to prohibit all sales of any form (live, dried, seeds) of any plant that has been placed on a state, regional or national noxious weed list.
16. The National Grange urges the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to continue to allow the use of atrazine after its registration review.
17. The National Grange urges a US Department of Agriculture (USDA) investigation into why domestic industries in the United States of America (USA) fail to produce enough commercial fertilizer to meet our domestic needs. The National Grange urges domestic industries in the USA to produce enough commercial fertilizer, in a safe manner, to meet our domestic needs. <sup>2022</sup>

#### *Dairy Policy, Milk Marketing Orders, Dairy Prices, and Inspections*

1. The National Grange supports a milk supply management program that recognizes regional differences based upon the cost and amount of production, availability of markets, percentage of production that is allocated to Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) stocks, and the percentage of Class I use.
2. The National Grange supports the use of Basic Formula Price (BFP) in determining the base price for dairy products, as well as multiple-component pricing for all classes of milk in all federal milk marketing orders.
3. We support the continued payment of Class I differentials and oppose any effort to form a national pool of Class I milk differentials.
4. The National Grange opposes any change in the classification of reconstituted milk and the de-pooling of Class III milk.
5. The National Grange requests of all appropriate agencies, associations, and boards that milk prices received by dairy farmers be quoted in terms to which consumers can relate, such as price per gallon rather than price per hundredweight.



6. The National Grange urges Congress to pressure the USDA to raise the support price of milk to a level for the benefit of both the producer and the consumer. The National Grange supports legislation that is geared toward controlling volatility of month-to-month milk prices.
7. The National Grange also supports efforts that assist struggling dairy farmers by revising the national milk pricing system. We believe that a federal order system for milk pricing should include such concepts as: (1) supplying side controls, (2) charging Class I processors an assessment to fund the cost of cooperatives that balance the pool of milk in their areas, (3) keeping multiple component pricing, (4) declassifying Class I prices from other classes, (5) making major improvements to the dairy producer income insurance program that is complimentary to the Livestock Gross Margin Program, returns to the original feed cost formula and takes into account local prices paid, (6) creating a mechanism to more quickly respond to changing market conditions and reduce price volatility, which would include a growth management program that is flexible and responsive to market conditions while providing producers with the ability to grow, and (7) providing that any Growth Management Program must contain a minimum time period of 5 years before a total buy-out of a dairy operation can be restarted or if a partial buy-out of a herd, before an increase in production from the operation will be allowed.
8. The National Grange supports the implementation of a forward contracting pilot program for all classes of milk other than Class I. We support close monitoring of this program to assure that forward contracting does not adversely affect dairy farmer profitability. However, any monitoring or review of the forward contracting policy program must be sensitive to, and protect the privacy of, individual dairy farmers participating in the pilot program.
9. The National Grange continues to seek an increase in exports of milk and milk products. We support funding of the Dairy Export Incentive Program (DEIP) to the full limit permitted by WTO agreements. We urge milk cooperatives and other associations to become actively involved in the development of export markets for dairy products. We support additional funding for USDA to provide technical assistance to private sector dairy export trading entities.
10. The National Grange opposes the importation of caseinates and urges the adoption of tariff rate quotes on Milk Protein Concentrates entering the country. The National Grange also supports having milk used to produce Milk Protein Concentrate (MPC) included in the total milk produced in the area Federal Milk Marketing order and urges the adoption of standards on how MPC is used and inspected to ensure compliance.
11. The National Grange continues to support the National Dairy Product Promotion Program as a means to promote and increase the consumption of dairy products. We urge the USDA to periodically account to the public for any monies that have been collected from dairy farmers under any assessment programs, including required reports to Congress.
12. The Extension Service, nutrition educators, farm organizations, processors, and vendors should promote the nutritional value of "Real" dairy products and should promote use of the "Real Seal" merchandising program. Only those foods from mammalian sources should be allowed to use the term "milk."
13. The National Grange continues to support government purchases of dairy for domestic programs.
14. The National Grange opposes the Food and Drug Administration's proposal to allow products with the "nutritional equivalency" of a food to be labeled "substitute." We suggest that any "imitation" or "substitute" product which resembles a dairy product, whether or not nutritionally equivalent yet includes substitute dairy ingredients, may not in any manner be allowed to bear the name of the dairy product which it is purported to resemble. This also includes imported "imitation" or "substitute" products. The National Grange supports Federal Government oversight to enforce strict labeling regulations concerning organic milk, ensuring that all milk labeled organic comes from certified organic farms only.
15. The National Grange opposes legislation that requires the labeling of milk/milk products as it relates to rBST.
16. The National Grange supports legislation that would extend the present pay and trust provision of the Packers and Stockyards Act to the dairy industry. We further support a national security fund, funded by processors or secured by bonding, to protect against processor bankruptcy if the fund does not preempt a stronger state program.
17. We recognize the need for dairy farm and dairy plant inspections to help ensure the highest quality of dairy products but insist that duplication of inspections by the several government entities (city, county, state and federal) be discontinued where possible. The several levels of government should agree to accept uniform and reciprocal dairy farm and dairy plant inspections.
18. The National Grange encourages the continued performance of dairy genetic evaluations for the dairy industry.
19. The National Grange at all levels encourages the Dairy Co-ops to voluntarily initiate a program that allows membership of the Co-op to vote on any program that takes money out of the farmer's pocket with a yes vote for approval.
20. The National Grange urges the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to keep dairy as a separate food group and assure a place on the Dietary Guidelines of America for dairy and meat products.
21. The National Grange should actively participate in education activities that are focused on informing the public of the value and protection provided by the pasteurization process.
22. The National Grange urges a change be made whereby Commodity Credit Corporation purchases of surplus dairy products are of dairy products that are in demand by domestic and international markets.
23. The National Grange supports legislation that would expand the definition of qualifying livestock eligible for the 50% bonus depreciation to include all dairy cows purchased by a dairy farm operator for business use.
24. The National Grange urges the reform of Federal Milk Marketing Order regulations so that excess milk can more easily be donated to food banks while still protecting milk processors from unfair pricing practices and protecting the price being paid to farmers for their milk.
25. The National Grange encourages fundraisers to purchase excess milk to donate to food banks.

26. The National Grange urges FDA to adopt the 2017 higher California Standards for protein and solids-not-fat fluid milk to help standardize and improve milk quality.
27. The National Grange supports the establishment of Federal Milk Marketing Order regional cost of production rates which would be used in the makeup of a new Milk Market Pricing Subsidy Plan,<sup>2021</sup> as well as drop barrel cheese from the price formula, accurately reflect values of Class III and IV price formulas, update the Federal Milk Marketing Order to reflect delivery differentials, update the make allowance more frequently, and extend multiple component pricing to all parts of the country.<sup>2023</sup>

#### *Disaster Assistance and Risk Management*

1. The National Grange strongly supports the continuation of the multi-peril federal crop insurance program (FCI) that provides coverage on all program, non-program and specialty crops on a nationwide basis. We support changes in the FCI program that would include multi-peril insurance for all crops, including double-crop soybeans. We recommend that federal crop insurance coverage be updated annually to reflect the cost of production. We favor indexing crop insurance payments to the annual rate of inflation.<sup>2023</sup> We further believe that area coverage should be dropped, and a realistic production base should be established for each tract of land.
2. The National Grange urges the USDA Risk Management Division to take steps to accelerate the processing and payment of claims. We support using uniform standards for grading fruits for market, hail and other damage payments.
3. The USDA Risk Management Division should discontinue providing insurance coverage on a percentage basis. Coverage should be changed to insure crops on a dollar amount of loss per acre (or unit). The National Grange recommends removing any percent cut on estimated yields if weather conditions prevent timely planting. In addition, the USDA Risk Management Division should delete the current footnotes and should clearly state all exceptions, limitations and other provisions concerning crop coverage in the insurance policy.
4. The National Grange supports disaster aid relief that is based on individual rather than countywide losses. We urge the federal government to distribute surplus stored grain, at no cost and on a need basis, to limited resource farmers in disaster-stricken areas as well as make available a recourse loan on a need basis for damaged commodities.
5. The National Grange urges the USDA Risk Management Division to allow an option that will permit wheat producers covered by the USDA Risk Management Division's crop insurance to obtain a replant payment if replanting is required.
6. The National Grange urges the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to streamline procedures that will expedite implementation of the disaster and market loss program payments. Funding for these payments must be an "emergency" and not otherwise reduce any other program spending.
7. The National Grange supports the Farm and Ranch Risk Management (FARRM) account program allowing farmers and ranchers to deposit a set-aside amount of pre-tax dollars into an interest-bearing account to average income fluctuations.
8. A farm yield or county average yield history for any government farm programs shall not be influenced when a yield is less than 50% of the normal yield of a given crop and is caused by any God-given weather-related disaster (drought-heat, flood, wind, hail, etc.) that is out of a farmer's control.
9. The National Grange supports a compromise that will lower the federal crop insurance subsidy for farm operations with an adjusted gross income over \$750,000 or \$1.5 million for a married couple from 62% to 42% and opposes lowering the subsidy for farmers with an adjusted gross income of less than \$750,000. The National Grange further supports crop insurance subsidies for all agricultural producers and urges the Risk Management Agency to adequately train insurance agents about the Whole Farm Revenue Protection Program.
10. Because extreme weather conditions are devastating to producers, The National Grange encourages Congress to provide additional insurance programs for catastrophic losses to livestock, crops and timber not covered by existing insurance programs. The National Grange supports the continuation of the current funding levels for the Livestock Forage Disaster Program, Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program and the Conservation Reserve Grasslands Program in the 2018 Farm Bill.
11. The National Grange supports legislation to furnish additional liability protection to food donors who would meet the requirements of regulations established and monitored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to ensure quality and labeling standards.

#### *Family Farm Policies and Farm Preservation Programs*

1. The National Grange believes that policies that promote a viable family farm structure in America's agricultural sector are in the best interests of all citizens. We reaffirm our support for farm commodity programs that serve the best interests of producers and consumers. The purpose of the Federal Farm Program is to ensure Americans an adequate supply of safe and wholesome food, provide some income protection to the food producers and protect our environment by providing incentives for soil and water conservation. The National Grange supports programs that will stimulate interest and appreciation for an expanding agriculture industry that provides an abundant supply of reasonably priced food and fiber to meet our domestic needs and still export the products of one out of every three acres into the world markets.
2. The National Grange continues to strongly support family farms as an integral and important contributor to a stable agricultural production and rural communities. We call upon the President and Congress to support programs and policies that will help sustain and enhance family farms by increasing the net farm income, providing economic and tax incentives, and credit and/or tax credits for soil and water conservation - without escalating the advantages to non-farm investors. This includes recognizing Alpaca and Llama farming as a livestock business enterprise.
3. The National Grange believes that a family farm is a business or enterprise involved in the production of food, fiber and related products or services that is owned and operated by the members of a family who make the management and

financial decisions and supply at least part of the labor. We urge USDA to modify its programs to provide additional assistance to beginning farmers and ranchers.

4. The National Grange request federal, state and county governments streamline the process to transfer farms and other small businesses from one family member to another, so that the cost of compliance and tax consequences do not prevent the transfer from occurring.
5. The National Grange will continue to support the use of lands for production of food and fiber, as long as the enterprises are operated under best management practices as established by the Farm Service Agency and the Natural Resource Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
6. The National Grange encourages the U.S. Department of Agriculture to maintain the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) as individual agencies in order to enhance their critical roles in supporting farmer-owned cooperatives and the rural communities they serve.
7. Federal, state, and local agencies should work for efficient economic development policies that treat the agriculture industry on equal terms with other businesses and industries, such as small farmers. The National Grange supports government rural development programs that provide local off-farm employment for rural people and that provide an improved income for small and medium-sized farms.
8. The National Grange supports public relation programs that disseminate accurate information on the efficiency and productivity of American agriculture, as well as the contributions it has made in providing an adequate supply of food and fiber, and the important role the food and agricultural industry plays in the nation's economy. A coalition of farm and commodity organizations working together on common problems is in the best interest of agriculture and rural communities. Such a coalition will strengthen and preserve the economic well-being of the family farm. The National Grange will continue to support and take an active role in maintaining an effective national farm coalition. We support efforts to organize farm-city meetings, farm-city visits, as well as efforts to enlist the cooperation of the news media in presenting agricultural news. We endorse the efforts of the Agriculture Council of America, Livestock and Meat Board, Animal Industry Foundation, National Milk Producers Federation, and other agricultural organizations in a united program to tell agriculture's story to the American public. We will cooperate with and support the efforts of other agricultural organizations in their educational programs pertaining to false, unproven, and misleading statements about the production and safety of agricultural commodities in order to present a true picture of environmentally safe farm and ranch best-management practices.
9. The National Grange supports efforts to enhance new economic opportunities for urban agriculture by supporting programs that provide mentorship and education.
10. The State Granges and the National Grange urge state and federal government to strengthen, expand, and enforce farmland protection programs to save our farmland for food and fiber production by designing tax laws to enable farm families to pass their land on to future generations. The National Grange supports a reduction in capital gains as relating to personal income tax for retiring farmers who are willing to sell to beginning farmers. The National Grange will also work with Congress to find additional ways to contain urban sprawl through the use of purchasing development rights and conservation easements on agricultural land. However, we oppose the development of agricultural land trusts by financial institutions. We further oppose land purchase programs that involve the federal government as the purchaser and leaser of farmland.
11. The National Grange supports Farmers' Markets, family farms and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA's) that produce and sell homegrown agricultural products. Grange policy also supports the creation of pilot programs that endorse the buying of local fruits, vegetables and produce.
12. The National Grange urges the USDA to strictly enforce the Agriculture Foreign Investment Disclosure Act. We further oppose the use of public funds and/or the services of government agencies in the development of U.S.-based, foreign-owned agricultural enterprises.
13. The National Grange urges that a high-level staff position with appropriate resources, targeting the prevention and minimization of agro-terrorism be appointed as part of the Department of Homeland Security.
14. The National Grange encourages federal, state and local governments to protect agriculture against bio-terrorism.
15. The National Grange supports allowing farm parcels with less than the new 10-acre minimum, but which have a previous history in the federal farm program, to continue to receive federal farm program payments.
16. The National Grange strongly supports beginning farmer and rancher programs and urges USDA to modify its programs to give additional consideration individuals and families who qualify.
17. The National Grange supports price insurance protection for farmers that considers the diversity of crops, commodities, production methods, target markets and regional differences.
18. The National Grange supports the US Department of Agriculture's incentive-based approach that would increase implementation of climate-smart farm, ranch, and forestry practices. (2021)

#### *Farm Labor*

1. In the organization of farm laborers on the West Coast and other farm labor-intensive areas, it is evident that the consolidation of production units may lead to increased costs to the consumers and the producer because of possible disruptions caused by labor disputes. Therefore, while we continue to support the rights of individuals to organize, we call for sound approaches when dealing with labor problems in the agricultural industry. Labor and management in the food and agricultural industries should seek solutions to labor problems without striking. To further this goal, we recommend establishing procedures for negotiating labor disputes that will minimize disruptive labor strikes, especially during critical growing and harvesting periods. We also support a prohibition on the exclusive use of hiring halls for supplying agricultural labor and a prohibition on the use of secondary boycotts.

2. The National Grange supports a youth differential minimum wage rate for youth under the age of 18 so agricultural employers will be willing to employ such persons.
3. The National Grange supports legislation that will reduce federal funding of the Legal Service Corporation (LSC), a federal agency that provides legal services to the poor, including migrant farm workers. The LSC legal services should be limited to representing the poor in the courts, not an advocacy group for farm employees that investigate perceived violations of the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act.
4. The Workman's Compensation Insurance Program should be the exclusive remedy for work-related injuries under the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Workers Protection Act.

#### *Farm Safety*

1. The National Grange supports a comprehensive farm-safety training program for operation of farm machinery, use of chemicals, and animal management to be funded through the Cooperative Extension Service at land grant universities.
2. Machinery and wagons should be equipped with reflector tape. Farmers should be encouraged to use lights and reflectors or a reflective material on all sides of tractors and machinery that is traveling on public highways.
3. The National Grange strongly opposes any attempt by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) to require that farmers, farm workers or ranchers have commercial driver's licenses (CDLs) to transport their crops and/or their landlord's crops on the public highways.
4. The National Grange supports public awareness initiatives for rural road safety involving the presence of agricultural equipment, to improve signage, education awareness and promotional efforts.

#### *Farmer Credit Programs and the Farm Credit System*

1. The primary function of the Farm Service Agency (FSA) Farm Loan officers should be a lender of first opportunity for farmers/ ranchers and veterans seeking funds for agricultural purchases. Caution must be exercised to avoid granting undue advantage to large operations at the expense of family-sized farming units. The Grange urges the FSA to strengthen farm loan programs. Loan programs should provide the needed short and long-term low interest credit for soil and water conservation. We support providing emergency loans and management assistance during times of natural disasters, commodity embargoes, or economic setbacks to expedite the application, review and granting process for these loans. During situations of economic stress facing FSA farm borrowers, we support maintaining the right of mediation on farm loan foreclosures. We further believe that the present owner/operator or beginning farmer should be given the first consideration of sale or lease in disposing of foreclosed farms.
2. The National Grange supports the separation of the truly agricultural production and farm ownership lending programs from lending programs generally associated with rural development such as the Business and Industry Loan Program, water and sewer loans, and non-farm family homes, to free Farm Service Agency county office staff to better supervise agricultural production loans. Business and Industrial Loan Guarantee Programs should be administered so they do not interfere with providing credit to family farmers.
3. The National Grange supports Farm Credit Services programs that will service the needs of farmers who are actively and directly engaged in the production of agricultural commodities. We support retaining the present tax exemptions that apply to the Farm Credit, Services, and we specifically recommend that the Farm Credit Services create policies and programs that will assist young and beginning farmers. We oppose efforts by the Farm Credit System to increase its activities regarding insurance coverage for its farm borrowers.
4. The National Grange recommends that the lending authority of the Farm Credit Services be expanded to address the total needs of rural communities, including rural economic development. We support the financing of on-farm and off-farm facilities that add value to agricultural commodities or provide services to agricultural production and marketing as well as financing for agricultural exports to all foreign markets. We further support FCS financing directed toward the development of rural enterprises engaged in the development of alternative uses for agricultural commodities and the development of rural infrastructures, such as water and sewer systems and the creation of state-of-the-art telecommunication systems for rural areas.
5. The National Grange supports requiring all agricultural lending institutions, including those under the Federal Reserve System, to consider the security and payment history of the applicant rather than relying entirely upon his/her cash flow.

#### *Federal Programs, Commodity Loans, Target Prices, & Farm Storage Programs*

1. The National Grange supports legislative and administrative actions that will obtain an economic return for the farmer on his investment of capital, labor, and management that is equal to that of the other segments of the economy. We support permanent programs for cotton, tobacco, peanuts, rice, corn silage, wool and mohair. Farm programs should be based on units of production, not acreage, and provide the individual farmer with maximum flexibility in their planting and production decisions. Target prices for major commodities should be based on economic need, set in relationship to the national average cost of production, and set at a level that will not encourage over or under-production. Marketing loan programs for major commodities, including soybeans and minor oilseeds, wheat, feed grains, cotton, rice, and other government-supported commodities, should provide for a loan rate that is set at the national average cost of production and that redeems the loan at the lesser of the original loan or the state's monthly, weekly, or daily average market price as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture. The difference between the regular loan rate and the marketing loan is to be retained by the farmer, provided the loan differential is subject to the \$50,000 payment limit. In the absence of a marketing loan, the traditional loan rate should be set at or near the cost of production.

2. The National Grange supports the Farm Storage Facility Loans Program (FSFL) and a farmer-owned reserve program that will place limits on the total amount of a specific commodity that is to be held in reserve as well as place limits on the amount of a commodity that any one farmer can place in the reserve. Storage rates should be commensurate with the cost of on-farm storage to enable farmers to be in a better position to take advantage of storage payments. The Secretary of Agriculture should have discretionary authority to waive the interest charges on reserve loans. We further urge that there be a strict monitoring of grain stored under loan contracts by county, state and national USDA officers, and State Departments of Agriculture.
3. The National Grange supports port terminals and storage facilities for feed grains.
4. The National Grange continues its long-standing support of the County and Community Committee System as the proper means of supervising and administering all farm programs. We pledge our full support for the federal government in investigating incidences of discrimination and in implementing action that will bring about changes to end racial discrimination in USDA policies. We urge stricter monitoring and enforcement of the USDA's farm programs in order to eliminate any abuse of farm program regulations. The Grange supports funding and staffing of local USDA programs and offices at levels that are consistent with congressional mandates. In meeting these mandates, we will support co-location and cross-agency use of personnel from various agricultural agencies within counties where offices now exist.
5. The National Grange encourages the United States Department of Agriculture to actively enforce the Packers and Stockyards Act.
6. The National Grange supports immediate legislation by Congress, enacting the "Constructive Receipt" exemption in the 2002 Farm Bill, and in all future Farm Bills, to exempt advance program payments from taxable income for the year they are received and, instead, treat those payments as potentially taxable income for the year they were intended to cover.
7. The National Grange supports expanding funding to develop Broadband infrastructure in rural areas to support Precision Agriculture.
8. The National Grange urges Congress to maintain funding for the National Organic Program and the Specialty Crops Block Grant Program.
9. The National Grange supports an update to the US Department of Agriculture Whole Farm Revenue Protection plan to revise Risk Management Agency insurance plans to make them more flexible and accessible to organic farmers.<sup>2021</sup>
10. The National Grange supports additional funding in the farm bill for specialty crops, adding aquaculture products as a specialty crop, a review of the many definitions of "rural" to include the importance of agriculture to a geographic region in addition to the number of people living in those areas.<sup>2023</sup>

#### *Food and Meat Inspection Programs*

1. The National Grange urges an increase in inspection on all livestock, feed, meats, dairy products and all by-products being imported from all countries to the United States for the protection of our animal industry. We support extending mandatory inspection regulations to seafood. We support legislation to implement pathogen detection and reduction strategies based on sound science that targets micro bio-contamination by pathogens that may be harmful to consumers. We request the USDA to strengthen the inspection process for meat and poultry that is being imported into the United States. However, we will oppose adopting "user fees" to pay for inspection services and or any changes in the system that will result in less than continuous inspection during processing of meat and poultry for human consumption.
2. The National Grange supports legislation to eliminate the unfair prohibition against the interstate shipment of state inspected meat and poultry products if the state meat and poultry inspection service is equal to or better than the federal meat and poultry inspection service system.
3. The National Grange urges Congress to fund, and the USDA to develop and disseminate educational programs relative to safe handling of foods.
4. The National Grange will seek legislation to have the uniform expiration date stamped, not coded, on all processed food.
5. The National Grange strongly urges that the USDA work with State Departments of Agriculture on a cooperative effort to enforce and inspect egg production, including egg grading and egg safety. Furthermore, the National Grange supports the effort where USDA and FDA work more closely together on food safety issues and that the two agencies should be given more power to order food recalls and close firms with records of serial contamination violations.
6. The National Grange supports legislation requiring more open notice to the consumer on products containing M.R.M (machine removed meat).
7. The National Grange opposes federal legislation that would presume that all food, including food produced for local market sale and consumption, should be treated as potentially hazardous and would require family farmers to produce and maintain onerous amounts of paperwork indicating what production inputs were purchased and when food produced on an individual farm will be consumed, in order to reach an unattainable goal of total traceability of all food produced in the United States, all the way through the food system. Additionally, the National Grange opposes federal legislation that would add an unwelcome layer of national bureaucratic paperwork to the business of producing food to meet local demand without demonstrating any commensurate food safety benefits to consumers, or cost reductions that benefit family farmers or their local customers.
8. The National Grange supports the establishment of additional mobile slaughterhouses meeting USDA standards.
9. The National Grange supports legislation that would eliminate the second inspection of bulk bin apples by the Department of Agriculture before being exported to Canada.
10. The National Grange supports a rewrite of the Veterinary Feed Directive regulations to exclude on-farm animal feed or storage products.

11. The National Grange urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to review existing meat inspection policies and to provide additional marketing opportunities which allow privately owned custom butcher shops to slaughter, package and sell animals from local farms to local in-state communities for individual use without a USDA Inspector on site
12. The national Grange urges all consumers to be diligent in researching how food and non-food products certification revenues are used with regards to any secular category so they can buy with confidence.
13. The National Grange urges the President, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. department of health and Human Services to force the Dietary Guidelines for Americans Advisory Committee to consider all legitimate and pertinent health studies when making their recommendations for a well-balanced diet rather than a low-fat diet.

#### *Horticulture, Beekeeping and Honey*

1. The National Grange recommends continuing research to improve the development of more freeze-resistant nursery stock and methods of frost control.
2. The National Grange recommends that a realistic tariff be placed on imported honey to protect the financial position of the U.S. bee industry that is necessary for the pollination of U.S. agricultural crops. We support the enactment of federal laws that will provide for the inspection of honeybees and honeybee hives that are transported across state lines in an effort to better control the spread of honeybee diseases and parasites. We urge Congress to set up a "bee zone" and appropriate the necessary funds to stop or at least slow down the northward invasion of the killer bees. We further recommend that the USDA promote a program to educate the general public on the importance of bees, and on the destructive Africanized bees now invading the southern U.S.
3. The National Grange supports research efforts aimed toward solving the problem occurring with honey bee colony collapse. While a cause for this syndrome has not been identified, research strongly suggests that colony collapse may be caused by a combination of many factors, one of which is the prophylactic use of neonicotinoid pesticides in agriculture production. Therefore, the National Grange supports the designation of neonicotinoids as restricted use pesticides.
4. The National Grange supports continued efforts by all Granges to utilize Managed Pollinator Protection Plans to make their properties better habitat for pollinators and to improve honeybee health.
5. The National Grange encourages agricultural universities and pesticide companies to develop pesticides that are not harmful to bees and other beneficial insects.
6. The National Grange opposes the ban or prescription restriction of over-the-counter antibiotics for treatment of honeybees unless such restrictions are based on scientific information.
7. The National Grange supports increased research through the states in growing mushroom spawn.
8. The National Grange supports expansion of Federal Crop Insurance and Multi-Peril Insurance Programs to include horticultural crops.
9. The National Grange calls upon the Department of Agriculture, Land Grant universities, and industries to continue research efforts to determine expanded uses for surplus fruits and vegetables.
10. The National Grange supports federal indemnity funding for specialty crop producers against loss through no fault of their own such as diseases, viruses and chemical contamination.<sup>2023</sup>

#### *Livestock and Poultry Disease Control*

1. The National Grange supports continued efforts to eradicate Brucellosis, Johne's Disease, Foot and Mouth disease, Bovine Leukemia virus, tuberculosis, and screw worms, as well as the continued monitoring of our nation's borders against re-infestation of these and other infectious livestock diseases.
2. The National Grange supports funding of increased research to control and eradicate poultry diseases and parasites. The National Grange also urges the USDA to work with State Departments of Agriculture on a cooperative effort to enforce and inspect egg production, including egg grading and egg safety.
3. The National Grange supports blood testing for Johne's disease in cattle. We further support the development of a test that can isolate the causal organism of Johne's disease in a shorter time frame.
4. The National Grange requests that health charts show freedom from TB and Brucellosis when dairy cattle are either sold or shown.
5. The National Grange opposes any ban on the use of antibiotics in livestock and poultry feed, unless the Food and Drug Administration or other agencies have scientifically established and determined that the use of these antibiotics are detrimental to human health. We oppose any proposals to reclassify over-the-counter animal drugs as prescription-only drugs unless scientifically based information suggests drugs should be reclassified on a drug-by-drug basis. We strongly recommend that all producers who use antibiotics, growth stimulants and other feed additives abide by the directions for the use of, and withdrawal provisions for, such products
6. The National Grange supports the establishment of firm guidelines for the management of bison and elk in the National Parks to control the spread of brucellosis and the high risk of undulant fever in humans.
7. The National Grange supports enforcement of puppy mill laws and regulations.

#### *Livestock Production and Animal Care*

1. The National Grange supports effective regulations to require interstate transporters of livestock to maintain transport vehicles in a sanitary condition in order to prevent the spread of disease.
2. The National Grange seeks a federal indemnification standby program for livestock and poultry diseases that are not presently covered. Such a program would apply only in cases that require condemnation and slaughter to eradicate or

control the given diseases. We further support federal indemnity programs to indemnify farmers against loss through no fault of theirs in cases such as radioactive fallout, chemical contamination, and bioterrorism.

3. The National Grange supports legislation and rulings that will strengthen the Packers and Stockyards Act to ensure producers have adequate price discovery, price transparency, and fairness in the marketing of U.S. livestock.
4. The National Grange supports exotic animal farming, provided it does not create a health hazard for the domestic livestock industry.
5. The National Grange continues to support the beef promotion programs. We urge State Beef Councils to join in cooperative efforts to target Beef Check-off Funds to larger consumer audiences. However, the National Grange recommends that the National Beef Promotion Board consider eliminating the \$1 "Beef Check-off" on any animal that, when sold, the farmer would receive \$20 or less.
6. The National Grange strongly supports the livestock, poultry and dairy industries as suppliers of food and fiber that are so necessary for today's standard of living. We will continue to inform the public of the economics and importance of the livestock industry and their contributions to a balanced nutritional diet. We will continue to cooperate with the Animal Welfare Coalition to combat misleading statements made by animal rights organizations regarding animal agriculture.
7. The National Grange believes that the regulation of livestock and poultry care should be a state issue and does not support the establishment of federal standards.
8. The National Grange supports the use of lean fine textured beef in any beef products. The National Grange will work to develop a commercially acceptable term for cell-based proteins and support USDA to be the regulatory oversight agency responsible for cell-based protein production.
9. The National Grange supports using animals in animal agricultural research in order to advance the science of animal husbandry in the most humane and economic fashion. The National Grange opposes efforts to declare animals to be "sentient beings," and all efforts to give animals the legal protections to which humans are entitled. We support the development of educational programs that demonstrate the advantages and humanness of modern animal husbandry. We oppose any legislation and/or regulations that would hinder good animal husbandry practices. Instead, we support developing a code of "best management practices" for the care and maintenance of agricultural animals and other animals that are under human control. We also support efforts to severely punish any individuals and organizations that commit illegal actions against animal agricultural producers and animal agricultural and biomedical researchers and facilities. We support the voluntary efforts of farmers in reducing the number of injured or downer animals. We encourage livestock auction markets to continue their programs of not accepting animals that are injured or are too weak to stand. We support the efforts of commercial processing facilities to continue the humane disposal of unwanted agricultural animals.
10. The National Grange strongly opposes legislation calling for the severe curtailment of the veal industry by such measures as eliminating confinement stalls and crates. However, the Grange will work with the National Veal Association to correct or remove the veal production practices that are not within the guidelines of best veal management. We further recommend that a USDA grader be assigned to all veal calf slaughtering plants, so that a farmer or seller receives a fair price from the packing plant for their veal based on the grade that was determined by the inspector and not the plant manager.
11. The National Grange supports rodeos, the use of animals in rodeos and the great heritage rodeos represent.
12. The National Grange supports efforts to deal with concentrated animal feeding operations issues emphasizing sensible control and enforcement, the development of nutrient management plans, developing cost efficient odor reduction technology, and the zoning of agricultural districts. We continue to support the development and use of "the best management practices" for the handling of animal and poultry wastes. We support liability protection for farmers who follow the appropriate regulations and "best management practices." We also support strict laws that regulate large livestock enterprises, so that they apply nutrients according to an approved nutrient management plan to assure that excess nutrients will not contaminate the waters of the United States. We continue to support strict construction standards to new earthen manure lagoons and set a phase-in period after which existing lagoons would have to meet appropriate standards. We support prohibiting indefinite storage of animal waste by requiring treatment according to federal wastewater standards, if the waste is not applied to land or used in another environmentally sound matter. We further support regulations or other provisions to prevent animal owners from using contracts or similar arrangements to avoid responsibilities for animal waste management. We support imposing tough new penalties on the worst polluters. However, we believe that the implementation of any rules and regulations forcing compliance with the Clean Water Act for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations should not become mandatory until all technical expertise and funding is secured and available for the timely compliance with these directives.
13. The National Grange believes the Environmental Protection Agency should not be empowered or allowed to levy fines, fees, or any other monetary pressure based on natural emissions of livestock that may ultimately affect greenhouse gases.
14. The National Grange at all levels seeks legislation to accomplish a national identification for livestock and poultry. The program should include safeguards to protect the privacy of the farmers and the Grange will work at all levels to have farmer privacy provisions included in the national identification for livestock program legislation.
15. The National Grange encourages all livestock operations to follow the goals of the Beef Quality Assurance Program and the Pork Quality Assurance Program. These actions will help manage their herds with respect to the following:
  - a. proper use of pharmaceuticals;
  - b. management of their feed sources;
  - c. low stress animal handling techniques;
  - d. proper housing and living standards;
  - e. proper transportation techniques and transport space requirements;



- f. culling strategies to maintain optimum herd health; and
  - g. numerous other management tools that help to make the animals healthier, more comfortable and as a result, more productive.
16. The National Grange encourages public education on the value of livestock grazing as a land management and conservation tool when appropriate for reducing and managing the wildfire fuel load, soil improvement, and healthy lands in public parks, forests, and other lands.
  17. The National Grange supports efforts to restructure the fed-cattle buying market wherein beef packers would be required to purchase not-less-than 50% of their needs through negotiated-bidding, and they must take delivery of all cattle purchased within 14 days of the purchase date.<sup>2021</sup>
  18. The National Grange urges federal lawmakers to make permanent the Feral Swine Eradication and Control Program. <sup>2023</sup>

#### *Marketing and Cooperatives*

1. The National Grange opposes any repeal of the Capper-Volstead Act of 1922, and strongly supports agricultural cooperatives and the special legal status granted to agricultural cooperatives under this Act.
2. Agricultural cooperatives should be owned and controlled by farmers. We support tax law changes that would allow cooperatives to raise additional equity capital to expand cooperative operations as long as such equity does not undermine farmer ownership and control of their cooperative. We support allowing grain-marketing cooperatives to receive commodity loans.
3. The National Grange supports purchasing, processing, and marketing rural electric and telephone cooperatives that are providing high quality products and services to their members.
4. The National Grange urges the USDA and other appropriate agencies to continue their educational programs for farmers on the use of the futures market through hedging and other marketing options to increase farm profitability.
5. The National Grange continues to support the efforts of commodity organizations to improve the promotional activities for their products.
6. The National Grange endorses federal and state legislation to protect the bargaining status of cooperatives. Purchasers should be required to recognize and negotiate in good faith with the designated representatives of their producers. The right of producers to control by democratic means the selection of bargaining cooperatives to represent them should be guaranteed by law. Processors of agricultural products should be prohibited from intimidating growers or withholding growers' contracts because of membership in a bargaining association.
7. The National Grange supports extending the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1937 to include all agricultural commodities. Following the marketing order approval by a referendum of respective producers, regulations covering allocating aggregate market supply among markets in time, space, and form; trading practices; grading standards; container and other terms of sale should be issued under the order. The USDA should have the administrative responsibility to implement Federal Marketing Orders.
8. The National Grange urges the USDA to cooperate fully with the states in developing direct farmer to consumer marketing programs.
9. The National Grange recommends that the provisions of any check-off be approved by a majority of the producers of that commodity in a national referendum. Following producer approval, the programs shall be mandatory, without refunds, and no more than 5% of the check-off funds can be used for administrative costs. The funds shall be under the control of the promotion board with oversight responsibility in the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
10. The National Grange supports a study to determine the feasibility of a check-off program for wheat to fund a research, educational and promotional program on the nutritional benefits of wheat flour products.
11. The National Grange supports increased research by government and industry to discover and develop new uses and markets for agricultural commodities, including the development of value-added products with the aid of non-farm groups. We further support a national agricultural marketing policy which would encourage farmers to retain important production and marketing decisions in their own hands and that would encourage domestic regional marketing cooperatives to develop a cooperative marketing federation that is capable of entering into the international market for selling farm commodities.
12. The National Grange supports integrating and coordinating existing state and federal governments' export marketing programs, such as the Market Access Program, the Market Promotion Program, and other similar programs that are designed to develop and expand foreign markets for U.S. farm products. We believe that these programs should be limited to domestic firms and targeted to new exporting companies, small businesses and individual farmers who sell directly into export markets. We urge Congress and the USDA to reinstate the Export Enhancement Program in order to meet the price competition in world markets. New efforts should be made in the development of marketing programs to expand agricultural exports that encourage the participation of new export marketing groups, such as farm cooperatives and export trading companies. Farmers selling commodities directly into the export market should be subject to all of the protections and restrictions that apply to corporations and other commercial ventures that are selling into the export market.
13. The National Grange supports retaining present state standards for maple syrup and opposes any mandatory federal regulations that would be less stringent than present state regulations.
14. The Grange vigorously opposes any effort that would abolish the current practice of carcass quality pricing of beef and swine in favor of one value fits all price concepts.
15. The National Grange supports the principle that the term "meat" can only be used to describe animal protein derived from harvested production livestock, poultry, seafood or wildlife, wild or domestic. The USDA must retain the authority to regulate the emergence of the efforts to produce cell cultured protein in a laboratory setting.



### *Production Management Programs*

1. The National Grange supports voluntary production control programs as a way of balancing supply with demand. Production control programs should be based on controlling the number of bushels (amount of product) allowed to qualify for price supports and by the requirements to set aside a specific percentage of a farm's crop production. We support eliminating any offsetting compliance requirements between farms related to production control programs, but support maintaining cross compliance requirements for crops grown on the same farm. We support paid production diversion with payments made in cash or in-kind, if farmers first comply with set-aside and other non-paid production control programs. We further recommend that any land diverted from agricultural production under farm programs remain eligible for conservation cost-share practices. Program benefits, such as loans, deficiency payments, etc., should be set at a level that is sufficient to accomplish the program's objectives and should be made available only to producers who comply with the program's requirements.
2. Production yields should be based on the proven yield of the land on that farm. We support allowing farmers to re-establish their proven yields, but we further support requiring all crop production bases to be established using a soil suitability criterion rating rather than past crop history and changing farm programs, so that a farmer will not lose their farm base from under-planting.
3. The National Grange supports the concept of a Cover Crop Program that is voluntary and incentive-based for all farm programs that involve government funding.
4. Surplus food purchased by the Government should in no way be sold at reduced prices to be in competition with ongoing farm prices. Instead, we encourage surplus foods to be given to charitable organizations. The National Grange encourages increased USDA purchases of surplus agriculture products to be given away through various food assistance programs.

### *Research and Extension*

1. The National Grange strongly supports the cooperative Extension Service (ES), as well as the land grant universities in their effort to maintain a quality extension program in their respective states. The ES should continue to provide leadership to the agricultural and rural sectors with programs directed primarily to improving the quality of rural life. We recommend renewed federal funding for the State Farm Safety Specialist position and farm safety programs, establishing a job retraining program for displaced, disabled, or injured farmers and ranchers, maintaining a viable 4-H Program, and increased funding by all government entities so that the ES can provide information on alternative and sustainable agricultural practices and marketing methods.
2. The National Grange continues to strongly support adequate funding for basic and applied agricultural research from federal, state and private sources. We encourage state departments of agriculture and state experiment stations to conduct research designed to achieve the same results. We specifically recommend full funding of the federal share of agricultural research, especially in cases of emergencies when increased research is required. We strongly support additional research to provide the technology that is pertinent to small-scale agriculture, including more emphasis on research in the areas of marketing, insect control, disease control, energy use, improved product quality, and soil and water management.
3. The National Grange supports increased funding for the National Seed Storage Laboratory in an effort to preserve plant material and seed germ plasma.
4. The National Grange will support the goals of sustainable agriculture research and education programs that will promote the most efficient and effective Best Management Practices (BMP) to reduce soil loss due to erosion, protect water quality from degradation by substance discharge from agricultural operations, and to identify methodologies that will result in higher profitability from production through market development.
5. The National Grange supports expansion of precision agriculture practices to include poultry and livestock production to make animal nutrition more effective, reduce the amount of waste, and reduce the nutrient levels in the waste.
6. The National Grange endorses organic farming research and education.
7. The National Grange urges continued research on the benefits and risks of using biosolids as agricultural fertilizer.
8. The National Grange encourages USDA and state agriculture experiment stations to identify and promote fire-resistant plants and encourage their planting in fire-prone areas.
9. That the National Grange encourages the development of a Farm Corps program for apprenticeships and mentoring of new and beginning farmers. (2021)
10. The National Grange supports an educational path that prepares students for a career after high school, whether that is through higher education or Career and Technology Education pathway. <sup>2022</sup>

### *Tobacco Policy*

1. The National Grange recommends that the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture use simple regulations in requiring cigarette manufacturers to report only the total use of domestically grown and imported tobacco by class or kind of tobacco, thus leaving manufacturers the flexibility to adjust blends for their various brands of cigarettes to meet their customer demand.
2. The National Grange supports programs at the federal level to help tobacco farmers diversify their farming operation by raising and marketing of alternative crops and will support new research programs to discover new uses for tobacco, such as a new source of protein.
3. The National Grange supports negotiations, regulations, or legislation to control the importation of low grade, inferior quality tobacco.
4. The National Grange supports steps to make U.S. tobacco more competitive in the world market. We urge that all tobacco that is exported as U.S. tobacco must be certified as 100% U.S. tobacco.

5. The National Grange continues to support the Tobacco Auction System and the necessary improvements to modernize the Auction System to meet new packaging ideas and technology in order to facilitate the movement of tobacco through the Auction System.
6. The National Grange opposes any proposals to ban the use of menthol in cigarettes.

#### *USDA Responsibilities, Authorities & Organization*

1. The National Grange strongly supports the U.S. Department of Agriculture remaining as an independent agency with the Secretary of Agriculture as a member of the President's Cabinet.
2. The National Grange supports the repeal of the USDA's personnel regulations that forbid USDA employees from actively participating in the meetings and other activities of farm organizations, from holding office in farm organizations, from participating in membership recruitment campaigns, or from acting as a volunteer financial or business agent of a farm organization. This should not change or alter USDA's other regulations concerning general employee conduct.
3. The National Grange strongly urges the USDA to devise plans to reduce the paperwork for farmers to participate in federal farm programs. We urge the USDA and its agencies to format all reports, applications and paperwork that are to be filed by farmers, so that they may be filled out via computer media using commonly accepted word processing programs and returned to the agency for processing.
4. The National Grange urges the USDA to increase oversight of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to decrease fraud and ensure that SNAP is only used for its defined purposes.
5. The National Grange urges the USDA to review and recommend changes to current EBT (electronic benefit transfer) eligibility guidelines in order to avoid unintended consequences to the beneficiary.
6. The National Grange supports legislation to simplify the business application of the current Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) so that businesses may more easily become participants.
7. The National Grange supports increasing the available funding for food bank distribution centers. <sup>2022</sup>

#### *Miscellaneous*

1. The National Grange supports the agricultural weather forecasting service.
2. The National Grange continues to support the development of aquaculture. We urge aqua cultural farmers to use care and caution in the placement of rearing pens in public waterways so as not to interfere with common waterway uses.
3. The National Grange supports legislation that would ensure a producer the "right to harvest" any legally planted crop regardless of any environmental or regulatory action arising between planting and harvest time.
4. The National Grange supports the production of industrial hemp when production is done within the guidelines of applicable state and federal laws.
5. The National Grange opposes EPA regulations that concern dust blowing attributed to agricultural operations.
6. The National Grange actively supports revising the standards, so that all meats in the national school lunch program are required to meet the new standards used by the United States Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service.
7. The National Grange urges the United States Congress to direct the USDA Food and Nutrition Service to amend their rules to allow consumption of grapes, whole milk, flavored milk and potato products by students in school meal programs and to insert that language into the next Farm Bill.
8. The Grange at all levels support initiatives to encourage the use of farm structures as a base for communication antennas.
9. The National Grange seeks a more aggressive position on the issue of irrigation water shared by the U.S. and Mexico on behalf of the U.S. interest and that the period of payback for the excess usage of irrigation water to be limited to two years rather than five years.
10. The Grange supports legislation that offers a form of reimbursement of student loans for large animal veterinarians committing to work in private practice.
11. The National Grange supports the market availability of GPS (Global Positioning System) tracking devices to monitor the locations of agricultural/farm equipment.
12. The National Grange supports legislative efforts that would allow individuals involved in agriculture as well as independent mechanics to have access to diagnostic software, information and other necessary technological tools used to repair modern farm equipment.
13. The National Grange opposes the expansion of the definition of areas considered "navigable waters" as was defined under the 1968 Clean Water Act.
14. The National Grange urges all appropriate agencies of federal, state and local governments to expedite the harvest and removal of beetle-kill trees from all public lands.
15. The Grange will support a cotton program that provides for a marketing loan at a level that will encourage the continued exportation of cotton, as well as research into the eradication of detrimental insects.
16. The National Grange supports legislation that will financially assist agricultural fairs across the nation in recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic.
17. The National Grange supports legislation that will assist in reducing the threat of wildfires across the United States.
18. The National Grange supports amending the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act to declare foreign ownership of farmland as a matter of national security, restrict foreign ownership to no more than ten percent share of any U.S. food production or processing capacity, prohibit foreign ownership of farmland within 50 miles of any U.S. military

installation, and add the Secretary of Agriculture as a standing member of the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States.<sup>2023</sup>

19. The National Grange strongly opposes the establishment of the French Creek Wildlife Refuge.<sup>2023</sup>

## AUDIT & BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT

### POLICY STATEMENT

The members of the Audit and Budget Committee thank the National President, Executive Committee and the National Grange staff for presenting us with a budget that allows us to continue with the programs and projects of the National Grange.

While we await a contract and the official sale of the building, we must remain financially conservative, monitoring and limiting unnecessary expenses in all areas while looking for every opportunity to increase income in these uncertain times.

Dues at all levels of the Grange are the lifeblood of our Order. Our focus must be membership growth at all levels. Every member needs to make a serious effort to attract new members while working to retain our existing members.

We encourage all members to continually monitor the many member benefits that are listed on the National Grange website and to take advantage of these benefits at every opportunity. Member benefits are not only a benefit to the membership, but many of these programs provide an ongoing revenue stream to the National Grange. Few organizations give such value for the small monetary contribution from its membership.

The Communications Department continues to expand communications to the State Granges, Community Granges and our membership. Some of these programs include The Patrons Chain, and our quarterly subscription based *Good Day!* publication.

We applaud the Communications Department for the continued innovation in our quarterly *Good Day!* magazine. *Good Day!* is now available as an online magazine in addition to the printed version. *Good Day!* is truly an asset to the National Grange. This is due to advertising and donations to offset the cost of the publication and distribution of the magazine. In order to remain financially viable, we encourage all members to subscribe to the *Good Day!* magazine and enjoy a wealth of different articles. In an effort to make the Grange more visible, why not consider a subscription to the magazine for your local library or FFA chapter? Communication between the National Grange and our membership is vital and the outstanding *Good Day!* publication is an essential part of that effort, but to continue it, it must receive support from us as leaders as well as our members. Why not take few minutes and renew your subscription, or subscribe to the magazine today?

It is our responsibility as leaders of the Grange to work with our Membership Director to design and create strategies for success in our membership recruitment efforts. Has your Grange considered offering members requesting to be dropped from the Grange an e-membership for this individual for a period of 1 year to keep them informed of the activities of the Grange? Hopefully, these E- members will see the benefit of membership and maintain their E-membership moving forward.

When the closing on the building has taken place and the funds are invested, we need to ensure that the principal from the sale of the building is invested in such a way to generate the net income (income minus expenses) that will be lost without the rental income generated by the tenants in the building. We also need to ensure that the funds generate enough income to continue the existing programs and allow for creation of new programs which will continue to enhance member value as well as attract new members to our order and allow us to carry on for many years to come.

We support the current financial investment policy adopted by the executive committee in 2022 which limits our international investments.

*This policy statement covers portions of the Presidents Internal Address.*

### INDEX OF RESOLUTIONS

Res. #	Origin	TITLE	ACTION
202	A&B Committee	Compensation for Elected Officers	Adopted
203	A&B Committee	Covered Expenses for Officers and Delegates	Adopted

### RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY DELEGATE ACTION

#### *202-AB – Compensation for Elected Officers*

RESOLVED the Audit and Budget Committee affirms the following compensation for elected officers be approved in the budget at the 157th annual session held in 2023:

National Master: \$65,000 annually

National Lecturer: \$500 honorarium annually

National Secretary: \$500 honorarium annually

High Priest: \$500 honorarium annually

#### *203-AB – Covered Expenses for Officers and Delegates*

RESOLVED, the National Grange pay room costs for five (5) days at the National Grange Convention for Delegates, Officers, and approved non-delegates for the 2024 National Grange Convention.

## CITIZENSHIP & TAXATION COMMITTEE REPORT

### POLICY STATEMENT

The National Grange continues to support accurate broadband mapping, and funding to connect the unserved and underserved. The National Grange encourages State Grange presidents to establish a working relationship with their state broadband agency such as the Affordable Connectivity Program, an FCC benefit program.

The National Grange must continue to fight to protect family farms, ranches and businesses from over-regulation, government control that will inhibit operations and devastating changes in the Federal Tax Code.

The National Grange continues to support the formation of an Office of Rural Prosperity to be housed in the Executive Branch of the President of the United States to coordinate and streamline Federal investments and foster public-private partnerships that strengthen communities and improve the quality of life and well-being of persons living and working in rural communities.

The importance of retaining a tax-exempt status for all qualified Granges must be maintained. We encourage the National Grange to provide State Granges with information on filing procedures for the necessary 990-N form.

The National Grange supports a comprehensive energy policy that includes all sources of energy.

The National Grange strongly encourages our Congressional leaders to engage in bipartisan cooperation.

The National Grange supports the passage of the Stop Stolen Valors for Service-Disabled Veteran-owned Small Contractors Act, or similar legislation.

The National Grange supports the continuance of availability of AM radios in all vehicles.

The National Grange strongly opposes the supplantation of printed currency with digital currency.

*This Policy Statement covers a section of the National President's external address and resolution 318-NY and 325-OH,*

### INDEX OF RESOLUTIONS

RES. #	State	TITLE	ACTION
304	CT	Artificial Intelligence	Adopted
305	CT	Maintaining Options for Consumer Use of Computer-Based Technology	Adopted
307	ID	Protect Our Most Vulnerable Citizens	Adopted
308	MI	The US Dollar is the Main Currency	Adopted
309	MI	United States Postal Service	Adopted
315	NY	Junk Fee Prevention Act	Adopted
316	NY	Peer-to-Peer Payment Apps	Adopted
317	NY	Protecting Your Genetic Data	Adopted
319	NY	Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Program Reform	Adopted
320	NY	The Import Security and Fairness Act	Adopted
322	PA	Cannabis – Schedule One Drug – VA Benefits	Adopted
326	OH	Federal Pension Guarantees	Adopted

### RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY DELEGATE ACTION

#### ***304-CT – Artificial Intelligence***

WHEREAS: Artificial Intelligence (AI) is an emerging technology that is popping up in many different areas like academia, publishing, the court system, movies, television, art images and graphics, recording; and

WHEREAS: a group of major AI software developers and technology companies (Microsoft, Adobe, Apple, Google, etc.) have formed an advisory council and developed a framework of six key principles for responsible AI: accountability, inclusiveness, reliability and safety, fairness, transparency, and privacy and security; and

WHEREAS: these principles are essential to creating responsible and trustworthy AI as it moves into mainstream products and services; and

WHEREAS: it is documented that the framework addresses ethical issues, such as inclusivity, accountability, and discrimination, and insures that AI systems can justify their decisions and are in compliance with company policies, industry standards, and government regulations; and

WHEREAS: one of the areas that poses the most danger for our society is the artificial creation of videos, sound bites, graphics and other digital media that can easily be confused for the real thing; and

WHEREAS: public trust of news, as well as artistic and media sources is low and generally citizens believe current safeguards are insufficient, and that there is a fear of AI taking over human jobs; and

WHEREAS: a trusted and transparent AI framework will promote responsibility yet not eliminate creativity and artistic license, and create new employment based on implementing targeted human intervention; and

WHEREAS: a bipartisan group of U.S. legislators introduced a bill on June 20, 2023 to create a government commission focused on regulation and adoption of emerging artificial intelligence called the National AI Commission Act; therefore be it

**RESOLVED: the National Grange supports the establishment of ethical and sustainable fair-use guidelines for the use of Artificial Intelligence.**

### ***305-CT – Maintaining Options for Consumer Use of Computer-Based Technology***

WHEREAS: technology has evolved quickly in all areas of the consumers' daily living, including home, work and community settings; and

WHEREAS: many traditional means of communication, business transactions and shopping are being phased out and being replaced by electronic methods and virtual formats; and

WHEREAS: many consumers in rural and urban communities continue to have little to no access for computer use at home for essential activities such as financial tasks and managing healthcare appointments; and

WHEREAS: many consumers, including seniors or individuals with functional challenges may not be able to adapt to nor prefer to use new technology; and

WHEREAS: choices should remain for traditional forms of communication (land line telephone use), financial tasks (hard copy bill writing) and methods for consumer assistance (access to a live person); therefore be it

**RESOLVED: National Grange encourage recognition of varied consumer needs related to computer use and choices should remain for traditional forms of communication (land line telephone use), financial tasks (hard copy bill writing) and methods for consumer assistance (access to a live person); and be it further**

**RESOLVED: that the National Grange support any policy development that would retain options for traditional methods of communication.**

### ***307-ID – Protect Our Most Vulnerable Citizens***

WHEREAS: Our Federal Government, particularly the House or Representatives has threatened budget cuts to Medicare, the Veterans, and Social Security, as a way to balance the Federal Government budget, and

WHEREAS: the citizens covered within these categories are among our most vulnerable, and we, as citizens, believe that our government is bloated beyond sustainability; therefore be it

**RESOLVED: that The National Grange strongly encourages that funding for Veterans, Social Security, and Medicare not be reduced by congress.**

### ***308-MI – The US Dollar is the Main Currency***

WHEREAS: the US dollar is the main currency in the United States; and

WHEREAS: cash is the main form of currency; and

WHEREAS: debit and credit cards are an alternative form of payment, but require a bank/credit union account; and

WHEREAS: many people do not have a bank/credit union account for various reasons; and

WHEREAS: many businesses and establishments are switching over to card only transactions; and

WHEREAS: this leaves many without a card unable to make transactions; therefore be it

**RESOLVED: that the National Grange urges legislation that prohibits businesses from being card only payments and that CASH be accepted at all institutions as a form of payment.**

### ***309-MI – United States Postal Service***

WHEREAS: at one time the United States Postal Service (USPS) operated in the black, and provided exemplary service to our country, as well as to the world; and

WHEREAS: of late the USPS seems to continuously raise the cost of postage; and

WHEREAS: the service quality has dropped considerably to American citizens; and

WHEREAS: it should not take four (4) weeks for a first class mailing to get from Durand, Michigan to Niles and Three Rivers, Michigan and to Owosso, Michigan, a distance of only fifteen (15) miles; therefore be it

**RESOLVED: that the National Grange urges and requests a congressional inquiry into the total United States Postal Service (USPS) to ascertain why costs continue to rise while service to our citizens has suffered creating hardships for many.**

### ***315-NY – Junk Fee Prevention Act***

WHEREAS: consumers are perpetually barraged by fees: overdraft charges on bank accounts, seat assignment fees on airlines, service charges on event tickets, resort fees on hotel stays, broadcast TV fees on cable service, etc.; and

WHEREAS: consumers are too often surprised by these fees because they tend to lurk in the fine print or appear on bills only when it is too late or inconvenient to back out; and

WHEREAS: because these fees are often not included in the advertised or sticker price, they undermine consumer efforts to comparison shop and to stick to their household budgets; therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** that the National Grange urges members of Congress to pass the “Junk Fee Prevention Act” or similar legislation, which would help protect consumers from excessive, hidden, and unnecessary fees as often happens when purchasing entertainment tickets, communication service fees, and the seating of young children adjacent to an accompanying adult on an aircraft.

### ***316-NY – Peer-to-Peer Payment Apps***

WHEREAS: peer-to-peer (P2P) payment apps such as Apple Cash, Cash App, Venmo, and Zelle, are a convenient and easy way to send money to others with just a few taps on your phone; and

WHEREAS: well over half of Americans (64 percent) use a P2P app for payments to and from individuals; and

WHEREAS: while P2P payment apps have proven popular, users can lose money when they accidentally make an erroneous payment or fall victim to fraud or scams; and

WHEREAS: a study by Consumer Reports found that all four of the P2P apps did not fully reimburse customers when users were induced into fraud, collect far more personal data and more types of data than they need to provide the services that consumers expect, have to meet sometimes confusing conditions to ensure their funds held in the payments portion of the app are protected by Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation insurance and make it difficult for users to give up certain legal rights to resolve disputes (users must resolve claims and disputes on an individual basis, mostly through binding arbitration or small claims court; therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** that the National Grange supports legislation that would strengthen consumer protections for peer-to-peer payment app users by requiring providers to clearly state which security protocols are used to protect users’ information, clearly explain reimbursement policies in cases of fraud or error, collect only the data needed to prevent fraud and provide the payment service, disclose and identify who they share consumer data with and the purpose for sharing the data, allow users to see their personal data and delete it if they no longer want to use the service, and do not require users to agree to binding arbitration to resolve disputes or to resolve claims on an individual basis.

### ***317-NY – Protecting Your Genetic Data***

WHEREAS: direct-to-consumer (DTC) genetic test kits have become very popular. According to a Consumer Reports survey conducted in 2020, about 1 in 5 Americans have taken a DTC genetic test; and

WHEREAS: current laws in most states do not cover what companies can do with this data; and

WHEREAS: one risk is that insurance companies could price or deny coverage based on one’s DNA or even that of a blood relative who happened to get tested; therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** that the National Grange supports legislation that would update the definition of “genetic” testing” to include direct-to-consumer commercial genetic testing companies, forbid the use of a person’s genetic data without their consent, and ensure that such data is stored securely.

### ***319-NY – Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Program Reform***

WHEREAS: the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program was initially intended to help prevent people with disabilities and older adults from living in poverty; and

WHEREAS: due to outdated benefits and rules, the program not only fails to provide enough benefits to lift its beneficiaries living independently above the poverty line, it penalizes work, savings, and receipt of Social Security and other benefits, effectively keeping many beneficiaries in poverty; and

WHEREAS: key features of the SSI program like asset limits and the rules governing how much income from other sources beneficiaries can keep without penalty have not been updated in decades, even to account for inflation; and

WHEREAS: under current program regulations, beneficiaries can only keep \$65 of their earnings after which benefits are reduced by \$1 for every \$2 earned, and they can only keep \$20 of most other income such as veteran’s benefits and social security after which benefits are reduced dollar-for-dollar, even when total incomes are below the poverty line, keeping beneficiaries in poverty; therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** the National Grange supports legislation that would update the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program to increase asset limits and earnings to be in line with today’s economy and tie future increases to the rate of inflation.

### ***320-NY – The Import Security and Fairness Act***

WHEREAS: since 1938, the intention of de minimis in United States trade law has been to ease the burden on the United States government related to processing imports – the revenue collected from imports of low value simply was not worth the effort; and

WHEREAS: instead of going through a formal process, these low value imports enjoyed simplified import processes and did not have to pay any duties, taxes, or fees due to the United States Government; and

WHEREAS: the original limit for such low value de minimis shipments was \$1 but has been raised by the government significantly over the years to today’s \$800 limit. By comparison, some examples of other countries de minimis limits are Mexico – about \$50 in US dollars, Canada – about \$15 and China - \$8; and

WHEREAS: the latest increase has coincided with an explosion in e-commerce packages that use the de minimis provision to enter the United States, currently more than two million packages per day, that do not pay duties, taxes, and fees, and provide less data to the United States government; and

WHEREAS: this has created concerns from regulators such as U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission about compliance with basic U.S. laws designed to protect the United States from

unsafe and illicit imports, including goods made with forced labor and imports that don't have to pay duties, taxes and fees at the border gain a significant competitive advantage over other similar products, particularly when imported from countries with markets distorted by government intervention; therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** that the National Grange supports legislation that would address concerns related to United States competitiveness by prohibiting goods from non-market economies, or those on United States trade representatives' priority watch list from benefitting from de minimis treatment.

#### **322-PA – Cannabis – Schedule One Drug – VA Benefits**

WHEREAS: Cannabis is listed as a Schedule one Drug; and

WHEREAS: as a Veteran in possession of medical marijuana allowed by their state of residence could lose their VA benefits; therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** the National Grange support legislation that would prevent a veteran from losing any of their benefits if they are participating in a state approved marijuana program.

#### **326-OH – Federal Pension Guarantees**

WHEREAS; most pensions that are by companies on US soil are covered under the Federal ERISA and pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation programs. But unfortunately, some companies sell their pension plan assets to other companies or Insurance Co. who are not covered under the Federal plan. Then they use up the assets and go bankrupt, leaving the retirees out in the cold. They call this D-Risking by the company that sells the pension assets. These assets are usually from companies that start out as US companies but are broken up or sold to off-shore companies. Offshore companies are more apt to do this to make their bottom line look better. The problem is they may sell these pension assets to a company or insurance co, that is not covered by the Federal ERISA plans; therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** that the National Grange go on record asking our congressmen and women to start and support legislation that would protect all pension assets; even if they are sold, bartered or traded to a non-qualifying plan.

### **PRESENT POLICY: CITIZENSHIP**

#### *Broadcasting*

1. The National Grange supports the concept of public broadcasting and urges improved service for our rural communities. The National Grange supports continuing the present level of federal funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting through self-supporting sources of financing.
2. The National Grange supports the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association in its efforts to help rural areas receive satellite TV reception. The National Grange supports legislation to ensure that satellite dish owners in rural areas pay no more for their service than cable TV subscribers in the cities do. The Grange supports regulations requiring satellite television companies to provide rural customers access to more than one predetermined set of local channels including local public access channels in the customer's region.
3. The National Grange supports the continuation of religious broadcasts on radio and television.
4. The National Grange urges Congress to maintain the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) as a watchdog agency to protect the public from unfair practices and monopolies. We oppose media mergers where one company can control all forms of media. We encourage the FCC to provide ample opportunity for new media companies and medium-sized media companies to be able to compete.
5. The National Grange supports elimination of the foul language, obscenities, and vulgar images used on TV, radio, or public places and fully supports the increased penalties for violations imposed by the FCC.
6. The National Grange lobbies the FCC to ban the use of emergency vehicle sirens in all radio advertisements to prevent hazards and confusion on the roadway.
7. The National Grange urges Congress and the Federal Communications Commission to require broadcast media to maintain a constant volume level during an entire broadcast, including commercials.
8. The National Grange supports the current financial assistance to support quality, commercial-free educational children's programs.
9. The National Grange reaffirms its support for the 1934 Federal Communications Act; and The National Grange favors allowing up to 49% foreign ownership of a U.S. communications company as a method to exit or avoid bankruptcy for a short term (less than or equal to seven years) period; and that the National Grange believes that no one foreign entity should own more than a 25% stake in a U.S. communications company in the long-term; and upon adoption.

#### *Elected Officials*

1. The Grange favors changing the term of office of Congressional Representatives from two to four years. We also favor a maximum of 12 years consecutive service for Senators and Representatives.
2. The National Grange supports a ban on automatic salary increases for elected officials and Members of Congress, separate from those of judges and other federal government employees. All Congressional pay raises should be considered by Congress during normal business hours and on their own merits as a separate entity to be discussed in open committee hearings and voted on by roll call with a three-fourths majority voting in the affirmative as opposed to being attached to an unrelated piece of legislation. Any approved Congressional pay increases should take effect at the next session of



Congress. The National Grange further favors strengthening the law limiting the number of gifts and money that members of Congress can accept.

3. The National Grange urges members of Congress to participate in both Social Security and the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS). We further recommend that all laws, including employment laws, apply to Congressional members.
4. The National Grange opposes rules that permit members of the United States Senate to block other members' bills from being placed on the floor. However, should this practice be permitted, the dissenter should be required to disclose his/her identity and reason for dissent.
5. The National Grange supports an amendment to the United States Constitution that should read: "Congress shall make no law that applies to the citizens of the United States that does not apply equally to Senators and/or Representatives, just as Congress shall make no law that applies to the Senators and/or Representatives that does not apply equally to the citizens of the United States, including health care insurance programs and rates." Further, when the federal government is shut down because Congress has failed to pass proper funding, Congress should not be paid for the period of the shut-down.
6. The National Grange supports the requirement of those sworn in to testify before Congress to include "so help me God" in their swearing in. (2022)
7. The National Grange support legislation requiring each Member of Congress to divest or place in a blind trust any specified investment owned by the Member, the Member's spouse, or a dependent of the Member. This requirement applies for the entire period of a Member's service in Congress and for 180 days after that service ceases. (2022)

#### *Elections*

1. We believe that projections and/or final results of national elections should not be reported or broadcast by the news media until the polls have closed in all western states.
2. The National Grange urges all of its members to exercise their right to vote. We further recommend that all ballots and pertinent instructions for all elections be printed in the English language only. Proof of citizenship is to be required at the time of voter registration with federally approved photo identification when voting. We oppose same day registration voting laws.
3. The National Grange supports the current Electoral College system for presidential and vice-presidential elections.
4. The National Grange supports a change in the qualifications for appointment as a United States Supreme Court Justice requiring the candidate to be a citizen of the United States of America.
5. The National Grange supports the federal campaign law that requires public disclosure of the names of persons who contribute \$1,000 or more and anyone who contributes \$100,000 or more to be posted on the Super PAC website within 24 hours and must stay on the website until the completion of the campaign.
6. The National Grange opposes United Nation representatives at any U.S. polling location.
7. The National Grange supports laws requiring individuals to show appropriate/proper identification at the polls and/or anyone requesting an absentee ballot, to verify they are a legal voter within this country and proper state.

#### *Government and Legislative Affairs*

1. The National Grange believes:
  - a. that all government-mandated programs and agencies must contain "sunset" provisions, including a target termination date;
  - b. that systematic and continuous reviews of all mandated programs be made periodically by an appropriate board of review;
  - c. that all mandated programs must be funded and financed by the government of origin and that at any point funding is not provided, the mandate will be removed.
2. The National Grange strongly opposes the use of any commission, council, or other consortium of non-elected appointees to create legislative mandates that Congress must adhere to, that are not subject to judicial review or the American system of checks and balances.
3. The National Grange supports the present status of Washington, D.C. as both a "federal city" and the nation's capital, which is not affiliated with any state government and not a separate state in and of itself. We further favor restricting the Congressional delegates from non-tax paying territories of Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico to being non-voting members of Congressional committees.
4. The National Grange supports legislation that would specifically make protection of private property rights and compensating private property owners for property that is taken for public use as a part of the federal statutes. The National Grange supports strengthening the Constitution's guarantee that a person owning property has the right to control such property, including restricting trespassers, and excluding liability for injuries to a trespasser.
5. The National Grange supports a constitutional amendment that allows the President to exercise a line-item veto for budget appropriations and authorization bills.
6. The National Grange opposes all legislation limiting the individual's ability to lobby and communicate with our elected officials either directly or through organizations such as the Grange.
7. The National Grange supports the continuation of public tours of the White House.
8. The National Grange supports allowing military recruiters to bear arms inside recruiting centers.
9. The National Grange supports the inclusion of a question on census forms as to whether a person is a U.S. citizen.

#### *Government Service*

1. The National Grange supports efforts to improve the collection and dissemination of accurate and timely statistical data by all federal agencies. The National Grange encourages legislation to require the Commerce Census Bureau to return to inclusion of a separate category for farm families.
2. The National Grange supports legislation that would make compliance with regulatory requirements regarding equipment and services for volunteer fire departments contingent upon providing financial assistance to those volunteer fire departments.
3. The National Grange encourages the federal government to provide assistance immediately following the successful request by a State Governor for a declaration of a national disaster in the United States.
4. The National Grange supports legislation to reclassify public safety telecommunicators and dispatchers to the same protective first-responder classification as police and firefighters.

#### *Government Spending*

1. The National Grange strongly advocates for Congress to put aside partisan politics to pass a balanced budget, prevent federal government shutdowns and ensure a permanent solution to our deficit problems. The National Grange believes the issuance of Social Security, other critical social service monetary supplements, military salaries, benefits, or expenses should not be affected, delayed or reduced, should a federal government shutdown occur.
2. We support efforts at all levels of government to reduce costs and excessive paperwork, to review regulations, and to generally reduce any undue influence of government on the private sector. We favor the review of all tax supported federal incentive programs for possible reduction or elimination. We encourage all levels of government to downsize and/or eliminate government jobs where possible.
3. The National Grange supports the enforcement of regulations to assure that government programs abide by the bidding process, when appropriate.

#### *Native Americans*

1. The National Grange supports the continuation of all rights and privileges enjoyed by Native Americans as U.S. citizens, including fulfilling all responsibilities associated with such citizenship, which includes being subject to the same laws as other citizens.

#### *Patriotism, Prayer, and Religious Observances*

1. The National Grange strongly supports maintaining The Star-Spangled Banner as our National Anthem. The National Grange supports legislation to maintain the wording of the current Pledge of Allegiance including the words "Liberty," and "under God." The National Grange believes that the Pledge of Allegiance should be recited in every U.S. school classroom and by members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives during their opening sessions each day.
2. The National Grange favors making new National Veterans Cemetery facilities available.
3. The National Grange believes the American flag be treated with all due respect in accordance with recognized flag etiquette and protocol. We support the purchase of American flags made in the USA and made from domestically produced materials.
4. The National Grange opposes any attempts by any federal, state or local government agency to dictate membership qualifications for any social or fraternal organizations.
5. The National Grange joins with the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and other Veteran Service organizations along with churches and individuals to protect our religious freedoms and the First Amendment. We support the words "In God We Trust" remaining on our currency and as our national motto.
6. The National Grange supports maintaining November 11th as Veterans Day.
7. The National Grange opposes the removal of any Federal monuments and the reinstatement of all Federal monuments that have been removed. <sup>2021</sup>

#### *Social Security*

1. The National Grange encourages Congress to positively reform the Social Security System to ensure its future solvency. The National Grange urges the continuing investigation of all Social Security programs ensuring that only those who are eligible are receiving benefits. The National Grange supports using Social Security funds for Social Security programs only. We oppose the utilization of any funds from the Social Security Trust Fund to achieve a balanced federal budget or for any purpose other than Social Security benefits.
2. We ask Congress to proceed with caution when proposing changes to Social Security and we request that the public be provided with explicit and concise information concerning any major changes in the Social Security system.
3. The National Grange urges Congress to revise Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and other programs for the elderly and handicapped so that an individual's benefits will not decrease if they decide to marry.
4. The National Grange favors making Social Security benefits completely exempt from personal income taxes. The National Grange supports legislation that would remove all Social Security "Earning Limits" for individuals.
5. The National Grange supports any and all federal bills that would eliminate the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provisions, therefore restoring full Social Security benefits to public employees and surviving spouses.
6. The National Grange supports reform that would expedite the application for, and processing of, Social Security Disability benefits for all clients.
7. The National Grange lobbies to amend the Social Security Act to assure that a beneficiary is paid for the month of his or her death. However, the Grange encourages the Social Security Administration to remove deceased persons from the rolls

of social security and terminate all benefits to that person; this includes being more diligent in updating its Death Master File.

8. The National Grange encourages legislators to raise the Social Security Death Benefit to at least \$500.
9. The National Grange supports legislation for expediting Social Security benefits by eliminating the five-month waiting period for patients with terminal illnesses. <sup>2022</sup>
10. The National Grange supports legislation to increase Supplemental Social Security asset limits and earnings in line with the economy and rate of inflation. <sup>2023</sup>

#### *Social Welfare Programs*

1. The National Grange supports requiring additional means to facilitate the identification and location of each child's parent for purposes of welfare recovery.
2. The National Grange supports legislation that would require drug testing to be included in the eligibility requirements for welfare recipients.

#### *Telecommunications*

1. The National Grange supports legislation to promote an integrated telecommunications network to assure widely available, high-quality telecommunications to all of the nation's users at a reasonable cost as was originally intended by the Communications Acts of 1934 and 1996. We further believe that access to affordable and reliable broadband Internet service is vital to preserving the quality of life in rural America. The National Grange supports the modernization of the Universal Service Fund (USF) to secure last mile (wireline or wireless) connectivity for rural Americans to broadband, thereby creating jobs, enhancing the economy, and boosting local businesses. The National Grange supports a national broadband policy that will:
  - a. provide federal government funding for rural broadband infrastructure improvement.
  - b. remove the regulatory uncertainty that has deterred broadband investment in rural America.
  - c. provide the incentive for private businesses, government agencies, and private citizens to invest in rural broadband deployment, stimulate broadband competition and impose reasonable taxation for private investment in rural broadband infrastructure improvement.
  - d. spark the creation of new service providers and new innovations that will assist a host of new technologies becoming more affordable, including cutting-edge wireless technologies that promise to deliver broadband to even the most remote parts of our country.
  - e. reallocate unused government agency spectrum (broadband connectivity) for commercial and rural broadband connectivity; and
  - f. allow Public Utility Districts (PUDs), or other public utilities to get involved in establishing the wireless communication systems.
  - g. encourage USDA's continued investment in broadband expansion through their grant programs including but not limited to Distance Learning and Telemedicine grants.
  - h. work to ensure that the wholly unserved and underserved locations in rural America are accurately and adequately mapped. <sup>2021</sup>
2. The National Grange supports continued strict enforcement of the Federal Communications Commission's national "Do Not Call List." The National Grange supports expansion of the Do-Not-Call list to include computer dialed political telemarketing, including, but not limited to, charities and political groups. No one calling a household for commercial or charitable request reasons may use a restricted number or call a phone with a restricted number. Telemarketers, as well as computer-generated or robocalls, should be prohibited from calling cell phones. The National Grange supports the Robocall Enforcement Improvement Act.
3. The National Grange recognizes the importance of the Universal Service Fund (USF) to the American public, especially in rural communities. The National Grange urges the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to approve any petitions by wireless telephone companies that demonstrate their ability to meet the obligations of Lifeline service, especially in rural areas, so they can serve low-income consumers with wireless Lifeline telephone service through the federal Universal Service Fund. Further, the National Grange opposes measures that would limit or reduce the Federal Communications Commission Lifeline Program.
4. The National Grange will work with telecommunications coalitions to encourage an increase in the number of cellular towers and new technologies where needed in rural America.
5. The National Grange urges U.S. Congress to expedite funding for a resilient, mobile, wireless, data network between local and state first responders and emergency personnel with federal emergency agencies, such as FEMA, Homeland Security and the National Guard.
6. The National Grange urges Congress to appropriate the necessary funding to combat the continuing cyberspace warfare threats to the United States in the 21st century.
7. The National Grange opposes any relinquishing of control of the American internet access to the UN or any foreign entity.
8. The National Grange encourages the recognition of varied computer needs and the need for consumer choice to use traditional forms of communication such as land line phone and hard copy wiring. <sup>2023</sup>

#### *Veterans Affairs*

1. The National Grange supports the continued operation of all Veterans' Hospitals and veterans' eligibility for medical care and benefits. We further support continuation of the current Disabled Veterans' Compensation Schedule, maintaining the

current benefits and the criteria for qualifying. The National Grange encourages additional federal funds to be appropriated for the Veterans' Administration for the purpose of improving the service and care of service men and women in the Veterans' Administration hospitals.

2. The National Grange believes disabled veterans should remain eligible to receive all their service-related retirement benefits and any other benefits to which they are entitled without offsets or reductions. Also, the National Grange supports legislation requiring the U.S. Veterans Administration to pay all benefits to veterans, effective the first day of the month that the veteran was diagnosed with the service-connected presumptive condition. Further, the Grange calls upon Congress to support the inclusion of 100% service-disabled veterans in the Space Available Program operated by the Air Mobility Command.
3. The National Grange urges all levels of government to protect the parental rights of military personnel, such as custody or visitation rights, while serving in combat on active duty.
4. The National Grange supports allowing all veterans registered in the Veterans Administration health care system and residing in nursing facilities, both private and state owned, to receive their drugs through the VA pharmacies at the patient's co-pay price prior to admission.
5. The National Grange urges the Department of Veterans Affairs to continue the use of Veterans Administration Medical Centers and allow Veterans to seek community based medical attention. All veterans' medical services be paid by the Department of Veterans Affairs Services.
6. The National Grange supports legislation allowing for a separate 10% disability rating by the Veterans Administration for each ear when veterans suffer from Tinnitus as a result of military service.
7. The National Grange urges the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to efficiently use their resources to resolve the serious backlog of veteran's benefit claims.
8. The National Grange supports the extension of the Veterans Administration Mortgage Protection Life Insurance to all service-connected veterans who are rated as permanently and totally disabled.
9. The National Grange supports legislation to increase to \$50,000 the maximum coverage a service-connected disabled veteran can purchase under the Service-Disabled Veterans Insurance Program.
10. The National Grange supports legislation that would direct the VA to select a VA medical facility to serve as the national center for research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of biological children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of service members exposed in combat to toxic substances.
11. The National Grange supports legislation to extend "Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers" to caregivers of all war-era veterans.
12. The National Grange support legislation that would allow any non-citizen who has served in the armed forces of the United States, and their immediate family, shall be offered an expedited path to full citizenship during their service or upon receiving an honorable discharge.
13. The National Grange encourages the development of "tiny house" villages to house homeless veterans and encourages alternative housing units (i.e., tiny homes) for housing the homeless.
14. The National Grange supports legislation so that any retired military service personnel with 50% or more service- related, disability rating be allowed to obtain and receive needed dental treatments at the Veteran's Administration Dental Clinics at no cost.
15. The National Grange supports legislation to override the 1950 Supreme Court ruling *Feres v United States* that prevents medical malpractice suits against military doctors with the exception of threat of war.
16. The National Grange opposes any legislation that would disenroll any Veteran who is currently receiving healthcare coverage through the Veterans Administration (VA) Health Care System.
17. The National Grange supports that complete medical records be made available to the service member at the time of separation for future Service-Connected Issues that may manifest after separation from service.
18. The National Grange supports legislation that would direct the Department of Defense to ensure the next National Cemetery provides full military honors and leaves unchanged the current (2016 rules) eligibility requirements earned through military service. <sup>2022</sup>
19. The National Grange reaffirm its position to lobby for honorably and medically discharged veterans and their families to be given preference when applying for low-income housing. This includes Federal subsidized housing developments, whether governmental or private. <sup>2022</sup>
20. The National Grange strongly encourages that funding for Veterans' Social Security and Medicare benefits not be reduced by Congress <sup>2023</sup>
21. The National Grange supports legislation that would prevent veterans from losing benefits if they are participating in a state approved marijuana program. <sup>2023</sup>

#### *Miscellaneous*

1. The National Grange supports all rights that are granted in the United States Constitution and Bill of Rights and urges Congress not to consider legislation eliminating or repealing these rights.
2. The National Grange favors a Constitutional amendment to make English the official national language. The National Grange supports legislation to require that English be used on all government forms throughout the United States.
3. The National Grange favors the establishment of a new branch of the Smithsonian dedicated to the nation's food and farm heritage.
4. The National Grange supports the National Council on Disabilities efforts to ensure rights of parents with disabilities to raise children.

5. The National Grange urges Congress to reject the United Nations "Small Arms Treaty".
6. The National Grange urges elected officials to address ongoing problems facing homeless and at-risk youth and to make more resources available day and night until they can become self-sufficient.
7. The National Grange supports legislation that would allow distribution from Individual retirement accounts as needed without required minimum distributions based on age.
8. The National Grange supports the National Weather Service and other alert systems that relay important life-saving storm warnings over streaming services.
9. The National Grange supports a national observance day honoring Eleanor Roosevelt, a fellow Granger, for her work and contributions both to the American people and on behalf of international human rights and urges Congress to approve legislative measures recognizing her contributions both to the American people and on behalf of international human rights by creating a national observance day in her honor.
10. The National Grange supports legislation to allow states to be on Daylight Savings Time on a year-round basis. <sup>2021</sup>
11. The National Grange supports the efforts of the Veteran's Administration (VA) and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) to eliminate most medical debt being reported to credit bureaus. <sup>2022</sup>
12. The National Grange urges Congress to pass the "Junk Fee Prevention Act or similar legislation to protect consumers from excessive, hidden, and unnecessary fees when purchasing entertainment tickets, communication service fees, and the seating of young children next to parents on aircraft. <sup>2023</sup>.
13. The National Grange supports legislation to strengthen consumer protections for peer-to-peer app users to clearly state security protocols used to protect users' information, clearly explain reimbursement policies, disclose who they share consumer data with and the purpose for sharing, and allow users to delete their personal data if they no longer want to use the service. <sup>2023</sup>
14. The National Grange supports legislation that prohibits card only business transactions and allows cash to be accepted at all institutions as a form of payment. <sup>2023</sup>
15. The National Grange supports the establishment of ethical and sustainable fair-use guidelines to govern the use of artificial intelligence. <sup>2023</sup>
16. The National Grange supports legislation to update the definition of "genetic" testing to include direct-to-consumer commercial genetic testing companies, forbid the use of genetic data without the person's consent, and ensure such data is stored securely. <sup>2023</sup>
17. The National Grange supports legislation to address concerns about United States competitiveness by prohibiting goods from non-market economies or those in the United States Trade Representative's priority watch list from benefitting from de minimis treatment. <sup>2023</sup>
18. The National Grange urges Congress to pass legislation to protect all pension assets even if they are sold, bartered or traded to a non-qualified plan. <sup>2023</sup>
19. The National Grange requests a congressional inquiry of the United States Postal Service to ascertain why costs continue to rise while service our citizens has suffered creating a hardship for many. <sup>2023</sup>

## **PRESENT POLICY: TAXATION**

### *Business, Investment, Capital Gains, and Inheritance Taxation*

1. The National Grange supports legislation to permit farmers to use the method of depreciation that is most suitable to the uncertainties of their businesses. We support depreciation schedules for agricultural capital assets that accurately reflect the useful life of those assets. In particular, we support a depreciation schedule of 15 years for single purpose farm structures. The National Grange supports legislation to eliminate the reporting of government funded environmental and conservation cost-share monies as income to the recipients. We oppose the use of income tax write-offs from farming to reduce the amount of taxes that are owed on the earnings of non-farm businesses or professions.
2. The National Grange supports an Investment Tax Credit or accelerated depreciation with a \$100,000 value eligibility limit.
3. The National Grange supports preferential treatment for capital gains income. We support the abolishment of the capital gains tax. Until then, we support indexing the basic value of an asset, so that only the real gain, and not the inflation value, is subject to the capital gains tax. We support excluding capital gains up to \$500,000 from sale of agricultural lands from taxable income. We further support excluding all of the proceeds on the sale or exchange of qualified farmland development rights to a tax-exempt conservation organization from all capital gain taxes. We further support allowing farmers to invest any un-excluded capital gains from the sale of real and personal property into tax-deferred accounts, such as IRAs.
4. The National Grange believes that employees should not be liable for un-remitted income or FICA taxes if the employer properly withheld those taxes from the employee's pay but then failed to make the proper payments to the IRS or the state.
5. The National Grange opposes the enactment of any federal tax on securities transactions.
6. The National Grange supports the uniform application of all timber depletion allowances in the tax code to all timberland owners regardless of the size of their timberland holdings.
7. The National Grange supports legislation abolishing the federal estate tax, especially for small business and agriculture as long as their ownership stays in the family and the farm stays in productive agriculture. We support retaining current provisions for a full stepped-up basis on inheritances. We favor using the current use value as the basis for the property for estate tax purposes. The National Grange further supports a personal exemption from federal estate taxes of ten million dollars.

8. The National Grange supports federal tax credits or tax deductions to growers or grower co-operatives that build or own ethanol production facilities.
9. The National Grange supports legislation prohibiting employers from borrowing from an employee's pension fund. The National Grange supports legislation that would place employees or former employees, who had invested in their employers' stock as part of their retirement plan, ahead of payments to other creditors during bankruptcy.
10. The National Grange supports prosecution of cooperative executives and others suspected of illegal actions resulting in a cooperative declaring bankruptcy.
11. The National Grange urges Congress to oppose any future legislation allowing the IRS to implement percentage fees on banking transactions.
12. The National Grange opposes a methane fee or tax and agriculture should remain exempt from any methane fees or taxes that may be levied. (2021)

#### *Personal Income Tax*

1. The National Grange supports developing a simpler and fairer federal income tax code, written in precise, plain and understandable language. We further support simplifying the language that is used in the government's instruction pamphlets for filing individual income taxes.
2. The National Grange favors continuing 5 and 10-year averaging of lump sum distributions of pension funds for income tax purposes.
3. The National Grange favors indexing all federal income tax brackets for inflation.
4. The National Grange supports a 100% tax deduction for all qualified charitable contributions for all federal taxpayers.
5. The National Grange supports equalizing the mileage rates for volunteer services and medical transportation with mileage rates permitted for businesses for tax purposes.
6. The National Grange favors income tax credits for those families who care for their elderly or handicapped relatives, who otherwise would become residents of a nursing home. We further support exempting all benefits paid under Long Term Care insurance from all income taxes.
7. The National Grange supports a federal income tax credit for law enforcement officers for purchasing their own bulletproof vests.
8. The National Grange supports expanding medical flexible spending accounts to allow employees or retirees to set aside part of their pre-tax pay or pension. We further recommend that any unspent medical flexible spending account balance be rolled into the next year's account or refunded to the employee or retiree as taxable income.
9. The National Grange supports a 100% federal income tax deduction for all medical insurance.
10. The National Grange urges Congress to give farmers and ranchers flexibility in the tax code to adjust quickly to estate planning challenges.
11. The National Grange opposes the creation of IRS and Treasury Department authorities that require banks and financial institutions to report the account balance and total income and outflow of all bank accounts, and these departments should be required to obtain a court order to obtain this information. 2021

#### *Sales, Excise Taxes, and Internet*

1. The National Grange opposes the enactment of any national sales tax or any form of value added tax.
2. The National Grange supports federal law prohibiting any charges or taxes on e-mail or the use of the Internet. The National Grange opposes any new or increased excise tax on telecommunications.

#### *Taxes - General*

1. We support the tax treatment of agricultural cooperatives as non-profit entities.
2. The National Grange supports a federal prohibition on the imposition of any tax or fee on water that is drawn from private wells, lakes, and irrigation ponds.
3. The National Grange supports tax policies that will preserve the ability of this nation to find and produce domestic oil and gas resources. We support the current oil import fee and the domestic crude oil fee.
4. The National Grange supports tax exemption for income that is raised by non-profit organizations such as the Grange.
5. We support a further strengthening of the "Taxpayers' Bill of Rights." We support placing the burden of proof on the IRS - not the taxpayer - under due process of law and providing a course of action in which the taxpayer could defend himself and recover his costs and attorney fees should the IRS fail to prove its case. We support giving the taxpayer the right to record all interviews with IRS representatives and to set a reasonable time and place for meetings. We support prohibiting the IRS from sending out bills that are in excess of owed taxes, except for interest and penalties.
6. The National Grange supports the rights of local governments to use tax-exempt municipal financing without further limitations being imposed by Congress.
7. The National Grange supports requiring a two-thirds vote of each House of Congress to increase taxes. We further support federal legislation to explicitly limit the authority of all courts in the United States to order a state or political subdivision to levy or increase taxes as a remedy for any civil litigation.
8. The National Grange opposes any sale of information from individual tax returns to any agency or individual. The National Grange believes that tax preparers should be vigilant in their obligation to comply with the privacy standards of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act and the privacy rules of the Federal Communications Commission.

## CONSERVATION COMMITTEE REPORT

### POLICY STATEMENT

We encourage the responsible stewardship of our natural resources from all who own or use them. We define responsible Stewardship as a balance between use, preservation, and the environmental standards appropriate to the regional needs. Our organization has been a strong advocate for land stewardship. We believe that protection of the environment and the conservation of natural resources are vital. We further believe that education of the public regarding the importance of our natural resources is an absolute necessity. We support current federal guidelines on the control of air and water quality.

The National Grange should continue to advocate for conservation programs. These programs should encourage farmers to operate in an environmentally sound manner, focusing on scientific and technical assistance, research, education, loans, and cost-share programs.

Climate change is receiving attention not only in our nation, but across the globe. The National Grange understands agriculture is a part of the total picture on climate change and the efforts to accomplish Net-Zero greenhouse emissions in the United States. We demand American Agricultural Data, rather than worldwide data, be used to provide a more accurate picture of greenhouse emissions in our nation and that consistent sources of data be used. The National Grange supports the use of Best Management Practices and any mandates on agriculture in regard to reducing emissions be accompanied with economic incentives to lower the impact on our agricultural producers.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is releasing funding for agricultural producers and forest owners to participate in voluntary conservation programs and adopt climate smart practices. The money, made available through the Inflation Reduction Act, will be allocated to four programs administered by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service which accepts applications for its programs year-round in a competitive process.

We recognize that plastic and other non-biodegradable materials are a significant environmental nuisance. The National Grange supports legislation that will promote the use of shorter life plastic and biologically degradable materials.

The National Grange recognizes the unique role agriculture plays in land and environmental management. The National Grange supports transparent disclosure of details of any environmental testing and/or modifications being conducted by any governmental agency. We advocate for greater flexibility in the interpretation of environmental laws to allow for traditional land uses taking into consideration varying environmental situations across the country and encourage agricultural producers to engage in best management practices in all aspects of their operations.

The National Grange supports coordination among Federal, State and Local Governments when developing land use management plans. We urge Congress to include voluntary incentive-based assistance for conservation practices by farmers, ranchers, foresters, developers, and landowners in future Farm Bills, which will maintain a commitment to conservation. In that light, we also urge USDA to ensure that they use only scientifically based research when crafting regulations to implement the conservation portions of the Farm Bill. The optimum result should be that the environment be protected with the least amount of prime, productive farmland taken out of production.

Waters of the United States has emerged again through court rulings and legislative activity, which has the potential to overreach into our farms as it did before. The National Grange continues to stress that navigable waters remain in the definition of the Clean Water Act and will continue to monitor for developments as they occur.

Food waste is a problem to be addressed as approximately half of the food grown in the country is thrown away without being consumed. Environmentalists are concerned because the decay of food in landfills releases methane into the air. The Grange should be involved in efforts to reduce food waste while at the same time helping the environment.

*This Policy Statement covers sections of the President's External Address, Current Policy and Resolution AG-106-ID (transferred to Conservation Committee).*

### INDEX OF RESOLUTIONS

RES. #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
401	ID	Helium	Adopted
404	WA	Federal Funding for Forest Management	Adopted
405	WA	The Proposed Removal of the Lower Snake River Dams	Adopted
408	CA	Replanting Giant Sequoia Seedlings	Adopted

## ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS

### *401-ID – Helium*

WHEREAS: the supply of Helium gas is dwindling, and becoming harder to obtain because it is extracted from natural gas reserves; and

WHEREAS: Helium is not a renewable resource; and

WHEREAS: Helium gas is needed for industrial uses such as healthcare, electronics, and Aerospace; therefore be it

**RESOLVED: that the National Granges support restricting the use of Helium for personal use and maintaining the supply for industrial usages.**

### *404-WA – Federal Funding for Forest Management*

WHEREAS: catastrophic wildfires continue to increase across the Western United States; and

WHEREAS: proper funding for forest management could mitigate the damages created by catastrophic wildfires; and

WHEREAS: there is a bipartisan effort through legislation introduced in the U.S. Congress to increase funding for forest management; therefore be it

**RESOLVED: we support federal funding to the United States Forest Service (USFS) and other federal agencies which would allow the agencies to sustainably manage our nation's forests and reduce the wildfire fuel hazards in our forests; and be it further**

**RESOLVED: we support increased federal funding of the USFS to assist state and local agencies in preparing for wildfire emergencies.**

### *405-WA – The Proposed Removal of the Lower Snake River Dams*

WHEREAS: large, complex projects such as the proposed removal of Lower Snake River dams will produce new benefits and new costs that will not affect all communities equally; and

WHEREAS: the Grange's primary objective is to represent the views of rural residents and the agriculture community; therefore be it

**RESOLVED: the National Grange oppose the removal of any dam in the Columbia/Snake River system; and be it further**

**RESOLVED: we believe any plan to remove any dam in the Columbia/Snake River System must include an equitable and robust economic transition plan for the affected rural and agricultural communities. Any decision-making process must include the feasibility of replacing the dams' services with alternative methods of transportation, recreation, energy, and irrigation.**

### *408-WA – Replanting Giant Sequoia Seedlings*

WHEREAS: The National Park Service (NPS) is seeking input and comment from the public regarding re-establishing tree seedlings in 6 severely burned Giant Sequoia Groves and a nearby endangered fisher habitat in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks which were so affected by the fires that they are unlikely to recover if left to nature; and

WHEREAS: The NPS proposal includes replanting Sequoia seedlings as well as other native mixed conifer seedlings to mimic the natural process that would have taken place if the areas had not experienced severe fire effects during recent catastrophic fires; and

WHEREAS: The NPS is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), is working within the guidelines of the Wilderness Act, and will conform to all resource protection laws once a final decision has been made; and

**RESOLVED: The National Grange supports the efforts of the National Park Service (NPS) to replant sequoia and mixed conifer seedlings in Giant Sequoia groves and endangered species habitats.**

## PRESENT POLICY

### *Clean Air Act*

1. The National Grange supports a clean air policy that will best protect agricultural interests, relieve automotive passengers, freight users and carriers of costly and unnecessary restrictions, and will protect the physical and economic health of industry and the general public.
2. The National Grange proposes that Congress determine state compliance to the Clean Air Act by statute and not by administrative regulations. Until then, we urge state and national administrative flexibility in deadlines for meeting Ambient Air Quality Standards. The National Grange strongly urges the EPA to retain the existing National Ambient Air Quality Standard for ground-level ozone.
3. The National Grange opposes any national mandatory motor vehicle emission inspection and maintenance programs. We oppose any national law or regulation that would require the use of "stand alone" vehicle emission testing facilities. The National Grange supports exempting agricultural equipment and machinery manufactured prior to January 1, 1993 from the current Clean Air Act.
4. The National Grange supports the use of Freon until such a time until safer and more suitable alternatives are found or a proven substitute.
5. The National Grange favors reducing sulfur and nitrogen oxide emissions from coal-burning plants. The National Grange encourages more research into clean technology and revision of EPA standards for use of coal and gas in building new



generating plants. The National Grange opposes any "Cap and Trade" bill or related legislation concerning climate changes that would restrict greenhouse gas emissions.

6. The National Grange opposes adoption of the United Nations Climate Change Treaty or the Kyoto Protocol agreement on greenhouse gas emissions by the United States until uniform standards for greenhouse gas emissions are applied to all major countries, regardless of their economic development. In the meantime, we support the following measures: expansion of voluntary efforts to limit greenhouse gas emissions; scientific research and educational programs on climate; investing in the development and deployment of new technologies and urging utilities to update their older plants bringing them into compliance with the current Clean Air Act.
7. The National Grange supports a program of government incentives that will reduce commuting by private vehicle, increase subsidies for mass transportation or carpooling, and sponsor more research to make alternative energy cars viable.

#### *Clean Water Act and Wetland Management*

1. The National Grange supports federal clean water laws and regulations that are] enforced uniformly between the states. While our goal is a zero percent pollution standard, we understand that this goal is unrealistic and unobtainable.
2. The National Grange recommends that adequate State and Federal funds be provided for any soil or water conservation program required by the Clean Water Act, including at least 75% of the federal cost share on agricultural best management practices (BMPs) for non-point source pollution abatement administered through local conservation districts. The National Grange urges Congress and the President to clarify Clean Water Act Section 303 (d) so that the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) will be reasonable and attainable without extreme hardships placed on agriculture and other industries. Furthermore, the National Grange urges State and Federal Governments to fund conservation programs that will help farmers and municipalities to meet the goals of TMDL, and Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) with regard to the Chesapeake Bay cleanup.
3. The National Grange supports legislation to provide funds to study water quality regarding groundwater contamination. We further support the creation of groundwater protection and management plans that will limit the amount of toxic chemicals in groundwater realizing that a policy of no degradation is unobtainable. We support local control of groundwater management and management plans and support the enforcement of penalties to cities and towns that improperly dump waste in our streams and waterways.
4. The National Grange opposes efforts to require states to designate any watersheds with populations of threatened or endangered species as an Outstanding Resource Watershed that would further impede use of that water by traditional agricultural users.
5. The National Grange supports the US Supreme Court's holdings regarding the Congressional intent of the phrase "navigable waters" as used in the Clean Water Act that limit the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the US Environmental Protection Agency to regulate inland waters and wetlands. We oppose legislative efforts to remove or amend the definition of "navigable waters" in the Clean Water Act.
6. The National Grange supports legislation to improve the wetland regulatory programs by Federal, State and/or Local Governments to streamline the permitting process; delineate wetlands by categories based on readily identifiable natural characteristics, environmental value, function, and abundance; refine the wetland mitigation system; improve the system of compensation for private landowners; and increase the role of the states in the wetland permitting process. We further support exempting wetland designations from areas that are artificially created by irrigation, stock water ponds, fire protection ponds, or have been cropped for one of the last five years.
7. The National Grange supports the creation and funding of the Chesapeake Bay Resilient Farms Initiative, modeled after the Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watershed Initiative.<sup>2021</sup>

#### *Conservation Reserve and Agriculture Conservation Programs*

1. The National Grange supports a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) that will provide long-term solutions to natural resource concerns on our nation's farms. We believe that CRP programs should be integrated with other environmental protection programs and should have a high environmental benefit to the cost-ratio by accepting only highly erodible land for 10 years at a rental rate that is in relationship to its productive value. We believe that the commodity base acres in CRP land should remain as a production reserve and only be transferred to other production acres to meet increased export demand. However, we favor eliminating the offsetting and cross compliance provisions as they relate to the Conservation Reserve Program.
2. The National Grange recommends that the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Farm Service Agency (FSA) enforce the inspection of CRP land for noxious weed control. CRP payments should be withheld from the owners of the CRP tracts that are infested with noxious weeds until the (FSA) or NRCS certifies that the noxious weed control program is being carried out by the landowner. To assist landowners in their responsibility to control noxious weeds, we further urge the USDA (subject to state FSA Committee rules) to change the date, when mowing to control noxious weeds is allowed on CRP lands from July 15 to at least as early as June.
3. The National Grange supports federal funding for soil conservation, including sufficient funding to retain technical assistance for conservation. Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) and CSP (Conservation Stewardship Program) appropriations should be maintained at a level that will significantly help meet the conservation needs of America's farmland. EQIP to complete needed conservation practices and CSP to maintain those practices. Conservation contracts should follow land ownership with penalties assessed for destruction of said practices before the final contract date. In the event any federal conservation cost-share funds are granted to states, all such funds should be made available to farmers

for cost-share payments. EQIP and CSP funds should be used for the cost-sharing program for which they have been appropriated and none of these funds should be diverted for administrative costs of the states' delivery systems.

4. The National Grange urges each State Grange work with their respective Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) agencies implement Nutrient Management Plans (NMP's).
5. The National Grange opposes any legislation or initiative that would require Federal acquisition of private land or water for the preservation of 30% of all land and water by 2030.<sup>2021</sup>

#### *Energy Conservation*

1. The National Grange supports voluntary and economically viable energy conservation for agriculture, industry, commerce, and the home.
2. The National Grange encourages the voluntary "energy efficient" construction of new structures without mandating retrofitting existing structures.
3. The National Grange supports economic assistance to low-income persons and those who are on small, fixed incomes to assist them in paying for the high cost of energy.
4. The National Grange endorses the continuation of state and federal subsidies for home and business generation of solar energy.
5. The National Grange supports all oil and gas price decontrol as a positive step in reducing our need for foreign oil and gas. We oppose any increase in taxes and/or any decrease in tax credits (i.e. depletion allowance) on natural gas and oil production. The National Grange believes that all companies, including farm cooperatives, should be allowed to sell gasoline at both the wholesale and retail levels without divesting. The National Grange supports the following practices to guard against supply uncertainty and unreasonably high prices:
  - a. retain one billion barrels of U.S. oil reserve while supplies are adequate; and
  - b. encourage greater use of natural resources, especially those that are renewable and non-polluting. The National Grange only supports further releases from the U.S. Strategic Oil Reserve in the event of war or interruption of delivery of foreign supplies of petroleum into the U.S.
6. The National Grange supports legislation to direct the U.S. Secretary of Transportation to set fuel economy standards at their maximum feasible level, taking into account technical feasibility, safety, and the economic impact to the public. The National Grange urges increased research and development of more fuel efficient, internal combustion engines.
7. The National Grange supports restricting the use of Helium for personal use and maintaining the supply for industrial uses.<sup>2023</sup>

#### *Energy Development*

1. The National Grange urges the repeal of laws and regulations that have discouraged United States' energy production by private enterprise. We support a national energy policy that will encourage the development of all forms of domestic energy, traditional and alternative in a scientific and environmentally sound manner in order to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. The National Grange believes all domestically produced hydroelectric power should be classified as renewable energy under all applicable Federal and State statutes.
2. The National Grange favors the complete utilization of petroleum and the other mineral resources, including the exploration and production of oil reserves on the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and from any outer continental shelf lease sales in accordance with the terms of an environmentally sound development plan.
3. The National Grange supports legislation requiring the nation's motor fuels to contain a renewable component (Biodiesel and/or Ethanol). We support increased development and use of ethanol and ethyl tertiary butyl ether (ETBE) in gasoline blends with adequate income tax incentives to make the production and use of ethanol and ETBE economically feasible.
4. The National Grange supports the use of hydraulic fracturing for natural gas production in all hydrocarbon-producing strata.
5. The National Grange supports regulated oil and gas production in the United States that protects landowners and allows adequate compensation while allowing production to continue.
6. The National Grange supports an examination and reform of environmental laws so that new oil refineries can be built to supply our fuel needs. We further support a study of the need for different mandated formulations for gasoline, and if possible, a reduction in the number of gasoline blends to make it easier and less expensive to refine and transport the finished product.
7. The National Grange endorses the goal of generating at least 25% of domestic energy needs from domestic renewable resources while continuing to produce safe, abundant and affordable food, feed, and fiber by January 1, 2025.
8. The National Grange urges the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, U.S. Coast Guard, and any other pertinent Federal agencies to develop and strengthen regulations regarding the siting of liquefied natural gas terminals, and consideration should be given to the overall economic impact on the region before any site is approved.
9. The National Grange encourages Congress and/or the Department of Energy to implement a plan to strengthen our electric grid as required to support increased demand on electricity supply that will result from usage of increasing numbers of electric vehicles.<sup>2022</sup>
10. The National Grange seeks legislation incentivizing the solar energy and other alternative energy industries to locate facilities away from productive farmland, and to preserve farmland through sufficient tax credit and zoning incentives, or other inducements.<sup>2022</sup>

#### *Environmental Regulations and Controls*

1. The National Grange supports requiring all appeals or court actions against properly approved and financed federal state or municipal construction projects to post a security bond equal to the projected cost of the project before the appeal or lawsuit may be adjudicated that will, in turn be forfeited if the appeal or lawsuit subsequently fails.
2. The National Grange supports legislation to require that all environmental impact statements under the National Environmental Policy Act must equitably balance and weigh economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts of proposed Federal actions to reduce unnecessary delays on worthwhile and vital projects.
3. The National Grange supports the EPA's standards on the use of dangerous trace metals. We further support continued EPA programs to monitor the industrial and farm uses of materials that contain dangerous trace metals.
4. The National Grange supports new "Right to Farm" laws at the local, state and federal levels to further protect them against charges of civil or criminal violation of environmental regulations when those charges apply to activities that are essential to a normal farm operation in that area.
5. The National Grange urges Congress to maintain the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as an independent federal agency.
6. The National Grange urges USDA to use only scientifically-based research when crafting regulations to implement the conservation title of the Farm Bill.
7. The National Grange opposes any Federal legislation that would restrict the sale or use of any fuel used in a diesel engine for highway usage. <sup>2021</sup>
8. The National Grange urges Congress to oppose the Securities and Exchange Commission's rule that would require public companies to disclose their Scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions as this requirement would impact, and potentially harm the national agriculture industry. <sup>2022</sup>

#### *Federal Grazing*

1. The National Grange supports basing all decisions on Federal Grazing regulations, including grazing fee pricing formulas, upon solid economic principals, current livestock market prices, good conservation practices and extensive public input from existing grazing permittees. We favor legislation that would further limit any overall reduction in grazing to 10% or less on any given allotment except in the case of emergencies such as drought.
2. The National Grange strongly supports considering the economic impact that restrictions on grazing in riparian areas may have on farmers before legislation is passed.
3. The National Grange encourages the Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service to carry out an aggressive program to fill all grazing allotments on Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service lands. However, we support restricting the selling of Federal grazing permits to anyone other than someone using the permit for grazing purposes.

#### *Land Withdrawals and Wilderness*

1. The National Grange supports releasing all public lands not currently designated as Wilderness or Wilderness Study Areas to multiple uses. We oppose any further designations of National Forest lands as wilderness, especially in Alaska. We believe that all public lands suitable for producing commercial timber, farm or grazing resources, commercially valuable minerals, or public recreational facilities (including motorized sports activities) should be precluded from future consideration for wilderness designation and, instead, actively managed to achieve sustainable multiple use goals.
2. The National Grange believes that regulations governing the management of Federal Wilderness areas should allow for controlled access by motorized vehicles in cases of emergency, especially when lives or private property are at stake. We further support the harvest of timber resources from Federal Wilderness areas following natural disasters. We oppose the destruction or obliteration of any Forest Service roads and further oppose designating any roadless areas of the National Forest System as permanently off limits to logging, mining or other development.
3. The National Grange strongly opposes the use of eminent domain or any regulatory property taking via administration designation by any Federal agency to include any private property in any Federal Wilderness area, any part of the Federal Wild and Scenic River System, any part of the American Heritage Rivers Initiative, any land conservation program authorized by an international agreement or treaty or any habitat management area under the Endangered Species Act.
4. The National Grange supports legislation directing mitigation of identified losses of public and private lands from the state tax base due to federal acquisition through transfer of an equivalent acreage from federal land to public or private ownership, or by providing an annual payment-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILT), based on an independent economic impact analysis to be adjusted annually for inflation.

#### *Mining*

1. The National Grange urges Federal agencies to work with the states to develop surface mining guidelines, giving the states the flexibility to control and supervise the surface mining of coal, gravel, and similar materials. To ensure against the destruction of surface mined areas, a performance and a completion bond should be required of the mining companies that would assure the completion of reclamation plans as they are developed. Such plans should require the return of the land where strip mine operations occur to a reasonable topography and fertility level and should be enforced by law. The deposits that are required under Section 402(a) of the Surface Mine Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 should be returned to the states for strip mine reclamation. The National Grange further supports any regulation or law that holds the coal company liable for subsidence damage to structures caused by underground mining.
2. The National Grange supports changes in the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act that recognize the special conditions of small independent mine operations and provides for greater forbearance in correcting violations.

### *Preservation of Fisheries Resources*

1. The National Grange urges the Pacific Marine Fisheries Commission to support the designation of only those marine sanctuaries that guarantee fishery usage and recognize the fishery management authority of the current sanctuary boundaries.
2. The National Grange supports legislation to reauthorize the Magnuson Fisheries Conservation Management Act. We urge all appropriate federal agencies to work closely with all state wildlife agencies to maintain sustained fishing yields by regulating sport and subsistence fisheries in order to allow for the adequate recovery of fish and aquatic species in areas where they have declined. We support the United States working with all countries to regulate commercial fishing to allow for the adequate return of fish into many areas where fish yields have declined. We further support an extension of the U.S. territorial sea to not less than 50 miles where foreign commercial fishing may not be performed. The National Grange favors all reasonable measures to save the Pacific Salmon in the Columbia and Snake Rivers as long as the priority for these river systems is power generation, water use, and navigation. We support securing the passage of a treaty between Canada and the United States to govern the operation of the salmon industries in each respective nation. We support uniform regulation of all net fishing in the Columbia River, Puget Sound, and the Pacific Ocean before drastic economic measures to reestablish wild runs of Pacific Salmon are enacted. The National Grange recommends that fish ladders be included in the planning of any future dam construction on streams or rivers where fish that migration may be affected. We favor the transport of juvenile fish, the hatchery propagation of salmon stocks, flow control, and control of the salmon harvest until a final Pacific Salmon recovery plan is in place. We support the establishment of a program to audit the harvest of salmon on the lower Columbia River. We further believe that all salmon fishing on the Columbia and Snake Rivers should be restricted to hook and line methods only. We recommend to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service that spawned out salmon carcasses be planted near remote site incubators for smolt releases as a food source for the young fish.
3. The National Grange urges the federal government to continue funding the National Marine Fisheries Service at a sufficient level to enable them to continue the biological studies that will lead to the elimination of drift net fishing by all nations.
4. The National Grange supports adequate funding of the Marine Mammal Protection Act for use by the various states in developing appropriate marine mammal management plans and policies. In addition, we urge Congress to exclude Harbor Seals and California Sea Lions from the Marine Mammal Protection Act and place them under the control and protection of the states, including a controlled harvest season for Harbor Seals and California Sea Lions, until the yearly run of the Pacific Salmon increases to the point where the salmon will no longer be considered for protection under the Endangered Species Act.
5. The National Grange supports research and long-term solutions to prevent the introduction and the spread of invasive and/or destructive aquatic organisms as well as the necessary destruction of established populations of these species such as, but not limited to, Asian Carp and *Pfiesteria*. We support legislation requiring all shipping lines to change their ballast water in the open ocean to curtail the further introduction of foreign species, such as the Zebra Mussel, into our domestic waterways.
6. The National Grange favors the regulated harvesting of freshwater clams and mussels.
7. The National Grange supports legislative and regulatory measures to prohibit the National Marine Fisheries Service from taking control of private lands, breaching of dams, and killing of hatchery salmon under the authority of its 4 (d) Rules. The National Grange urges Congress to order the National Marine Fisheries Service to reconsider the proposed setbacks on private property along all bodies of water or to pay for the taking of the property. We urge Congress to intervene and formulate a true scientific basis for establishment of buffers/setbacks and buffer/setback restrictions along all bodies of water. We encourage the National Marine Fisheries Service do more to start identifying corrective measures beyond licensing and regulation to save the fish off our nation's coasts that include avoiding by catch, single-species management, ocean sanctuaries, eco-friendly gear, and consumer alertness. We further believe that alternative sources of fish production i.e. aquaculture, should be encouraged where appropriate.

### *Private Land Use, Planning, Zoning, and Eminent Domain*

1. The National Grange urges the USDA, in conjunction with land grant universities, to provide assistance to local governments and citizen groups in educating the public on the importance of keeping land in agricultural production and in developing farmland retention programs which protect the rights of landowners and the prerogatives of local governments. The National Grange supports land use planning and zoning remaining a function of local and state governments.
2. The National Grange urges that the transfer of development rights be used to protect family farms. Whenever land is designated for permanent agricultural use, farmers should receive adequate compensation for the loss in land value.
3. The National Grange urges the Farm Service Agency or any other agency not to relinquish the use of any farmlands, wetlands, or other lands to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or any other government agency.
4. The National Grange supports efforts to improve locally controlled site-specific resource and environmental management in the Columbia Basin.
5. The National Grange supports legislation reaffirming congressional power over international agreements concerning disposal, management and use of lands owned by the United States and also protects state powers, from federal actions designating lands to international agreements.
6. The National Grange supports legislation to mandate that when private property is acquired for a specific purpose by any federal agency through eminent domain, condemnation, foreclosure or negotiated price, and the property is subsequently not needed or used for the specific purpose it was acquired for, the original owner shall have first right of repurchase at either the original price or the current market price, whichever is less.

7. We support legislation that eminent domain be used only for public purposes, such as rights of way for transportation and utilities.
8. The National Grange urges the federal government to replace, whenever possible, condemned private land with public land of equal value/productivity, and to maintain a balance between public and private lands throughout the nation.
9. The National Grange supports changing laws so that, in points of controversy, private property rights take precedence over environmental regulations.
10. The National Grange supports legislation to prohibit the Federal Government or any agency or authority of the Federal Government from exercising its power of eminent domain to be used for private economic development unless there is an immediate danger to the health and/or safety of citizens. Furthermore, the National Grange supports federal legislation to require that no state, political subdivision of a state or any person or entity to which such power has been delegated shall exercise its power of eminent domain, for the purpose of private economic development or over property that is subsequently used for economic development unless there are situations of immediate danger to the health and/or safety of citizens. Any state or political subdivision that exercises the power of eminent domain for private economic development shall be ineligible for any federal economic development funds for any purpose for a period of at least two years.

#### *Private Timber Land Management*

1. The National Grange supports the use of best management practices (BMPs) and sustained yield management practices on private forestlands. The National Grange believes that in return for public benefits resulting from improved forest management on individually owned forest lands. Any forest management assistance programs should recognize the multiple use aspects of private forest lands, including timber production, watershed protection, wildlife habitat, recreation, and scenic values.
2. The National Grange requests Congress to control arbitrary appeals of U.S. Forest Service timber sales assessing penalties to the appellant to cover the costs of failed appeals. We further support legislation to require each appeal of a timber sale to post a security bond equal to the value of the timber sale before the appeal may be adjudicated that will, in turn, be forfeited if the appeal subsequently fails.

#### *Public Lands Management Practices*

1. The National Grange believes that multiple use of non-reserved land should be the cornerstone of the United States' public land policy in order to achieve the following objectives: energy exploration and development; sustained yield management for food and forest production; recreational uses for all citizens; responsible wildlife management; soil conservation and watershed protection.
2. The National Grange supports the maintenance of appropriate conservation practices on all public lands leased to private individuals yet will continue to support placing a moratorium on the acquisition of private land by the U.S. Forest Service. The National Grange recommends that a user fee be implemented for all commercial and recreational use of federal land requiring a permit.
3. The National Grange supports prescribed burning on public forestlands as a forest management technique to reduce uncontrolled fires on public lands. We oppose public forest management plans that include the use of natural, uncontrolled forest fires as a forest management technique. After a major natural forest fire, we support a maximum two-year administrative deadline for applicable Federal State and Local forest management agencies to formulate a forest recovery plan and complete all appeals. We support expedited restorative actions, such as reforestation and harvest of dead or dying timber resources as part of every forest recovery plan.
4. The National Grange supports sufficient appropriations for the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service to sustainably manage our nation's forests, reduce wildfire fuel hazards, assist state and local agencies prepare for wildfire emergencies,<sup>2023</sup> adequately carry out an expanded silviculture program, wildlife management, water and soil protection, weed control, recreational needs, protection of natural, historic and cultural resources, to develop additional forest campgrounds and increase the available spaces in existing campgrounds to keep them open year-round where economically feasible. We also urge that U.S. Forest Service campground fees be raised to more nearly cover the costs of operating these campgrounds.
5. The National Grange favors the increased planting of lumber-producing trees on both national and state forest lands, including increased funding for Federal and State tree nurseries, to produce additional seedlings for timber. We urge the U.S. Forest Service to permit selected timber stands to reach old growth and be harvested on a sustained yield basis. Furthermore, we support prohibiting states from exercising authority to restrict the sale or export of logs that are harvested from State-owned land.
6. The National Grange recognizes the states' rights to own and/or manage Bureau of Land Management (BLM) unreserved lands, not including National Forest lands. Revenues that are received by counties should be protected when control of any Federal land is assigned to State Governments.
7. The National Grange supports legislation to require Federal and State Governments to pay a proportionate share of monies, in lieu of taxes, to those counties, cities, and communities that provide public services to the parks and recreational areas within their boundaries. In addition, the Grange supports Federal legislation allowing National Parks to keep a major portion of entrance fees to be used for the development and maintenance of recreational facilities.
8. The National Grange calls on Federal, State, and Local Law Enforcement Agencies to investigate and prosecute incidents of tree and trail spiking and the destruction of logging equipment on Federal and State Lands.
9. The National Grange supports amending the National Antiquities Act to include public comment before any regulation or Executive Order designating any additional public land as a National Antiquity becomes effective.

10. The National Grange supports a policy that any responding agency to a fire, whether it is local, state or federal, be required to notify adjacent landowners and other authorities with jurisdiction, for their own safety, of all wild and grass fires in the area.
11. The National Grange supports the use of state and/or federal funds to reimburse small landowners for the mitigation of loss of land values due to any state or federal logging restrictions on private lands.
12. The National Grange opposes the creation of the Owyhee Canyonlands Monument in Oregon and Idaho.

#### *Recycling*

1. The National Grange supports legislation that would require a deposit on non-biodegradable beverage containers and urges manufacturers to use recycled materials.
2. The National Grange supports requiring all government agencies to initiate a recycling program for paper, metal, glass, etc. Government agencies should also be required to use recycled paper whenever feasible. The National Grange supports a review of recycling agricultural plastic wastes, such as Cornell University's Recycling Agricultural Plastics Project (RAPP), and encourages funding from the USDA for this type of research in order to help all American farmers with this concern.
3. The National Grange supports legislation requiring the use of biodegradable feedstocks in all appropriate consumer-based products such as retail plastic bags, product packaging, diapers and packing materials. We support legislation to require single-use and short-life plastic products and packaging to be manufactured with biodegradable ingredients that will completely degrade within three years when exposed in a biologically active environment. The National Grange encourages the use of alternative bags such as canvas, cotton, mesh, biodegradable paper, or other biodegradable products. We urge all manufacturers to reduce their use of packing materials in their consumer products.
4. The National Grange supports efforts to restrict the disposal of tires in landfills. We support additional efforts to recycle used tires to recover valuable petrochemical feedstocks and to utilize recycled tires in road and other construction projects.

#### *Rural Electric Cooperatives, Public Power and Rural Electricity Consumers*

1. The National Grange supports the continued application of the existing preference concept of the Federal Power Act being granted to public power utilities in the licensing and re-licensing of Federal hydroelectric facilities. We further support granting co-preference in the licensing and re-licensing of federal hydroelectric facilities to rural electric cooperatives.
2. In order to assure adequate electric, telephone and broadband service to rural areas, the National Grange supports continuation and expansion of the existing USDA Rural Utility Service low interest revolving loan fund to assure the financial stability of rural electric and telephone cooperatives.
3. The National Grange supports continuing electric service to urban areas that are within a rural electric cooperative's service area. However, rural electric cooperatives that provide electric service to predominantly rural areas should continue to have first priority for low interest federal financing. In addition, we urge the electricity industry to charge rates for farmers and small businessmen that are competitive with their large wholesale customers.
4. We support maintaining the current structure of rural electric systems without forced deregulation of publicly owned plants or any other action that would be detrimental to rural electric consumers. The National Grange supports reform to the Public Utilities Regulatory Policies Act, so that non-utility generating stations operate to sell their output at competitive market rates. The National Grange supports requirements for increased accountability and responsibility on the part of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and power companies in the operation of any nuclear power plant. The National Grange supports the careful selection by the Department of Energy of sites for the disposal of low-level nuclear wastes, excluding prime agricultural, forest, and parkland. The National Grange supports efforts to open the Yucca Mountain site [~~in 2020~~] for the storage of nuclear waste and opposes actions to delay the project. We urge that the public be involved in the decision to conduct additional research on the long-term consequences to the environment of the disposal of nuclear wastes. The National Grange further urges the Department of Energy to conduct an extensive educational program to inform citizens of the safeguards and hazards that are involved in the disposal of these wastes.
5. The National Grange opposes the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's imposition of a Regional Transmission Organization (RTO) and Standard Market Design (SMD) on the Northwest Region of the U.S. We support the present cost-based rate system, as determined in the 1937 Congressional Bonneville Power Administration repayment agreement; requiring Bonneville Power Administration to adopt for pricing electricity, instead of a market-based repayment pricing system. We support the present Federal Power Marketing Administrations. We further recommend the establishment of Power Marketing Administrations in areas of the United States where desired and feasible. We vigorously oppose selling the Western Area Power Administration and Bonneville Power Administration to private power companies. The National Grange also supports the allowance of the Northwest Region to develop an alternate approach to strengthening the transmission system.
6. The National Grange urges the U.S. Government to engage in diplomatic negotiations on the environmental impacts that contribute to air and water pollution before permitting the transfer of electricity across the borders into the United States.

#### *Soil Conservation and Non-Point Source Pollution*

1. The National Grange supports voluntary programs to control specific known point sources of pollution, as well as non-point sources of agricultural pollution. We support the concept of conservation tillage practices and other types of sediment control. We believe that irrigation and agricultural drainage practices should be recognized as soil and water conservation practices. We encourage broad participation in the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act studies in order to assure that quality, locally designed and controlled conservation programs are developed in order to meet the needs of family farmers. We support programs offering at least 50% cost share assistance for establishing grass strip boundaries and other

soil conservation best practices, as well as technical assistance, as the primary means of correcting agricultural non-point source pollution problems. We also support programs offering at least 50% cost-share assistance to correct agricultural pollution and free technical assistance prior to non-income producing practices that require major expenditures. The National Grange will raise awareness about regenerative agriculture and encourage practices to minimize on-farm inputs while building capacity for future production.

2. The National Grange opposes the sole use of uniform federal government farm pollution policies and supports that each state, or region, continue to maintain their own farm pollution policies that are unique to their industry and geography.
3. The National Grange supports the privately financed National Endowment for Soil and Water Conservation, the American Conservation Corps, as well as vocational programs to educate and train youths to help in the conservation of our woodlands with sustainable forests and arboreal practices and other natural resources, using presently established facilities. We believe that all citizens should share in soil conservation costs through tax dollars that support State and Federal programs focusing on technical assistance, research, education, loans and cost sharing programs.
4. The National Grange supports locally developed storm water management programs administered through local conservation districts.

#### *Toxic and Hazardous Wastes*

1. The National Grange supports a program to educate consumers on the proper handling and disposal of hazardous household waste, such as energy saver light bulbs and any other items containing mercury.
2. The National Grange supports realistic insurance coverage plans being made available by the Federal Government at a reasonable cost for existing and future storage tanks and other potential sources of toxic and hazardous waste pollution.
3. The National Grange supports legislation that would require urban sewer sludge disposal to be strictly regulated, i.e. knifing or ground injection as used in agriculture. We only support burning if such burning meets EPA air quality standards.
4. National Grange supports federal legislation prohibiting the dumping of waste material or raw sewage from foreign countries in landfills located in the United States.
5. The National Grange supports continued research on non-toxic materials in preparing pressure-treated wood for building materials.
6. The National Grange supports public education of the dangers of sodium azide and legislation to set guidelines for the proper storage or disposal of all unused airbags.
7. The National Grange supports the current exemptions for family farmers from the EPA's Toxic Spill Prevention Containment and Control regulations.

#### *Water Projects, Irrigation and Reclamation Reform Act, State Authority for Water Rights*

1. The National Grange recommends that federal, state, and local governments work closely with each other and local landowners in the development and construction of watershed projects, dams, and reservoirs for multiple uses, such as flood control, storing and releasing surplus flood water, replenishing underground water, hydroelectric power generation, irrigation, industrial and municipal use, and recreation. We urge both Congress and the President to make the necessary funds available in order to complete all planned and feasible federal water development projects and provide cost-share assistance for the rehabilitation of dams and other flood control structures that were previously constructed with Federal Assistance. The National Grange supports efforts to provide State and Federal funds to pay the recreational share of impoundment facilities on small water development projects.
2. The National Grange believes that the Federal Government should compensate any loss or diminution of water rights resulting from the exercise of a federally reserved right.
3. The National Grange supports legislation to consolidate the activities of the Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior to eliminate duplication.
4. The National Grange supports local control over State Water Projects.
5. The National Grange supports a national water policy requiring all alternate sources of water, including full development of desalination plants for urban uses, must be considered before approval of any water diversion project.
6. The National Grange supports the use of existing multi-purpose dams, creating possible draw-downs or transfers of water from productive agricultural lands to waters that could possibly assist in flushing young salmon to the ocean, and urge the development of alternative methods of enhancing fish populations including salmon.
7. The National Grange requests the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and all environmental agencies to facilitate restorative dredging of rivers prone to flooding.
8. The National Grange supports maintaining minimum water levels along the Great Lakes in order to support commerce, hydroelectric production and tourism in the region. We support accurate monitoring of water drawn from the Great Lakes Water Basin for agricultural, industrial and residential uses. We support only allowing those states and provinces that belong to the International Joint Commission on the Great Lakes to be authorized to allow permitting to remove and use waters of the Great Lakes. However, we also believe that agriculture entities should be exempt from any permits or fees for removing water from the Great Lakes.
9. The National Grange supports irrigation rules and regulations that prohibit abuse of the Reclamation Reform Act and assure the fullest measure of benefits from Federal Irrigation Projects for family farmers. The National Grange supports the continued development and widespread utilization of more efficient irrigation systems in addition to legislation outlawing the practice of using trusts, partnerships, corporations, and estates to circumvent the 960-acre irrigation subsidy qualification that favors small farmers.

10. The National Grange will actively work to preserve the way of life of the Klamath Basin farming community of Oregon and California. We support reversing the decisions of the Ninth Federal Circuit and permanently restoring the flow of irrigation water from Klamath Lake to the farmers and farm communities served by the irrigation system. We further oppose any efforts to remove water storage and electrical generation capacity from the Klamath River Basin system. We call on Congress to convene a local working group to draft a viable Klamath Basin Restoration Plan and then fund that plan for the benefit of the entire Klamath Basin community.
11. The National Grange vigorously supports state control of water rights. We oppose any federal plan that infringes on states' water rights. In particular, any water resource planning that is conducted by State or Federal Agencies must respect both the states' sovereignties and the agricultural sector in establishing priorities for water allocations. The National Grange firmly opposes the inter-basin transfer of water that would alter the flow of water into downstream states unless such transfer is dictated in an approved river basin compact.
12. The National Grange supports legislation to further develop water desalination technology. (2021)
13. The National Grange opposes the commodification of waters rights and supports Federal legislation that bans speculative trading in water rights. <sup>2021</sup>

#### *Wildlife Management*

1. The National Grange encourages Congress to amend the Endangered Species Act (ESA) to restore proper perspective by requiring public hearings and economic impact statements on the impacts to the affected areas before a species may be listed. We support changes to the ESA to require that only a pure biological and numerical definition of an endangered species be used without being based on subspecies, distinct populations, or hybridization. We believe that only those species actually threatened with extinction should be listed in the ESA, taking into consideration total populations, available habitats, and recovery areas on the North American continent. We further support a review of the ESA with the following guidelines: focus on keystone species (organisms critical to the stable functions of entire habitats and ecosystems), not minor or reduced species; rely on public lands for preservation; encourage voluntary protection by individuals and corporations; curtail taking of private lands for ESA; balance human costs with ecological benefits; compensation for private property owners for loss of usage of their property due to the ESA.
2. The National Grange supports legislation legally allowing people to defend themselves or their property from an attack by any animal listed as an endangered species without concern of retribution from government authorities.
3. The National Grange supports legislative and regulatory measures to prohibit further implementation of any Wolf Recovery Plan. We further support the passage of legislation to outlaw the propagation of wolves or wolf hybrids.
4. The National Grange supports the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as the chief administrator of the National Bison Range.
5. The National Grange believes it is the responsibility of the Federal Government to control the expanding populations of legally protected plants and animals where those plants or animals pose a threat to human life or health, or where those plants or animals pose a threat to established economic activity. We encourage State and Federal Wildlife Conservation Agencies to assist farmers in all cases of crop and property damage by wild game.
6. The National Grange is opposed to any Grizzly Bear recovery plan. We support legislation requiring government agencies to notify property owners when they relocate park bears or other potentially dangerous animals.
7. The National Grange strongly supports the continuation of licensed hunting and trapping of game animals, waterfowl, and game birds. However, we favor the levying of stiff penalties for poaching of wildlife. We further support the continued usage of steel jaw traps.
8. The National Grange believes that wildlife management areas should not be used for recreation or any other development that diminishes the value of the lands for wildlife management purposes.
9. The National Grange supports legislation to expand the hunting season of Canada and Snow geese from November 1st - April 1st. We also support increasing the daily bag limit for Canada and Snow geese.
10. The National Grange supports any prairie dog management plan that allows people to control the prairie dog population through shooting and toxicants, without the need for a special license.
11. The National Grange opposes the listing of the Eastern Oyster on the endangered species list.
12. The National Grange opposes forcing dams to spill spring waters in an unproven effort to help salmon.

#### *Miscellaneous*

1. The National Grange will raise awareness about regenerative agriculture encourage practices to minimize on-farm inputs while building capacity for future production.
2. The National Grange supports efforts of the National Park Service to replant sequoia and mixed conifer seedlings in Giant Sequoia groves and endangered species habitats. <sup>2023</sup>
3. The National Grange opposes the removal of any dam in the Columbia/Snake River system, and any plan to remove any dam must include an equitable and robust economic transition plan for the affected rural and agricultural communities, and any decision-making process must include the feasibility of replacing the dam's services with alternative methods of transportation, recreation, energy and irrigation. <sup>2023</sup>



## POLICY STATEMENT

### EDUCATION

#### Balanced Approach

The purpose of education is to open the minds of people to the world around them, to the lessons of the past, and the possibilities of the future. An understanding of the past and how it has shaped our present and future is a part of education that is too often neglected.

We encourage school systems and all students to put the same emphasis on the possibility of exploring vocational training as well as college preparation.

Current events have highlighted the need for local school systems to have standard tools for virtual learning, especially with regard to economically challenged students. Granges should explore the possibilities of working with their school systems to make Grange Halls available as Wi-Fi hotspots, and work with other groups that might provide financial assistance to this initiative.

We support 'K-12 Bridge to Broadband', a collaboration including the non-profit group 'Education Superhighway' and National Telecommunication Cooperatives Association (NTCA), The Rural Broadband Association. This is a national effort to connect more students for remote and hybrid learning.

We encourage and support legislation that provides funding for free quality meals for all school students in pre-k through 12th grade across the United States, to strengthen all students and the future of our country.

We feel that the National Grange shall support the restoration of the exemption of family farms and small businesses under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (501-CA)

#### Loans and Aid

Many teachers and mental health counselors undertook their career education under the auspices of federal programs that offered student loan forgiveness if specific conditions were met. However, these programs have sometimes been administered in a capricious and uneven manner, leaving many who followed the rules in good faith with unexpected, significant debt. We believe this is a situation that calls for reason and compassion on the part of the program administrators.

The cost of education continues to increase, and student debt is now the second largest category of consumer debt overall in the U.S. Targeted forgiveness programs for federal student loans can offer relief to some students and needed support for some sectors of the labor market. We favor such targeted loan forgiveness programs with specific requirements. However, we do not support blanket loan forgiveness.

Since the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 and the 1946 George-Barden Act, focused federal aid for agricultural, industrial, and home economics training for high school students, our federal government has to some degree had a hand in funding public education. Thus, the funding of public education has become a partnership between federal and state/local, but we reaffirm the importance of state and local control.

Private providers of higher education are major recipients of federal financial aid and should be held accountable for their academic standards and advertised employment outcomes. We are opposed to any weakening of regulation of private education providers.

#### Mental Health and Safety

Many social problems in schools arise from bullying, feelings of disenfranchisement and isolation among at-risk students. Schools must find ways to increase the availability of counseling for all students, and proactively engage with marginalized and at-risk young people. We strongly encourage Grange members nationwide to play an active role in their local school systems and communities. It is essential for our members to invest in our children's education through volunteering.

#### Hearing Aids

Though hearing aids are now available over the counter without prescription, we believe consumers should still consult with licensed audiologists to determine specific needs and be advised regarding which types of devices will be most suitable for them, how to properly fit and wear hearing aids, and even whether hearing aids will actually benefit them.

#### Battery Safety

The National Grange urges policy makers to give the Consumer Products Safety Commission the authority to protect consumers from the dangers connected to lithium-ion and other types of high energy density batteries. (515-NY)

### HEALTH

#### PFAS

PFAS are man-made perfluoroalkyl or polyfluoroalkyl substances having at least one fully fluorinated carbon atom. They are used in non-stick treatments, to treat material for water resistance, and in fire suppression among other uses. PFAS are persistent chemicals that have been found to have a host of dangerous health effects including cancer, liver damage, decreased fertility and increased risk of asthma and thyroid disease. These chemicals may be in to-go food containers, as waterproofing on clothing, or in fire suppression foams. The impact of these chemicals on our health must be studied further and the public made aware of the dangers.

#### Controlled Substances

We understand that opioids serve a needed place in pain management when properly prescribed by a physician. However, the opioid abuse crisis continues to plague our country. A multi-pronged approach is needed and must include continued study of the benefits of opioid painkillers as compared to alternative pain management strategies; improved prescription strategies such as limiting the number of pills issued per renewal; proper security of our prescription drugs in our

homes; and proper disposal of unused or outdated prescription medications through recognized drug take-back programs or disposal programs. These are all efforts that local Granges can and should promote in their communities.

The dangers of nicotine are well-known but what is less obvious are the ways nicotine is still being marketed. The nicotine content of tobacco products can be artificially enhanced which increases the health impacts and risk of addiction. Nicotine is also marketed in non-tobacco candy-like products such as gummies. We believe the nicotine content of tobacco products should be strictly regulated, as should the advertising and sale of any nicotine products resembling candies or other products potentially attractive to children.

Titanium dioxide (TiO<sub>2</sub>) is a substance that has been used by artists to make a bright white pigment. It is also used to whiten food products such as white frosting and to brighten the colors of other products such as the candy Skittles. TiO<sub>2</sub> was initially approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 1966 but as of 2021 it has been banned in foods by the European Food Safety Authority. We urge the FDA to fast-track research into the negative effects of TiO<sub>2</sub>.

#### Family Friendly Workplaces

We support paid parental leave and working with businesses to build a comprehensive policy that benefits both the employee and employer.

#### Affordable and Effective Health Care.

The National Grange recommends that the medical research community, drug manufacturers and the federal government cooperate to develop and approve new effective preventative vaccines. (President's External Address)

We encourage bipartisan efforts by Congress to continue health care reform, identifying solutions that provide high quality and affordable healthcare for all Americans.

Enforcement of existing laws regulating transparency and simplicity in the healthcare system should be made a priority. For example, in- and out-of-network access and cost differentials continue to be a problem. Disconnects between doctor and hospital networks are aggravating and unhelpful—especially when they result in surprise medical bills that appear due to hidden gaps in coverage.

Consumer education should also be a priority. For example, some supplemental insurance policies limit or do not cover skilled nursing care coverage, and people should be able to advocate for that when necessary.

We encourage efforts towards lowering prescription drug prices but doing so by purchasing such drugs from Canada or certain European countries may not be the answer. We cannot assume that drugs manufactured outside the United States are safe.

Congress must take steps to address unaffordable out-of-pocket costs in Medicare Part D and expand Part D coverage to include a broader range of immunizations.

We join with other groups including the American Psychological Association, the Farmer Veteran Coalition and other rural agricultural organizations in asking Congress to fully fund the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network which seeks to address the high rate of farm suicides.

The medical research community, drug manufacturers and the federal government must expedite the development and approval of new effective preventive vaccines to immunize our vulnerable at-risk populations against serious disease.

The National Grange supports the inclusion of funding in the Farm Bill to build a program to provide farm and rural families access to affordable childcare in their communities.

The National Grange supports the reauthorization and expansion resulting in increased funding of the National Agricultural Crisis Hotline in efforts to provide 24/7 access to trained responders in response to the nationwide rural mental health crisis. (President's external address)

The National Grange supports that Congress directs the Veterans Administration (VA) to increase treatment options for veterans with mental health issues. (524-WA)

#### Promoting Health of Minors

Nutrition is an essential building block for health. We support the concept of sending unserved food from school cafeterias home with needy students, assuming proper food safety concerns can be addressed. Also related to school lunches, different age groups have different appetite levels. In the interest of promoting healthy portions and minimizing food waste, we encourage the National School Lunch Program to change recommended portion sizes according to grade levels. E-cigarettes have emerged as a serious public health question, with illness and deaths from their use being reported across the country. While the debate continues about new regulations surrounding these products, legislation or public service campaigns are needed to educate youth about the dangers of using e-cigarettes and associated products.

School systems that are considering the offering of the Educated Choices Program to their students should include research and information that shows that a diet containing animal products is essential to a healthy, well-balanced diet, and also includes information why animal agriculture is good for the environment, and include the steps that animal agriculture has taken to reduce and prevent animal cruelty and abuse.

Childhood immunizations such as the Measles, Mumps Rubella (MMR) vaccine continue to bring passionate feelings, especially when proposals arise to make them mandatory for all children. We recognize that such proposals may not be practical under the civil liberties established in the U.S. Constitution. However, we suggest that even more effort should then be made to educate the public on this issue using valid science-based information.

#### Drug Pricing

National Grange Supports Pharmacy Benefit Manager Reform as being necessary oversight so that cost savings are passed along to the consumer. (President's External Address)

#### Cancer Research

It has been long-standing Grange policy to support research into the causes and treatments of all types of cancer. We encourage Congress to increase funding for cancer research.

The National Grange to supports the American Cancer Society and like organizations in requesting that April be recognized as Cancer Control Month. (506-MD)

#### Health Data

The National Grange supports legislation that would extend the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) to guarantee the privacy of our information related to our health. (514-NY)

#### RetireSafe

The National Grange should continue to partner with RetireSafe on appropriate initiatives.

*Covers 501-CA, 515-NY, 521-PA, 524-WA, 506-MD, 514-NY and portions of the President's External Address*

## INDEX OF RESOLUTIONS

RES. #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
502	CT	Healthcare Security	Adopted
504	DE	Disclosure of Inactive Ingredients in Prescription Medication	Adopted
505	ID	Support End Diaper Need Act	Adopted
510	NY	Ban Red #3 Dye	Adopted
511	NY	Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2018	Adopted
512	NY	High Levels of Caffeine in Energy Drinks	Adopted
516	NY	Medicare Coverage for Diabetic Sensor/Reader Appliance	Adopted
517	NY	National Agricultural Crisis Hotline	Adopted
518	NY	Preventing Maternal Deaths Reauthorization Act	Adopted
519	NY	The Ensuring Access to Lifesaving Drugs Act	Adopted
522	TX	Expansion of Mental Health Care	Adopted
525	WA	Standardization of Food Sell Date Usage	Adopted

## ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS

### ***502-CT – Healthcare Security***

WHEREAS: the recent cyber-attack on Prospect Medical Holdings crippled healthcare in the Eastern Connecticut Healthcare Network (ECHN) and healthcare in many states where Prospect has holdings; and

WHEREAS: for almost a month the attack has halted many hospital services, diagnostic testing, surgeries, and access to medical records by health care providers and patients due to computer systems being down; and

WHEREAS: many laboratories, diagnostic facilities and providers were forced to halt providing services; and

WHEREAS: denied access to healthcare can be life altering, even life threatening; and

WHEREAS: protected healthcare information has been obtained by hackers in a massive data theft, and

WHEREAS: the safety of our medical records and health care computer systems are the safety of our health, and

WHEREAS: the Federal Department of Health and Human Services warns that Rysida (the known worldwide cyber-extortion group) has proven itself to be a significant threat to organizations worldwide; therefore be it

**RESOLVED: that the National Grange urge Congress to enact legislation requiring all health care providers and medical companies have tight security measures in place to protect the safety of healthcare, health records and that there be strict penalties in place due to negligence to comply with this law.**

### ***504-DE – Disclosure of Inactive Ingredients in Prescription Medication***

WHEREAS: Prescription medications are not subject to the same regulations as over-the-counter medications regarding inactive ingredients that help stabilize the active drug or aid in its absorption; and

WHEREAS: Over-the-counter medications are required to list their inactive ingredients while prescription medications are not and do not list inactive ingredients either on the manufacturer's bottle or the consumer prescription label; and

WHEREAS: Some people have allergies to the inactive ingredients and need access to this information as some reactions can be severe or lead to death; and

WHEREAS: If you currently go to your Pharmacist and ask for the ingredient list for your medication, they cannot tell you and must contact the company that makes the drug; and

WHEREAS: Companies consider the inactive ingredients proprietary, even though they are common ingredients and there is a rise in allergic reactions to common ingredients among people; therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** that the National Grange lobbies lawmakers to pass a law requiring pharmaceutical companies to list inactive ingredients in medications for both the Pharmacy and the consumer, as they are already doing for over-the-counter medications.

***505-ID – Support End Diaper Need Act***

WHEREAS: Diapers are an essential item not covered by WIC, SNAP, or other government programs; and

WHEREAS: Bundles of Joy Diaper Banks across the nation and many others have seen an increase in need in the last year as prices for food, diapers, and other items have increased. Almost 47% of families reported diaper needs in 2023; and

WHEREAS: Recently, The Duckworth End Diaper Need Act of 2023 (S. 2879) was introduced in the U.S. Senate and the Lee-DeLauro End Diaper Need Act of 2023 (H.R. 5644) was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives. These bills would create \$200 million in funding focused on ending diaper need throughout the U.S. Ending diaper need promotes better health outcomes for children and economic outcomes for their families. (Source National Diaper Bank network); therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** The National Grange strongly support the End Diaper Need Act of 2023 and we ask our elected officials to support this legislation.

***510-NY – Ban Red #3 Dye***

WHEREAS: the Food and Drug Administration has been aware of multiple studies showing that erythrosine also known as FD&C Red #3 dye causes cancer in animals, and the agency banned its use in cosmetics more than 30 years ago; and

WHEREAS: Red #3 dye has also been linked to hyperactivity and other neurobehavioral effects in children; and

WHEREAS: it is still allowed in food, medicines, and supplements, and the Environmental Working Groups food database lists more than 2,900 food products that contain it; and

WHEREAS: Consumer Reports and more than 20 other advocacy groups have petitioned the Food and Drug Administration to ban the use of Red #3 dye in anything that humans ingest; therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** that the National Grange requests the Food and Drug Administration ban the use of erythrosine, otherwise known as FD&C Red #3 dye, in any products used for human consumption.

***511-NY – Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act***

WHEREAS: the original law was well intentioned and fixed a longstanding oversight regarding eligibility for claims and benefits for Blue Water Vietnam War Veterans by granting presumptive benefits status to those who were exposed to Agent Orange. However, it only covers veterans who served on vessels within twelve (12) nautical miles off the coast of Vietnam and Cambodia; and

WHEREAS: this excludes veterans who served beyond this arbitrary boundary yet were also potentially exposed to Agent Orange; therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** that the National Grange strongly supports legislation to amend the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2018 by eliminating the nautical mile limitation to include United States Navy and Marine Corps veterans who were assigned to the Vietnam theater of combat operation or received the Vietnam Service medal.

***512-NY – High Levels of Caffeine in Energy Drinks***

WHEREAS: Congress called on the Food and Drug Administration to investigate the potentially dangerous levels of caffeine in an influencer backed energy drink, “PRIME,”; and

WHEREAS: “PRIME” has become something of an obsession and status symbol among young followers; and

WHEREAS: there are a number of energy drinks with elevated levels of caffeine; in “PRIME’s” case, 200 milligrams per 12 ounces is equivalent to about have a dozen “Cokes” or nearly 2 “Red Bulls;” therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** that the National Grange supports any proposed legislation for the Food and Drug Administration investigation of the health effects of the high levels of caffeine in energy drinks.

***516-NY – Medicare Coverage for Diabetic Sensor/Reader Appliance***

WHEREAS: people who have been diagnosed with diabetes are encouraged to use a “continuous glucose monitoring device” (CGM) to record their blood glucose levels instead of the “finger stick” method; and

WHEREAS: the CGM device covers a 28-day cycle; and

WHEREAS: Medicare will only cover this prescription every 30-days; and

WHEREAS: this coverage by Medicare causes a lapse in the number of days for a diabetic person to be covered with a CGM device thereby forcing “finger sticks;” therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** that the National Grange urge Medicare to review its policy regarding the coverage of the diabetic “continuous glucose monitoring device” (CGM) and change its prescription coverage to allow refills every 28 days rather than 30 days.

#### ***517-NY – National Agricultural Crisis Hotline Act***

WHEREAS: New York farmers face tremendous stressors such as devastating storms, volatile commodity prices, debt, isolation, and the ever-present risk of losing their farms and their livelihoods; and

WHEREAS: Senator Kirsten Gillibrand announced legislation to establish the National Agricultural Crisis Hotline Act to provide desperately needed mental health support to New York State's 55,000 agricultural workers and their families; and

**RESOLVED: That the National Grange supports the establishment of a 24/7 National Agricultural Crisis hotline staffed by crisis specialists to provide real time mental health assistance to the needs of farmers, ranchers, agricultural workers and their families.**

#### ***518-NY – Preventing Maternal Deaths Reauthorization Act***

WHEREAS: the United States continues to experience the highest rate of maternity mortality in the developed world; and

WHEREAS: a recent report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shows that 1,205 pregnancy-related deaths were reported in 2021, reflecting an increase of nearly 89% in the maternal mortality rate since 2018; and

WHEREAS: the CDC estimates that at least 80% of maternal mortalities are preventable, and

WHEREAS: persistent disparities exist across key maternal and infant health indicators. Black and Native American women are 62% more likely to give birth prematurely, and their babies have a mortality rate double that of the white population; and

WHEREAS: the bipartisan "Preventing Maternal Deaths Reauthorization Act of 2023" (S2415 and HR 3838) would authorize federal support for state based maternal mortality review committees, which review pregnancy related deaths to identify causes and make recommendations to prevent future mortalities; and

WHEREAS: this legislation would also require the CDC to work with the Health Resources and Services Administration to disseminate best practices to prevent maternal mortality to hospitals and other health care providers; therefore be it

**RESOLVED: that the National Grange supports the "Preventing Maternal Deaths Reauthorization Act of 2023" or similar legislation that would authorize federal support for state based maternal mortality review committees, which review pregnancy related deaths to identify causes and make recommendations to prevent future mortalities.**

#### ***519-NY – The Ensuring Access to Lifesaving Drugs Act***

WHEREAS: the Chemotherapy Drug Carboplatin is an important drug used in the treatment of breast, ovarian, head and neck, lung, and several other cancers. Carboplatin is not just an effective drug, it is also less toxic and causes fewer side effects than other available drugs; and

WHEREAS: chemotherapy treatments are given every day for a week, or once every 21 days or once every 28 days. Treatments can be as long as 8 hours each time or as short as 3 hours. It is important for treatments to remain on schedule to ensure the patient has the best chance for survival; and

WHEREAS: recent surveys have found the majority of cancer centers are reporting shortages of this drug. Oncologists are having to change the drugs given or delay treatment all together; and

WHEREAS: the current shortage was caused in part by quality concerns and temporary closing at an international manufacturing but the real problem is the profitability of this industry is very low or nonexistent. Firms are either going out of business or they have quality problems because of difficulty investing in their technology; and

WHEREAS: New legislation called "The Ensuring Access to Lifesaving Drugs Act" gives the FDA the power to balance the risks and benefits of the expiration date of drugs during a shortage, when it is safe to do so particularly when the alternative is for patients going without; therefore be it

**RESOLVED: The National Grange supports the legislation titled "The Ensuring Access to Lifesaving Drugs Act", as well as any other legislation giving the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) the power to balance the risks and benefits of the expiration date of chemotherapy agents during a shortage, when it is safe to do so particularly when the alternative is for patients going without.**

#### ***522-TX – Expansion of Mental Health Care***

WHEREAS: Investigations of school shootings and mass shootings consistently point to a problem in mental health care and,

WHEREAS: Violence, especially gun violence continues to increase in American cities and,

WHEREAS: This violence is expanding into rural American cities and towns and,

WHEREAS: Investigations of school shootings and mass shootings consistently point to a problem in mental health care and,

WHEREAS: Access to mental health care is lacking in rural America due to barriers (lack of facilities, providers, transportation, and face-to-face interactions); therefore be it

**RESOLVED: That states be encouraged to include early childhood through young adult mental health education and development in rural areas; be it further**

**RESOLVED: That the National Grange lobby Congress to establish a system of block grants, made available to States for the purpose of expanding Mental Health Care in rural areas and communities.**

### **525-WA – Standardization of Food “Sell Date” Usage**

WHEREAS: there are no regulations to the meaning of when a food product is outdated and should not be consumed; and

WHEREAS: the meaning behind such labeling as, “Best Before”, “Expires On” or “Sell By” has no true meaning often resulting in food that is perfectly safe to consume being thrown out instead; and

WHEREAS: consumers are confused by the use of over 50 phrases suggesting an expiration date without a standardization of what the phrases actually mean, with only a few actually meaning the food is no longer safe to consume; and

WHEREAS: “Sell By” dates are only meant to help stores decide when to rotate their stock; and

WHEREAS: because of the lack of clarity about what these dates mean, causes an estimated one-third of household food waste being tossed out which is the equivalent of enough food to feed all of the country’s hungry and food-insecure; therefore be it

**RESOLVED: the Grange support efforts to clarify the labeling of food expiration dates to either: “Best if Used by” to indicate that products will decline in quality or freshness past the date on the label, or “Use by” to indicate that a product’s safety risks can increase after that date, both of which already have support from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).**

### **PRESENT POLICY: EDUCATION**

#### *Education for Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Special Needs Children*

1. The National Grange believes that parents of deaf and hard of hearing children, deaf and hard of hearing people, teachers, and professionals who are trained in the area of educating the deaf should assist in determining the extent, content, and purpose of the educational program, and particularly consider those program options that provide the pupil with an appropriate and equal opportunity for communication access, including the state’s school for the deaf, which may be the least restrictive environment for a deaf or hard of hearing child.
2. The National Grange strongly supports continuation of the Education of the Deaf Act to provide maximum benefit for deaf and hard of hearing persons, both in programs and services, including funding for Gallaudet University and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID).
3. The National Grange opposes any repeal of the provisions in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 which provides necessary accommodations for children with special needs.

#### *Educational Funding*

1. The National Grange supports the continuation of the federal guaranteed student loan, grant, and work-study programs. The National Grange recommends that Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and Expected Family Contribution (EFC) regulations be adjusted to reflect family expenses, such as real estate taxes, medical expenses and other financial obligations in the determination of financial aid. We urge strict enforcement of the requirements for repayment of federally financed student loans with severe penalties for default. The National Grange suggests that the guidelines for student financial aid laws be revised so students financially independent of their parents are eligible to receive financial aid for their higher education.
2. The National Grange supports the retention of Federal Government Impact Aid for public school districts that lose traditional revenue sources due to a federal presence or activity.
3. The National Grange supports federal categorical aid to school library centers.
4. The National Grange believes that public funding should be used only in public schools. We support redirecting public funding to nonpublic or charter schools, only when the money is for special needs students where the law mandates special training not available in public schools. We oppose any legislation that establishes a voucher program which distributes block grant funds to be distributed as vouchers to children attending nonpublic schools.
5. The National Grange supports federal funding for state allocation of dollars for rural education to promote better salaries and benefits for teachers in rural education and to improve rural school conditions.
6. The National Grange urges adequate funding by the federal government for all federally mandated education programs. In particular, we support equal educational opportunities for exceptional and differently abled persons including federal funding at the 40% level for federally mandated individualized education programs for special needs children.
7. The National Grange supports federal legislation protecting the Upward Bound Talent Search, designed to benefit low-income students seeking college educations.
8. The National Grange supports legislation that awards grants to institutions for history teacher preparation initiatives stressing content mastery in traditional American history and the principles on which the American political system is based.
9. The National Grange support the reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools and Communities Self Determination Act, and we urge Congress to provide adequate funding to support this legislation.

#### *Food Safety and Labeling*

1. The National Grange believes the agricultural industry should be free to advertise their products as long as the advertisement is accurate and is based on facts.
2. The National Grange favors strict enforcement of all food labeling laws by the Food & Drug Administration and supports a uniform system for labeling food and drink products, including an expiration date in a color that is readable on the

background. We encourage the National Safety Working Group and Congress to enact far-reaching legislation increasing the inspection rate and level of safety of imported foreign foods, drugs, and manufactured goods. We also support legislation requiring food companies and restaurants to clearly mark food labels and items on menus that may contain ingredients such as Monosodium Glutamate (MSG). We recommend that all manufacturers of food and drink who use sulfites in their products be required to specify on the product label that a sulfite was used. However, we support each individual restaurant's right to decide whether to include calorie counts on their menu boards of calorie, fat, carbohydrates and sodium on their menus for all food and beverage items.

3. The National Grange urges the Department of Health and Human Services to review and strengthen the regulations pertaining to manufactured products used in the home canning process, including requiring a manufacturer's name and expiration date on these products.
4. The National Grange favors continued testing of cider processing but strongly urges Congress and the USDA not to require pasteurization of all commercial cider.
5. The National Grange supports easy and inexpensive access to vitamins and supplements. We urge that all herbal medicines sold in the United States be labeled with a warning to consult with a physician or pharmacist before using. We further support legislation that would require manufacturers and processors of vitamins, herbal supplements and other dietary supplements to report certain information to the Secretary of Health and Human Services annually, including a list of supplements manufactured, the labeling to include the country of origin and the major ingredients for such supplements, and be verified to contain only and all ingredients listed on the product label.
6. The National Grange supports national legislation to require clear labeling of food and medicines as well as other products that may be ingested when they contain gluten in any form, or as gluten-free when they do not contain gluten.
7. The National Grange encourages the continued efforts of the FDA and the USDA to establish a viable definition for the term "Natural" on food labeling.
8. The National Grange urges the Food and Drug Administration to modify regulations for the Food Safety Modernization Act in order to balance the need to ensure the safety of the food supply while seeing that the farmers selling direct to the consumer are not harmed economically.
9. The National Grange supports Food and Drug Administration efforts to significantly reduce levels of toxic heavy metals such as cadmium, inorganic arsenic, lead, and mercury in baby food. (2021)

#### *General Education Policies*

1. The National Grange supports public education and supports the idea of strengthening and improving the system of public education. Parents should have a choice of schools based on the schools' performance numbers provided that those parents furnish transportation for the children. We believe that every child should be able to receive a public education, and that the state is responsible for providing said education, which shall include the following: a broad curriculum with emphasis on basic language, physical education, math, and science skills; an opportunity for students to choose either vocational or "college preparatory" training; functional buildings; frequent public reports and accountability of funds; and basic training in agriculture, including the "Ag in the Classroom" program, covering both production and consumption.
2. The National Grange supports the adoption of a comprehensive health education curriculum.
3. The Grange supports the teaching of foreign languages, including sign language. We recommend that all other subjects be taught in the English language and that all non-English speaking students and residents in the United States be given the opportunity to receive immediate instruction in the English language through programs such as English As A Second Language. The National Grange seeks to establish a program for state Granges to advocate for American Sign Language to be offered in primary and secondary schools.
4. The National Grange supports affordable telecommunications services for rural schools and libraries.
5. The National Grange supports the retention of the Head Start program and encourages its transfer to the US Department of Education. The National Grange also suggests that the Head Start program be completely integrated into federal and state education programs and that federal level funding be supported as needed to efficiently support the program.
6. The National Grange supports the teaching of both the theory of evolution and the story of creation, allowing individual school boards and students to make their own choice.
7. The National Grange encourages civics classes to be included in high school graduation requirements as suggested by the U.S. Department of Education and supports the teaching of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States, including the Preamble and the Bill of Rights, in schools.
8. The National Grange opposes any legislation allowing illegal aliens to receive tuition discounts at American institutions of higher learning.
9. The National Grange endorses "Read Across America;" we recommit our organization to engage in programs and activities to make Americans the best readers in the world.
10. The National Grange is opposed to any changes in the language of classic literature, except those necessary for translation from another language.
11. The National Grange urges the Federal Department of Education to encourage all local school systems to retain recess for elementary school children.
12. The National Grange supports legislation to establish standardized requirements for school nurses in all 50 states, as well as legislation to adequately fund school nurse programs to be able to handle the increased workload.
13. The National Grange urges the U.S. Department of Education to mandate that penmanship be a required course of study in early primary education.

14. The National Grange urges the US Congress and Administration to overhaul the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (currently known as the “Every Child Succeeds Act”), reduce the testing mandates, promote multiple forms of evidence of student learning and school quality in accountability, and not mandate any fixed role for the use of student test scores in evaluating educators.
15. The National Grange supports legislation that directs the Consumer Product Safety Commission to adopt a stronger, mandatory stability standard for clothing storage units and other potentially unstable furniture within one year of enactment. Such standards must include specified testing related to tip overs, including an increased weight limit to simulate children up to six years old, testing under real world conditions such as climbing, carpeted floors, and open drawers, inclusion of smaller clothing storage units, and new, strengthened warning requirements for all such products entering the U.S. market. (2021)
16. The National Grange supports the teaching of history that is factually accurate and has a balanced approach, showing both the positive contributions of all races, religions, and cultures as well as mistakes and shortcomings that occurred. We can only learn from our past mistakes if we properly understand them. (2021)

#### *Nutrition*

1. The National Grange urges adequate funding for school breakfast and lunch programs. We urge the USDA and HHS (Health & Human Services) to keep dairy products in their Dietary Guidelines and encourage all consumers to include adequate amounts of calcium in their diets. School breakfast and lunch programs should provide balanced diets to meet a child’s daily nutritional requirements. The National Grange urges school systems to promote milk in school lunches and urges USDA and HHS to promote the greater use of milk in other child nutrition programs.
2. The National Grange supports legislation that would require adjustments to child nutrition programs as necessary to promote better consumption of milk by the nation’s students and to permit schools to offer all varieties of milk consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, including low-fat flavored milk containing no more than 150 calories per 8-ounce serving, as well as provisions for meeting the needs of lactose-intolerant children.
3. The National Grange urges enforcement of current Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regulations and encourages related social agencies to assist SNAP recipients with information about foods that meet their nutritional needs. The National Grange asks the SNAP program to allow essential non-food personal articles, such as laundry soap and toilet paper, to be purchased using SNAP and opposes replacing SNAP with cash distributions. The National Grange further urges Congress to reduce current welfare rolls and take steps to reduce fraud.
4. The National Grange supports the continuation of the WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) Program.
5. The National Grange urges legislation to repeal the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act and allow local communities to make their own guidelines on school lunches to reduce child obesity. The National Grange also encourages local communities making their own guidelines to look at alternative ways to reduce child obesity, such as how school lunches are prepared (baked vs. fried), requiring physical education classes, and eliminating unhealthy snacks and soda pop from vending machines.
6. The National Grange urges the agricultural community to provide nutrition education programs for consumers and school-aged children and support continued funding for the Farmers’ Market Nutrition program.
7. The National Grange opposes any additional tax on “fat” foods for the purpose of preventing obesity. Instead, educational programs should be provided to encourage eating a variety of nutritious foods in moderation, and to teach the basic interaction of calorie intake and energy expenditure.
8. The National Grange applauds the efforts of the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health, but urges that the Dietary Guidelines for America recommendations be based on sound science and pertinent research showing that dietary animal fats and proteins should continue to be a part of a healthy and well-balanced diet. <sup>2022</sup>
9. The National Grange supports clarifying food expiration label dates to either “Best if Used by” to indicate that the products will decline in quality or freshness past the date on the label, or “Use by” to indicate a product’s safety risks can increase after that date, both which already have support from the Food and Drug Administration. <sup>2023</sup>

#### **PRESENT POLICY: HEALTH**

##### *Alcohol, Tobacco, Controlled and Toxic Substances*

1. The National Grange encourages the bold, accurate labeling of household products (including carpeting and furniture that have been treated with toxic chemicals), farm chemicals, and other products containing toxic ingredients.
2. The National Grange supports the continuation of the many programs presently fighting substance addiction. The National Grange urges that funding for addiction treatment be governed by medical personnel and not by non-medical administrators of reimbursement programs. The National Grange supports legislation to end insurance discrimination against Americans living with mental illness and addiction in order to provide necessary assistance and treatment programs that will allow many of these afflicted individuals to return to a productive life in mainstream society.
3. The use of steroid and other stimulants, unless prescribed for medical reasons, should be made illegal in all competitive sports and the National Grange supports having heavy penalties imposed upon the violators. We also support legislation banning the sale of synthetic marijuana and synthetic cannabinoids regardless of their chemical composition or the name they are sold under.
4. The National Grange supports aggressive enforcement of the laws to stop the import of all jewelry and any other products from foreign countries that contain highly dangerous levels of cadmium, other metals or chemicals.



5. The National Grange support legislation to prohibit the use of BPA and other similar industrial chemicals in all children's products, human food and food packaging.
6. The National Grange urges stricter enforcement of existing bans on flavored vaping products. (2021)
7. The National Grange urges the Drug Enforcement Administration to re-examine and revise their classification schedule of controlled substances based on current science. (2021)

#### *Consumer Protection*

1. The National Grange supports access to affordable health care and health insurance for every American regardless of age, race, income, health condition, or location with freedom of choice of medical provider and facility. We call upon federal regulators to ensure insurance companies abide with mental health parity laws already on the books to correct what remains an unequal health care system for patients with behavioral health conditions. In addition, health care cost containment strategies should maintain the highest quality of care without compromising effectiveness and efficiency. The National Grange calls upon the President to take immediate steps to reduce regulatory burdens and duplication to enhance care coordination by allowing health care providers to focus on patients rather than paperwork. The National Grange supports restrictions being placed on insurance companies, so that they can only cancel policies for nonpayment or fraud, and not because of new health issues. We favor legislation to guarantee that the attending physician's decision is the governing factor regarding appropriate medical treatment or length of hospital stay. The physician's decision should be the deciding factor for coverage whether or not treatment or hospitalization takes place in or out of the patient's home state. We believe HMOs should be required to accept the determination of the attending health care provider as evidence of the need for an emergency visitation or ambulance service. The National Grange encourages all families to carry catastrophic health insurance.
2. The National Grange supports legislation on a federal level that will require insurance companies to cover testing for breast cancer for all patients regardless of age.
3. The National Grange urges federal agencies to be more aggressive in their investigations and prosecutions of fraud, waste, and abuse in the health care system. We support efforts to maintain the National Practitioners Data Base allowing consumers to have access to malpractice reports so they can properly choose the best medical professional for themselves.
4. The National Grange encourages all continued legal and legislative actions necessary to eliminate the sources of counterfeit medications and to pursue the prosecution of those found responsible for the making and marketing of them, in support increased efforts to educate the public on the dangers of obtaining medications from unreliable sources.
5. We support extending health care coverage under COBRA for all terminated employees who qualify for a period of up to 36 months or until eligible for Medicare/Medicaid and include portability of health insurance coverage even if there is a pre-existing condition for those who change jobs or become unemployed. The National Grange supports tax incentives for businesses to provide health insurance coverage for their employees and 100% tax deductibility of health insurance premiums for the self-employed and individuals acquiring private health insurance.
6. The National Grange supports federal legislation requiring all restaurants and all public buildings to be smoke free and to require builders and landlords to include carbon monoxide detectors as well as smoke detectors in buildings they build or manage. Carbon monoxide detectors should be monitored quarterly and replaced as needed.
7. The National Grange strongly opposes any effort to require the Internal Revenue Service to turn over tax return documents to other government agencies that review health care decisions.
8. The National Grange opposes the imposition of a tax on medicine or medical supplies.
9. The National Grange will work with other organizations to urge the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission to reject proposals to increase patient out-of-pocket costs and co-pays for beneficiaries under the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit (Part D).
10. The National Grange urges Congress to reform the Affordable Care Act in an open bipartisan manner. Special care needs to be taken so that rural hospitals that traditionally have high numbers of uninsured patients are not harmed by the reform.
11. The National Grange urges Congress to legislate incentives and policies to encourage the production of food, pharmaceuticals, energy, and defense supplies in the United States or other countries considered allies of the United States.
12. The National Grange opposes the use of personalized pricing without consumer and public awareness. (2022)

#### *Deaf, Hard of Hearing and the Disabled*

1. We strongly support legislation to protect the rights of deaf and hard of hearing persons.
2. The National Grange encourages manufacturers of machinery and stereo equipment to place warning labels, where feasible, informing consumers that permanent hearing loss could occur as a result of prolonged noise exposure above 85 decibels.
3. The National Grange supports legislation requiring emergency warning messages to be both close captioned and delivered verbally, and all television stations provide closed captioning for news, weather, sports, and other live events.
4. The National Grange supports the installation and use of "induction hearing loop systems" compatible with telecoil ("T" switch) hearing aids.
5. The National Grange supports legislation that would require all health insurance companies to cover hearing screening, testing, surgery, and hearing aids, including mandatory regular hearing screenings and hearing aids for children.

6. The National Grange supports legislation that would establish detection and intervention programs for newborns and infants with hearing loss. We further urge Congress to pass legislation to require hearing testing of newborns prior to their release from the hospital.

#### *Family Planning*

1. We oppose any amendment to the United States Constitution that denies an individual the freedom of choice for abortion. We recognize the need for readily available family planning information for those who need or desire it. However, we do oppose partial-birth abortions. Government financing should not be available for abortions, except in cases of rape, incest, endangered health of the mother, or serious defects of the fetus. We support educational efforts, which would emphasize the necessity for licensed hospitals and medical doctors when abortions are necessary. We further support requiring all abortion agencies to provide counseling by qualified professional personnel to explore all possible options before an abortion, and we favor state legislation requiring abortion and family planning clinics to notify parents or guardians of minors who are seeking drugs or abortions.
2. The National Grange supports the release of adoption records that will provide family health history.
3. The National Granges opposes the distribution of any contraceptives to middle school age students.
4. The National Grange supports legislation that requires coverage of infertility treatments.

#### *Health Care*

1. The National Grange believes that teeth should be declared a legitimate part of the body requiring the same comprehensive level of care and coverage as any other part of the body by health insurers and that all prosthetics, including dentures, implants, crowns, and bridge work be covered at the same rate as all other medical procedures. The National Grange also believes that dentists should be treated as any other medical specialists by both the government and insurance carriers and reimbursed at comparable rates.
2. The National Grange supports tax deductible Medical Savings Accounts (MSAs) in the form of an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) type account to be used strictly for medical expenses. The National Grange supports legislation that reinstates the list of Over The Counter items eligible for reimbursement under Health Saving Accounts (HSAs), Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs), and Health Reimbursement Accounts (HRAs), removes limits on contributions and allows year-end balances to roll over to the New Year or return to the employee.
3. The National Grange supports World Mental Health Day observed annually on October 10.
4. The National Grange supports programs that strengthen families and advocates for educational programs that emphasize the importance of families and the prevention of family dysfunction.
5. The National Grange supports legislation to achieve meaningful price transparency for charges for hospital health care.<sup>2022</sup>
6. The National Grange supports the "Preventing Maternal Deaths Reauthorization Act of 2023" or similar legislation that would authorize federal support for state-based maternal mortality review committees that review pregnancy-related deaths to identify causes and make recommendations to prevent future mortalities.<sup>2023</sup>
7. National Grange urges Congress to enact legislation requiring all health care providers and medical companies to have tight security in place to protect the safety of health care records and that there be strict penalties in place due to negligence to conform with this law.<sup>2023</sup>
8. The National Grange requests the Food and Drug Administration ban the use of erythrosine, otherwise known as FD&C Red #3 dye, in any products used for human consumption.<sup>2023</sup>
9. The National Grange strongly supports legislation to amend the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2018 by eliminating the nautical mile limitation to include United States Navy and Marine Corps veterans who were assigned to the Vietnam theater of combat operation or who received the Vietnam Services Medal.<sup>2023</sup>
10. The National supports legislation for the Food and Drug Administration to investigate the health effects of high levels of caffeine in energy drinks.<sup>2023</sup>
11. The National Grange supports the End Diaper Need Act of 2023.<sup>2023</sup>

#### *Long Term Care and Assisted Living*

1. The National Grange supports coverage for long-term nursing/in-home care, including an allowable tax credit for long term care insurance premiums, and an allowable tax credit for adult day care expenses incurred by primary care givers of adults who cannot care for themselves. A tax credit should also be available for programs to provide assisted living to the elderly in their own homes. We urge changing the Medicare entitlement and managed health care insurance programs so that they provide payment for assisted living programs.
2. The National Grange supports legislation that will provide uniform care and services to nursing home patients and will protect their rights.
3. The National Grange encourages Congress to require Medicare to make timely payments to both acute care and extended care facilities to ensure that the correct level of care is maintained for all patients.
4. The National Grange urges the U.S. Health Care Financing Authority to allow elderly couples to be in the same nursing home when long term care for both becomes necessary.
5. The National Grange supports action that develops a comprehensive and economical method to treat patients requiring Palliative Care.
6. The National Grange recommends that the National Institutes of Health and Center for Disease Control utilize the information learned during the COVID-19 pandemic to develop and implement a more comprehensive plan for assisting the older population during times of health emergencies, and this plan should ensure that long term care facilities have sufficient

access to personal protective equipment (PPE) and infectious disease testing for all staff and patients; and that daily, clear reports for long term care facilities on any infectious disease cases be made available to the public.

#### *Medical Research/Awareness*

1. The National Grange supports and recognizes the value of medical research in increasing the quality of life. We support improvement in the quality of healthcare services and access to new and existing technologies. We encourage continued funding of medical research, including the responsible use of animals in research.
2. The National Grange encourages research to continue on alternative treatments, such as acupuncture, hypnosis, massage therapy, prayer, and meditation, which may be used in conjunction with the standard treatments that are showing results against diseases.
3. The National Grange supports the National Cancer Institute and encourages Congress to continue providing funds for research.
4. The National Grange supports the establishment of a "radiation database" on radiation releases to the public resulting from both intentional and unintentional releases due to nuclear weapons testing and accidental releases from nuclear power plants.
5. The National Grange supports legislation to explore the risks involved in the use of water fluoridation in the United States.
6. The National Grange urges that information about Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS) should be given to all parents and caregivers of children under five years.
7. The National Grange urges adequate funding for agencies at all levels dealing with the HIV and AIDS problem and supports increased emphasis on testing.
8. The National Grange urges the use of government funds for stem cell research only on postnatal or adult stem cells. We further support the research and possible use of cord blood stem cells and, promote the registry and donation of cord blood stem cells. However, we support legislation banning full human cloning.
9. The National Grange supports legislation that would ban the patenting of natural occurring genes. We only support the patenting of treatment and/or alterations of those natural occurring genes.
10. The National Grange supports governmental efforts on the state and national level to fund research on the prevention and treatment of Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses, to disseminate information and to educate the public about its prevention, detection, and treatment.
11. As an incentive for the pharmaceutical industry to develop drugs for "orphan" diseases, the National Grange encourages "market exclusivity" for orally administered Alzheimer's and Dementia medicines and treatments.
12. The National Grange supports continued research on man-made nanoparticles used in medical devices and sunscreen.
13. The National Grange and all state and local Granges support the various national, state and local agencies and commissions striving to eliminate the unintended and intended abuse of heroin and opioid addiction. The National Grange will be proactive in support of a variety of treatment solutions and programs. The National Grange supports systems to limit the over prescribing of opioids and the education of the application of Naloxone (Narcan) pursuant to state regulations.
14. The National Grange encourages legitimate scientific studies on the risks and benefits of the use of medical marijuana in the treatment of disease.
15. The National Grange encourages legislation that would provide funding for public service announcements to increase awareness of farm and ranch stress and destigmatize mental health care in rural communities; provide voluntary stress management training to Farm Service Agency, Risk Management Agency and National Resources Conservation Service employees as these agencies are constantly in direct contact with members of the ag community and will be able to direct producers in need to appropriate mental health services; and convene a task force of agricultural and rural stakeholders at the federal, state, and local levels to assess the causes of mental stress in farmers and ranchers and identify best practices for responding to such stress.
16. The National Grange supports legislation by the US Congress on a plan of action to coordinate and improve efforts to prevent, control and respond to future pandemics and the potential effect they may have on our public health as well as the health of our economy.
17. The National Grange will support:
  - Research into identifying the causes of chronic pain especially in rural life.
  - National and state initiatives that encourage research and development of new pain relief therapies that avoid opioids and other addictive drugs
  - Research into possible chronic pain mitigation strategies through education, technology and other mechanisms
  - Robust policy discussions and education about pain management among Grange members and their rural communities

#### *Medicare/Medicaid*

1. The National Grange supports the following reforms and changes in the Medicare and Medicaid programs: a) equity of payment between inpatient and outpatient procedures according to Medicare's Diagnostic Related Groups; b) equity in reimbursements between rural and urban hospitals; c) prohibit hospitals or doctors from setting fees or discontinuing Medicare assignments for specific diagnosis during treatment on the basis of the method of payment or from charging amounts above the Medicare limits for Medicare services; d) faster processing of claims to permit faster reimbursement; e) extended coverage to ensure sufficient time for full recovery; f) health care professionals; and (g) all reimbursements under the Medicare program to all Medicare patients, medical personnel, suppliers, be made within a three month timeframe and (h) adequately compensate primary care physicians for non-procedural services.

2. The National Grange supports a full investigation of the causes of the rapid increase in Medicare/Medicaid costs. We urge our legislators to investigate pricing, availability and coverage options provided by health insurance companies as supplemental coverage for Medicare recipients. The National Grange supports the ability of Medicare and Medicaid to negotiate with drug companies for the best reimbursement price of prescription drugs for consumers. We further support a cap on the annual increase in Medicare deductions of no more than the general inflation rate. The National Grange strongly urges Congress to refrain from reducing payment to physicians and providers under Medicare since it would add an additional burden to patients needing to use the program. The National Grange urges all U.S. Senators and Representatives to continue to support funding to all aspects of the current Medicare programs.
3. The National Grange will lobby for a change in current Medicare insurance to include coverage for hearing exams and hearing aids. The National Grange urges Medicare and Medicaid to review their payment schedules and make changes which recognize recommended and accepted medical procedures and screening tests, such as: coverage for the prostate-specific antigen test (PSA); increased coverage for home health care costs; reimbursement for services of midwives and physicians' assistants; coverage for outpatient office laser surgery.
4. The National Grange favors legislation permitting retired people to deduct the cost of their supplemental health insurance from their taxable income and legislation to improve access to Medicare to ease the financial burdens on seniors. We support changing current regulations to permit seniors who are "grandfathered" by residence address into a Medicare supplemental insurance program to be allowed to move anywhere within the original service area without being dropped from their insurance plan. We further support a division of assets procedure for Medicaid and Medicare that would preserve the financial stability of a healthy spouse.
5. The National Grange supports the right to have a second doctor in the operating room, where medically required, for patients on Medicare.
6. The National Grange supports legislation that would give eye and dental insurance to seniors age 65 plus for those procedures that Medicare does not cover, with a co-pay/deductible for amounts over 100 dollars.
7. The Grange at all levels works to convince our government that Medicare money should also be spent on health screening for early intervention of diseases which is far more economical than the huge cost of treating advanced stages of the diseases.
8. The National Grange urges Congress to pass an act allowing Medicare information to be given to an assigned representative and that the representative be allowed to act on behalf of said patient without consignment of Medicare and/or Social Security benefits.
9. The National Grange supports the continued process to eliminate the "donut hole" for Medicare prescription coverage.
10. The National Grange urges the United States Congress to amend the Federal Health Care Overhaul Bill to read that all states be fiscally responsible for their portion of Medicaid expenses.
11. The National Grange urges Congress to amend the Social Security Act "to count a period of receipt of outpatient observation services in a hospital toward satisfying the three-day inpatient hospital stay requirement for coverage of skilled nursing facility services under Medicare.
12. The National Grange supports legislation that would require Medicare to cover Multi-Cancer Early Detection (MCED) blood testing or other cancer screening tests once they are approved by the Food and Drug Administration and are available. <sup>2022</sup>
13. The National Grange supports legislation to include coverage for essential immunizations, such as shingles, pneumonia, pertussis, and others, under Medicare, Part D. <sup>2022</sup>
14. The National Grange urges Medicare to review its policy regarding coverage for the diabetic continuous glucose monitoring device (CGM) and change its prescription coverage to allow refills every 28 days rather than 30 days. <sup>2023</sup>

#### *Patients' Rights*

1. The National Grange will work with other organizations to develop and present a "Healthcare Bill of Rights" for Americans to Congress. We support proposals for health care reform that include the following safeguards:
  - a. allow patients to sue HMOs for medical malpractice;
  - b. place a cap on how much an individual may sue for per medical malpractice suit, including a \$250,000 cap on malpractice awards arising from non-economic claims (i.e., pain and suffering);
  - c. place a cap on malpractice awards regarding product liability.
  - d. require insurance companies to provide hospital coverage for birth as deemed necessary by the doctor.
  - e. establish an efficient grievance and appeal process for patients when medical procedures or payments are denied by insurance companies or HMO's.
  - f. require that insurance companies cover all legally mandated medical services deemed necessary by a doctor at federal, state, or hospital levels, including preventative procedures such as Well-baby check-ups and childhood immunizations;
  - g. require insurance companies to pay claims within 30 to 45 days of receiving properly completed forms and bills.
  - h. We also support a health care plan that includes the following provisions:
    - Access to affordable, portable health care, health insurance and prescription drugs for every American regardless of age, race, income, health condition or location with freedom of choice of medical provider and facility.
    - Each person should be treated with dignity, equality and respect and health information should be provided in a manner that is easily understood and comprehended.
    - Protection of Medicare or current health insurance coverage as they are presently provided with no reduction in coverage.
    - No ban on writing new policies for insurance companies.

- Preventive care, screenings and services that include educational programs, immunizations and holistic or alternative medicines that assist the patient in taking responsibility for their own care but do not mandate participation.
  - A national registry of health information that is accessible in all health care settings by health care professionals.
  - Encourage utilization of technology, such as telemedicine, to support the delivery of care and management of patient conditions.
  - Address the alarming rate of medical errors in health care settings by establishing guidelines, training and standards.
  - Oversight of any federal healthcare program should be provided by a qualified health agency and not the Internal Revenue Service.
  - Medical decisions should be made by licensed medical professionals based on the needs of the patient.
  - Efforts to reduce overall health care costs while providing the right care by the right provider at the right time in the right place and for the right cost.
  - Guidelines for revamping the reimbursement structure to support the delivery of primary care that seeks to address the needs of the costliest patients.
  - Programs to ensure that there is an ample health care workforce that is qualified to deliver all levels of care.
  - Any health care program established by Congress should be acceptable to the members of Congress as required coverage for them and their families.
2. The National Grange favors the passage of laws, which allow parents/guardians in conjunction with their doctors to decide whether or not to keep severely physically and mentally handicapped children alive by life support systems without interference by the government.
  3. The National Grange urges that the new federal and state laws on privacy of medical information be examined, and amended if necessary, so that medical practitioners may release or disclose limited information when necessary to contact relatives or others who are needed to authorize medical treatment. We further support legislation that would require patients, when physically or mentally able, to submit their medical background to health care professionals.
  4. The National Grange supports legislation that would bring about protection of parental and/or guardian rights in the guidance, control and administration of their dependent minors' health care. This legislation should be written to include any and all federal, state and local government agencies.
  5. The National Grange supports federal legislation that makes a child eligible for medical care under the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs until the child's 26<sup>th</sup> birthday, regardless of the child's marital status. <sup>2021</sup>

#### *Prescription Drugs and Medicines*

1. The National Grange supports making prescriptions and over-the-counter drugs more affordable. The National Grange strongly encourages drug companies to produce lifesaving and life enhancing medicines for a wide variety of diseases and medical conditions. We further support requiring all government and private prescription drug coverage programs to offer the widest possible selection of lifesaving and life enhancing medicines at an affordable price for those who need them.
2. The National Grange supports allowing U.S. citizens, who are visiting foreign countries, to bring back with them up to three months supplies of regulated pharmaceutical products for their own use, provided they have valid prescriptions for those specific pharmaceutical products from their U.S. physician. The National Grange supports the current Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act provisions that generally do not allow regulated pharmaceutical products to be imported into the U.S. for sale or distribution unless those importers are also pharmacists and/or pharmaceutical wholesalers currently subject to federal and state regulation. We strongly support current law and regulations that require anyone who imports regulated pharmaceutical products for sale or distribution in the U.S. to keep accurate records tracking the origin, history and chain of custody of these products before they entered the U.S. We support legislation requiring anyone authorized to import regulated pharmaceutical products for sale or distribution in the U.S. to be financially responsible for any testing necessary to verify the authenticity and/or degradation of the pharmaceutical products they import. We support strictly limiting the importation of pharmaceutical products to drugs from licensed pharmacies and wholesalers who sell to the public in Canada. We support providing the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) with sufficient resources and authority to ensure the safety of imported drugs from Canada employing technological and other safeguards. We further support legislation requiring anyone authorized to import regulated pharmaceutical products for sale or distribution in the U.S. to be allowed to import such products only if they are shipped into the U.S. in counterfeit proof and tamper resistant packaging.
3. The National Grange supports a voluntary program, which would offer pregnant women who test HIV positive voluntary access to the drug AZT that could prevent the transfer of the HIV antibodies to the unborn child or newborn child.
4. The National Grange will work to secure legislation requiring physicians to obtain specific written approval of the patient or those legally authorized to give approval prior to prescribing experimental drugs. When the physician prescribes experimental drugs, the warning and permission form must be in clear, common layman language on a separate medical form.
5. The National Grange supports having well-advertised places in our communities/counties where residents can safely dispose of outdated or unused medicines, vitamins and/or supplements, etc.
6. The National Grange supports legislation that would require the pharmaceutical companies to significantly reduce the minimum dose purchase requirement for pneumococcal vaccine. We recommend that local county Health Departments include this vaccine in required childhood immunizations.
7. The National Grange urges the Food and Drug Administration to mandate that pharmaceutical producers label all products and commodities containing gluten.

8. The National Grange encourages people to follow the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention regarding immunizations.
9. The National Grange urges Congress to repeal the prescription drug price controls in adopted in the Inflation Reduction Act<sup>2022</sup>
10. The National Grange supports legislation that would allow foreign made baby formula, as long as it meets the Food and Drug Administration regulations, to be marketed in the United States to ensure the long-term supply chain of infant formula.<sup>2022</sup>
11. The National Grange is opposed to the use of Pharmacy Benefit Managers in the pharmacy industry.<sup>2022</sup>
12. The National Grange supports "The Ensuring Access to Lifesaving Drugs Act" as well as any other legislation gives the Food and Drug Administration the power to balance the risks and benefits of the expiration date of chemotherapy agents during a shortage when it is safe to do so particularly when the alternative is for patients to do without.<sup>2023</sup>
13. The National Grange supports legislation to require pharmaceutical companies to list inactive ingredients in prescription medications for both the pharmacy and the consumer as is currently done for over-the-counter medicines.<sup>2023</sup>

#### *Rural and Home Health Care*

1. We urge that the federal government maintain block grant/matching funds to states for community health clinics.
2. The National Grange supports legislation to ensure that fairness in price and benefits offered becomes a part of any and all medical insurance programs. The National Grange believes that payment to health care providers should adhere to a schedule of fees for services provided that is fair and equitable across the United States.
3. The National Grange supports incentive programs for doctors who will agree to practice in rural areas where basic medical care is not available and supports the creation and/or expansion of programs that encourage students to become general practitioners and that address incentives and reimbursements for primary care.
4. The National Grange supports the establishment or use of the necessary infrastructure for the expansion of telemedicine into rural areas. The National Grange also supports the elimination of regulatory and statutory impediments to broaden the use of telemedicine and telehealth and institute a more uniform approach for reimbursement.
5. We encourage local Granges to present programs that educate the community about pharmaceutical assistance programs.
6. The National Grange supports preserving quality, rural home health care services provided under traditional fee-for-service Medicare by opposing the imposition of new, patient co-payment fees and the imposition of further cuts to reimbursement rates for home health care service providers.
7. The National Grange supports efforts by Congress, the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the home health care industry to reduce unnecessary Medicare spending on home health care services by aggressively weeding out instances of fraud, abuse and poor management practices in the home health care sector.
8. The National Grange supports passage of the "Caregiver, Advise, Record and Enable (CARE) Act" to prepare caregivers for home healthcare medical and nursing tasks.
9. The National Grange, through Grange Advocacy, engages the American Association of Community Cancer Centers in discussions regarding potential joint efforts to address the lack of access to proper health care and cancer care in rural America. Further, National Grange will support legislation to improve funding and change regulations to help keep rural hospitals and health care facilities open.
10. The National Grange supports the expanded use and funding of educational loan repayment funding programs to incentivize physicians, specialists, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, chiropractors, nurses, and other healthcare professionals' commitment to serve rural areas and underserved communities designated as Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA), Medically Underserved Areas (MUA), Medically Underserved Populations (MUP), Exceptional Medically Underserved Populations (Exceptional MUP), and Governor-Designated Secretary-Certified Shortage Areas for Rural Health Clinics (RHCs) throughout the United States.<sup>2021</sup>
11. The National Grange continues to partner with Rural Minds Inc. and other like-minded mental health organizations in an effort to educate the public and in particular, rural areas in the importance of mental health awareness and suicide prevention.<sup>2022</sup>
12. The National Grange will lobby Congress to establish a system of block grants to be made available to states for the purpose of expanding mental health care in rural areas and communities.<sup>2022</sup>
13. The National Grange works with the Centers for Disease Control to create and disseminate information that would inform medical providers and the at large agricultural community with the signs, symptoms, treatment, and causes of the infection known as "Q" Fever which results from the exposure to infected animal feces, urine and birthing by-products and to do further research on "Q" fever that will develop effective treatments for this illness.<sup>2022</sup>

# GRANGE GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

## POLICY STATEMENT

Throughout 2023 Grangers continue to dust off their regalia and join together for in-person meetings, fellowship, dinners, and fundraising events. We encourage Granges to continue and expand opportunities for more social activities in their communities. The National Grange reported a net gain in membership for a second consecutive year, which is proof our Granges are open for business and welcome new members. The biggest driver of this membership growth is Juniors, -- children and their parents coming to the Grange to find a family-friendly environment with service and fellowship opportunities for young and old alike.

As we all reflect on the wisdom of our Founders in all levels of our order, we must always remember to aspire to be characterized by open and respectful conversational dialogue. Let us be mindful of our brothers and sisters as we speak in respectful ways and invite open, sincere, and meaningful dialogue among those of different points of view. We will listen to one another calmly, with open hearts, in order to create deeper understanding. We encourage Granges to set the example of exercising patience, forbearance, charity, and tolerance in all your meetings and Grange activities.

The National Grange Foundation continues to support and fund many National Grange activities and programs. We would encourage all Granges and Grangers, as they are able, to continue their donations to support the National Grange Foundation philanthropic endeavors which greatly benefit Grange programs and activities.

We urge the continuation of the exchange of ideas and information through our communications in weekly and monthly email blast, *Good Day!* magazine, Facebook, and Instagram.

We strongly suggest when scheduling conferences and conventions, the National Grange consider non-smoking venues.

We thank the National Grange staff for the service and work they do on behalf of all Grangers. Much of their work directly benefits members of our communities and the Grange is again becoming the trusted voice of rural America. We need to support our National Grange efforts by bringing the programs, information, and opportunities they develop to our local communities.

The National Grange office has resources available to help Granges that do not own their own Grange halls to create a plan that will enable them to remain visible and relevant in their communities. We encourage Granges in this situation to contact the National Communications Director for information.

We highly encourage Community Granges to use the Heirloom Program, created by the National Grange, to help all our members learn or be reminded of our rich legacy. This program helps Granges to incorporate in their monthly meetings a quote or passage from a foundational text and briefly reflect on the lesson and how it may apply to everyday life. These lessons can also be read and discussed as part of the Lecturer's program or shared on social media with members of their communities for increased Grange visibility. For more information, please visit [www.nationalgrange.org/heirloom-program](http://www.nationalgrange.org/heirloom-program).

*This policy statement covers Resolutions GGD-602-CO, GGD-607-ME, and parts of the National President's Internal and External addresses.*

## INDEX OF RESOLUTIONS

RES. #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
603	IA	7 <sup>th</sup> Degree Format	Adopted
606	MD	Update Language and Songs of 1 <sup>st</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> Degree Work	Adopted
609	NY	National Grange Youth and Junior Departments	Adopted
611	PA	Documentation of Sixth and Seventh Degree	Adopted

## ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS

### 603-IA – 7<sup>th</sup> Degree Format

WHEREAS: the current 7th Degree format is hard to follow due to its language and costuming being based off of Greek mythology and age; and

WHEREAS: the length of the Degree and repetition of movement and acting make the 7th Degree difficult to follow; and

WHEREAS: the cost of the 7th Degree currently is expensive and requires professional staging, lighting, and sound; and

WHEREAS: members do not seem to remember or understand the meaning of the 7th Degree and do not seem to want to attend it again in the future; therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** that the High Priest, the Priest Archon, and the Priestess Analyst appoint a committee to investigate ways and ideas to make the 7th Degree more similar to its original floor format and streamline the degree itself to make it more easily understandable to members taking the 7th Degree and more cost-efficient to put on with less expensive costuming and report back to the Assembly and the Delegate body at the 2024 Session.

**606-MD – Update Language and Songs of 1st-4th Degree Work**

WHEREAS: the National Grange Manual was last updated in 2020 to reflect changes to the language associated with the opening and closing of the Grange, but not the 1st-4th degrees of our order: and

WHEREAS: much of the language found in the 1st -4th degree work is archaic and no longer in use, making it difficult for individuals to fully understand; and

WHEREAS: the degree work of our order sets the tone for the work of Grange and it is imperative that individuals be able to understand the meaning; therefore be it

**RESOLVED: that the National Grange President appoint a committee of seven to look at the 1st-4th degree work of our order and update the language and songs to reflect words that are understandable in today's society; and be it further**

**RESOLVED: that the committee report to the National President and Executive Committee their findings prior to the 2024 National Grange Session, and be it further**

**RESOLVED: that a resolution be presented at the 2024 National Grange Session that reflects the updates recommended by the committee.**

**609-NY – National Grange Youth and Junior Departments**

WHEREAS: after the 2022 National Grange Convention, the National Grange announced that the Youth and Junior Grange Departments were being put under the directorship of one person; and

WHEREAS: there are many Youth and Junior Grange Activities at National Session, and placing all of these responsibilities under one person can be overwhelming and overburdening; and

WHEREAS: there is a significant age, mentality, ability level, and interest difference from the youngest Junior Granger at age 5 and the oldest Youth Adult in the Youth Program at age 35; and

WHEREAS: the reasoning given for this change was lack of funding and the sale of the National Grange Headquarters; and

WHEREAS: the previous National Grange Youth Director offered to volunteer her time and not be paid for doing the work for this department and was turned down; and

WHEREAS: no other National Grange Department lost their director or separate identity due to financial issues; and

WHEREAS: the National Grange should be increasing funding and activity with the Youth and Junior Departments rather than taking it away; therefore be it

**RESOLVED: that the National Grange strongly requests the National Grange President to appoint separate Youth Director and Junior Grange Director as our budget permits.**

**611-PA – Documentation of Sixth and Seventh Degrees**

WHEREAS: the National Grange Journal of Proceedings documents the actions taken at the annual National Grange session; and

WHEREAS: one of the historical events is those Patrons who receive the Sixth and Seventh Degrees at this annual event; and

WHEREAS: the individuals taking the Sixth and Seventh Degrees become an integral part of each year's annual session; and

WHEREAS: documentation in the annual Journal of Proceedings should include names of these individuals who receive the Sixth and Seventh Degrees so in future years individuals can access this information in the event someone has lost their certificate due to relocation, or a fire in the home destroying all contents; therefore be it

**RESOLVED: that the names of those members receiving the Sixth Degree at each National Grange Session be documented and a report provided by the host regional state secretary conferring the 6th Degree of the names of the members taking the 6th and 7th Degree be sent to the respective State Grange Secretary; and be it further**

**RESOLVED: that the National Grange Assembly of Demeter document the names of those members receiving the Seventh Degree at National Sessions; any States desiring a list of those taking the 7th Degree after 2011 may request such from the Assembly of Demeter**



## POLICY STATEMENT

Just as our Ritual provides the vehicle to present and understand our teachings and principles, our Constitution and By-laws provide the unified structure for our Order to function with unity of action. Understanding why we have our code is as important as understanding the code itself. Over the past 156 years, many hours have been spent by many minds crafting a document that will serve and protect the interests of the Grange at all levels, as well as its individual members. It is with a great deal of respect and caution that we approach the task of amending these laws, and sincerely hope that the changes made are in the best interests of the Grange as a whole.

With today's political climate, we need to remind our membership that partisanship ends at our door. We want to stress how important it is to remain non-partisan, that we as the Grange do not support any nominee, appointee, candidate, or agency appointees, etc. We also have to remind members or others wanting to use our emblem that it is a trademark symbol and should never be used for political activities.

Social media has afforded members the opportunity for instant communication of Grange activities and successes. We understand that not everyone will ever agree with all policies and undertakings of our Order, and that makes our organization unique. We strongly oppose the posting of personal grievances, the purpose of which is to divide and destroy. The First Amendment of the United States Constitution makes us powerless to stop the negativity. We challenge our Grangers to apply the high standards demanded by our Fraternal bonds and the National Grange's Grange Website and Electronic Social Media Code of Conduct as they interact online.

When electing officers, delegates should be mindful of maintaining equity among the regions of the country, including other factors when electing the Executive Committee.

The National Grange should communicate with the State Granges regarding all the entities that have entered into contractual trademark agreements in their state, so that they may act as agents for the National Grange. This will ensure that the State Grange is aware of all the entities that use our trademark in that State and that licensees are complying. It is all our responsibility to protect our trademark.

The Grange Law Committee urges that the traditional opening and closing ceremonies or the approved alternative opening and closing ceremonies always be used. Granges at all levels enjoy the fraternal and lodge classification under the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax code. It is vital that these ceremonies be used so no Grange jeopardizes their IRS status, if they are ever audited. Encourage that National and State Granges stay up to date on the interpretations of the qualifications for fraternal and lodge classifications under the IRS code. The Grange Law Committee further urges that recitation of the verbal portions of either the traditional opening and closing or the approved alternative opening and closing ceremonies must be used, regardless of whether or not that Grange can regularly follow the physical performance portions of these ceremonies, because at a bare minimum, these verbal recitations are necessary in order to legally conduct business as a Grange.

We further urge that State and National Grange leaders exercise wide discretion, common sense, and positive encouragement as well as tolerance, respect, and a little humility among local Grange members when grappling with these issues. Shaming or lecturing our fellow Grange members in a condescending manner about either their preference not to follow all of our traditions or their demands that we follow those traditions without exception, will never lead to the growth and development of the Order. As Brother William Saunders, the first Master of the National Grange and the author of the Preamble to the National Grange Constitution, wrote to us in 1873, "...hence we have a ceremony...which binds us in mutual fraternity as with a band of iron; but although its influence is so powerful, its application is as gentle as that of the silken thread that binds a wreath of flowers."

The Grange Law Committee commends the effort of the Video Study Committee looking at the feasibility of a video of the first four degrees. This committee was appointed following adoption of resolution 715 (2019). It is now necessary to continue their work to finalize the report on the feasibility and make recommendations of the proper path to follow video recording of the first four degrees. Once the recording is completed it should be the responsibility of the Assembly of Demeter to determine the uses of the video recording. This would be for archival and instructional purposes. Once the videos are produced and approved, we recommend that it also be extended to include the recording of the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh degrees.

The Grange Law Committee requests that the Assembly of Demeter evaluate the titles of their elected officers and the name of their division of the Order to develop recommendations on alternative titles that may be used in public-facing communications which better explain the functions of their offices. We also request that the Assembly of Demeter be judicious in their work to make the Seventh-Degree presentation more feasible to ensure that the lessons and mysticism of the Degree are preserved.

In 2002, 2003, and 2004, the National Grange adopted changes to our Digest of Laws authorizing the use of alternative titles, by all levels of our Order, for several Grange officers including the title of President for the office of Master and the title of Vice President for the office of Overseer. Over subsequent years, many State Granges have adopted similar authorizations for the use of these alternative titles in their State Grange Constitutions and By-laws. Since the adoption of discretionary authority to use these alternative titles, the use of President and Vice President has slowly, but consistently, increased in our Grange meetings as well as in our communications with our local communities and the press. It is also necessary that we instruct our fellow members in the meaning and use of our heritage titles. We recommend that this be included in the Heirloom program developed by the National Grange Membership/Leadership director.

Therefore, the Grange Law Committee recommends that every Grange member embrace the alternative titles of President and Vice President for those officers of their Granges that have been authorized and approved in the National Digest of Laws and various State Grange Constitutions. It is no longer sufficient in today's society or even today's Grange, to simply treat the traditional and alternative titles for these offices as morally equivalent. We especially ask members who have been elected to these offices to take the lead in always referring to themselves as President and Vice President, whether in a Grange meeting or not. We also request that all Grange Secretaries use the titles President and Vice President in all of their

meeting minutes. We make these requests so as to not have the subsequent moral weed crop of inconsistent use of our traditional and alternative office titles, baffle and torment our efforts to make all of the members of our communities who hold an interest in agriculture, comfortable with joining the Grange.

We commend the Pomona Grange Study Committee and thank them for their work. We encourage each State Grange to work with the Pomona Granges in their jurisdiction to implement the changes made to the Pomona Grange division of our Order. We also encourage creativity and discernment in evaluating a renewed purpose and mission for the Pomona Granges.

We all know that “old habits die hard”, but at the same time, they are not immortal. We also take comfort that “Nature’s Motto is Onward: She never looks backward.” Our goal as an organization is to keep looking forward, to address the issues in our customs, ritual and rules that keep new members, as well as current members feeling welcome in the Grange and to plot an eventual course toward a successful 200th anniversary of the organization of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry.

As members, we all enjoy the protection of our Digest of Laws, which have proven to be legally enforceable and binding by Federal and State courts, and our fraternal responsibility to abide by them and hold our brothers and sisters accountable. Failure to do so results in strife and discontent. Let us practice our motto - “In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, and in all things charity.”

*This Policy Statement covers 703 – CT, 714 – MT, and the report of the Pomona Grange Study Committee.*

## INDEX OF RESOLUTIONS

RES. #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
707	DC	Strike Jurisdiction of Subordinate Granges	Adopted
708	DC	Strike Requirement for Permission to Join as Associate Member	Adopted
713	MD	National Dues for Junior Grange Members	Adopted
719	WA	Duties of the Secretary	Adopted
722	Committee	Proposed Changes to the Fifth Degree Manual	Adopted
725	Committee	Proposed Changes to the Digest for Pomona Granges	Adopted

## ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS

### *707-DC – Strike Jurisdiction of Subordinate Granges*

WHEREAS: there are many reasons that someone chooses to join one Grange instead of another, and

WHEREAS: from time to time, Granges change their meeting locations for various reasons, and

WHEREAS: bylaws such as Chapter 6, Section 3, create unnecessary barriers to entry for potential new members and opens the door for potentially unnecessary unwelcoming behavior by local Grange leaders, therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** to strike the following reference to Subordinate Grange jurisdiction in Chapter 6, Section 1:

“6.1.3 The geographic area included in the jurisdiction of a Subordinate Grange within a State shall be fixed by the State Grange having jurisdiction.

6.1.4 When a new Subordinate Grange is organized and includes in its jurisdiction a member of another Subordinate Grange, such member is not obliged to withdraw from the old Grange and join the new one.

6.1.5 State lines shall not be regarded by Subordinate Granges receiving applications for membership except where State Grange By-Laws require consent for the release of jurisdiction.

6.1.6 A new Subordinate Grange cannot be organized in the jurisdiction of a suspended Subordinate Grange during the time of its suspension.”

and be it further **RESOLVED** to strike the entirety of Chapter 6, Section 3, which reads:

“**JURISDICTION**

6.3.1 A Subordinate Grange may not meet within the jurisdiction of another Grange, without the consent of said Grange.

6.3.2 A Subordinate Grange may not have two places of meeting and claim jurisdiction of both.

6.3.3 In states which so provide in their By-Laws, no Subordinate Grange may admit to membership anyone outside of its jurisdiction, without the consent of the Subordinate Grange in whose jurisdiction the prospective member resides. No Subordinate Grange may be compelled to release jurisdiction where a resident within its jurisdiction makes application to join another Subordinate Grange.”; and be it further

**RESOLVED:** in all instances where a paragraph is stricken, the following sections be renumbered accordingly; and be it further **RESOLVED:** that Chapter 6, Section 9, Paragraph 3, which currently reads:

“6.9.3 A member who has received one or more degrees in a Subordinate Grange and moves into the jurisdiction of another Subordinate Grange, may request and receive a demit from the original Grange and become a member of the new Grange in the same degree and be entitled to advancement.”

be revised to read:

“6.9.3 A member who has received one or more degrees in a Subordinate Grange may request and receive a demit from the original Grange and become a member of a new Grange in the same degree and be entitled to advancement.”; and be it further

RESOLVED: that Chapter 6, Section 9, Paragraph 11 be amended to read:

“6.9.11 Former members may, upon application, accompanied by proof of previous membership, and the payment of the prescribed fee, be admitted to membership in any Subordinate Grange by a majority vote of the Grange.”

**708-DC – Strike Requirement for Permission to Join as Associate Member**

WHEREAS: people join the Grange and specific Granges for many reasons, and

WHEREAS: their choice to belong to a Grange that meets their needs and fits them best is being unnecessarily inhibited by the bylaw in the 2023 Digest of Laws, Chapter 8, Section 8, Paragraph 4, therefore be it

RESOLVED: to strike Chapter 8, Section 8, Paragraph 4, that reads:

“8.8.4 No resident of a State with a State Grange may become an Associate member in a non-contiguous State without the written permission of the State Master of the State in which the person resides.”.

**713-MD – National Dues for Junior Grange Members**

WHEREAS: the National Grange provides programming for Junior members; and

WHEREAS: the Junior Grange program provides value to its members; and

WHEREAS: Junior Grange members pay no dues to National Grange, but have in the past paid dues to the National Grange; and

WHEREAS: other organizations open to children charge for membership; therefore, be it

RESOLVED: that National Grange charge \$2 per year per Junior Grange or Junior 1+ member starting as of January 1, 2025; and be it further

RESOLVED: that section 4.8.2(G) of the National Grange Digest of Laws be amended to read

(G) National Grange - Part of the membership dues paid by Subordinate Granges and Associate Members to State Granges shall be paid quarterly as dues to the National Grange. Dues payable to the National Grange shall be as follows:

(1) For each individual Subordinate Grange member \$3.50 quarterly (\$7.00 for each family membership) beginning on January 1, 2015.

(2) For each Associate Grange member - \$3.50 quarterly.

(3) For each Junior and Junior 1+ Grange member - \$0.50 quarterly.

It is not intended that National Grange dues be paid only if the State Grange is successful in collecting dues. National Grange dues shall be paid on the total actual membership reported by the State Grange for that quarter.

It is specifically provided that any changes to the membership dues payable to the National Grange adopted by amendment to these By-Laws shall become effective on January 1, after the date of such adoption as per Section 4.17.1 of the Digest.

No State Grange whose dues are unpaid for more than one quarter shall be entitled to representation in the National Grange.

And be it further

RESOLVED: that State Granges and supporting Subordinate Granges for 1+ Juniors or chartered Junior Granges are encouraged to charge dues; and be it further

RESOLVED: that all National Grange dues collected for the Junior Grange members to be donated to The Grange Foundation Junior Grange fund.

*Two-year resolution. First reading adopted in 2023.*

**719-WA – Duties of the Secretary**

WHEREAS: the National Grange Digest of Laws, 6.5.9, states “A member must not disclose outside of the Grange the result of an unfavorable ballot. Should such an unfavorable ballot occur, it shall be the duty of the Master to call the attention of this law to the membership. Failure of a member to comply with this law may be cause for expulsion.”; and

WHEREAS: the National Grange Digest of Laws is silent on who is authorized to notify the applicant that their bid for membership has been denied; and

WHEREAS: the Subordinate Secretary’s installation charge states “Let your correspondence at all times be courteous, brief, yet comprehensive.”; therefore, be it

RESOLVED: that a new section, 6.5.10 be added to the Digest of Laws as follows:

6.5.10 when an application for membership has received an unfavorable ballot, it shall be the duty of the Secretary to notify the applicant in writing that their application for membership has been rejected; and be it further

**RESOLVED:** that the remaining sections be renumbered accordingly.

***722-Committee – Proposed Changes to the Fifth Degree Manual***

WHEREAS: at the 156th session of the National Grange, Resolution 730-GL – Special Committee on the Future of Pomona Granges was adopted by the delegate body, and

WHEREAS: a special committee was formed and has been meeting throughout 2023 with emphasis on studying the current membership numbers of the Pomona Granges across the nation, analyzing the general participation of the Pomona Grange sponsored activities, analyzing the current traditional procedures and ritual of the Fifth Degree, and reviewing the appropriate sections of the National Grange Digest of Laws pertaining to Pomona Granges, and

WHEREAS: the general consensus of the special committee was to continue the Pomona Grange structure but with a focus on detailing the purpose of the Pomona Grange, improving communication between State Granges and the Pomona Granges within their jurisdiction and improving support of the State Grange, therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** that various changes as shown in red on the attached pages be made to the obligation in the Fifth Degree Manual as well as the Official Obligation Ceremony of the Pomona Grange, and be it further

**RESOLVED:** that changes to Suggestions for the Fifth Degree – Part of the Specter

**Fifth Degree and Obligation Ceremony**

The obligation used in both the Fifth Degree and the Fifth Degree Obligation Ceremony be updated to the following:

Master: Patrons, I am about to administer to you the Obligation of the Fifth Degree of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry. You will repeat after me...

I hereby pledge my sacred honor..... That what I may now learn...Of the mysteries of this order.....\*Shall not be communicated outside of this order... And I solemnly promise.....That as a representative... In any legislative..... or business body of the order...My voice and my vote.....Shall always be used....To promote the welfare of the order.....Without fear, favor or personal bias. ....I declare that I never will...By word of deed.....Wrong another member of the Order....And will always endeavor...To protect our brothers and sisters from harm.....

I hereby renew and confirm.....all former pledges..... And make them a part of this obligation.

Under SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FIFTH DEGREE - PART OF SPECTER be updated to the following

The part of the Specter is very important, and the person selected (either Brother or Sister) for this impersonation should be carefully chosen and thoroughly trained, with the ritual part perfectly committed to memory.

The costume should be white, completely covering the person, with only the face and the right hand revealed; heavily draping of the garments and the arrangement of headdress adding to the weird appearance of the figure which the part suggests. The headdress should be tight to the head such as a veil and not any headdress that would appear as a point on the specter's head when the light is shined on him/her. With hall and stage properly darkened, the impressiveness of the scene can be greatly heightened by making it a "luminous Specter" indeed, by the application to the costume (but not the face) of some chemical solution obtainable from local sources; or startling color effects thrown on the Specter are possible by clever manipulation of lights from the sides of the stage while the Specter is speaking. When s/he appears between the two curtains, the flimsy one in front is parted only enough to reveal the Specter as s/he stands at stage center.

Note: Adaptations as appropriate are acceptable as long as in keeping with the intent of the Specter's role in the degree.

***725-Committee – Proposed Changes to the Digest for Pomona Granges***

WHEREAS: at the 156th session of the National Grange, Resolution 730-GL – Special Committee on the Future of Pomona Granges was adopted by the delegate body, and

WHEREAS: a special committee was formed and has been meeting throughout 2023 with emphasis on studying the current membership numbers of the Pomona Granges across the nation, analyzing the general participation of the Pomona Grange sponsored activities, analyzing the current traditional procedures and ritual of the Fifth Degree, and reviewing the appropriate sections of the National Grange Digest of Laws pertaining to Pomona Granges, and

WHEREAS: the general consensus of the special committee was to continue the Pomona Grange structure but with a focus on detailing the purpose of the Pomona Grange, improving communication between State Granges and the Pomona Granges within their jurisdiction and improving support of the State Grange, therefore be it

**RESOLVED:** that various grammatical and minor word changes be made to Chapter 7 and Chapter 11, as follows:

Chapter 7  
CODE OF THE POMONA GRANGE

**PREAMBLE**

7.0.0 It will be seen that the organization of Pomona Granges is intended and designed to “strengthen and aid” the Subordinate Granges. While the beautiful and instructive lessons of this Degree cannot fail to broaden the understanding and cultivate the moral and intellectual nature of all who receive it, at the same time the knowledge and culture there gained should be used by every member of the Degree of Pomona to strengthen and advance the interest of the Subordinate Granges. Pomona Granges are also required to take special charge of the business interests of the Order in their several districts. These interests are of vast importance and daily growing in magnitude, requiring the best wisdom of those to whom they are entrusted.

7.0.1 There must be at least two (2) Subordinate Granges to organize a Pomona Grange. If the number of Subordinate Granges included in the jurisdiction of a Pomona Grange falls below two (2), then the State Grange shall readjust the jurisdiction, or a new Subordinate Grange should be organized to maintain at least two (2) Subordinate Granges.

**ORGANIZATION**

7.1.1 Upon application being received setting forth:

(A) That the good of the Order requires the organization of a Pomona Grange in the county or district;

(B) That a suitable room will be provided, with the necessary paraphernalia for the convenience and work in such degree, and the Master of the State Grange, having authority jurisdiction, agrees that the proposed organization of a Pomona Grange will serve the good of the Order, such State Granges will provide for the organization and instruction of the Pomona Grange in accordance with the Ritual of the Fifth Degree, adopted by the National Grange.

7.1.2 The geographic area and the Subordinate Granges, included in the jurisdiction of a Pomona Grange, shall be fixed by the State Grange having authority jurisdiction or the Master of the National Grange if not within the authority jurisdiction of a State Grange. The State Grange shall have authority to readjust such geographic area jurisdiction from time to time.

7.1.3 On the reception of the certificate from of the officer or deputy finalizing perfecting the organization, that such Grange is organized, a Charter shall be issued in due form. The deputy or other officer, before completing the organization, shall see that the room provided is in proper order and suitably arranged that the officers are duly elected and installed, and that the membership fees are paid to the Treasurer of the new organization. It shall be his/her duty to instruct all officers in their several duties in the work of the Fifth

Degree. and he/she shall be entitled to receive a reasonable compensation for such service.

**MEMBERSHIP**

7.2.1 Persons applying for membership in Pomona Granges shall do so in the form prescribed by the State Grange.

7.2.2 It shall be lawful to admit candidates to Pomona Granges under such rules and regulations as the State Grange shall prescribe not conflicting with the Constitution of the Order, the Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws and Laws of the National Grange.

7.2.3 Any Fourth-Degree member in good standing, on filing an application in due form, shall on being duly elected by majority vote, be entitled to the Degree of Pomona, and membership in the Pomona Grange.

7.2.4 A member may hold a Subordinate Grange membership in one state and a Pomona Grange membership in another state upon securing surrender of jurisdiction as provided in section 7.2.1 above.

7.2.5 A member of a Pomona Grange may change membership from a Subordinate Grange in one state to a Subordinate Grange in another state without losing membership in said Pomona Grange.

**APPLICATION FEES**

7.3.1 When a member receives the Fifth Degree from a State Grange, such State Grange shall determine who collects the application fee.

**DUES**

7.4.1 The Pomona Annual Word cannot be communicated to a Pomona Grange member until such member's dues are paid for the current calendar year.

7.4.2 A State Grange may provide within any Pomona jurisdiction that additional dues may be collected from Subordinate Grange members in lieu of Pomona dues, and that a portion of such Subordinate Grange dues may be paid directly to the Pomona Grange or to the State Grange for repayment, in whole or in part, to the Pomona Grange as may be provided for in the By-Laws of the State Grange. The State Grange may pay such proportion of the dues so received to the Pomona Grange, as it provides in its By-Laws.

**DEMITTS**

7.5.1 A Demit from a Pomona Grange shall remain in force for six months from the date of issue, and shall show the date to which dues have been paid. Members having a valid demit such cards may be admitted to membership in another Pomona Grange, but shall be subject to the same form of petition and ballot as those first applying for membership.

## MEETINGS

7.6.1 Pomona Granges shall meet at least once in each calendar quarter three months, and may hold intermediate meetings as may be deemed necessary for the good of the Order.

7.6.2 Pomona Granges must open in the Fifth Degree and may later work in the Fourth Degree, however, only Pomona members may vote. Pomona Granges have authority to confer the Fifth Degree.

## DUTIES OF OFFICERS

7.7.1 Secretaries of Pomona Granges shall maintain a list of current members of their Grange.

7.7.2 State Granges shall require the Secretary of each Pomona Grange in its jurisdiction to report to the State Grange, at least quarterly annually, such membership information and other Pomona Grange activities, as prescribed by the State Grange.

7.7.3 When an officer, except the Master, fails to fill his office for four (4) consecutive meetings, without a good and sufficient reason, the Grange may then, by a majority vote of the members present, declare the office vacant. The office thus vacated may then be filled by election, at the next regular meeting.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

7.8.1 Pomona Granges shall report to their State Grange as requested by the State Grange having jurisdiction on such matters as agricultural production and marketing, agribusiness and other industries in the rural communities; county and state legislative issues; Grange sponsored services; and Grange sponsored programs designed to assist with the social, educational, legislative and internal affairs of the Pomona Grange. Such reports must be made promptly and certified by the Master and Secretary of the Pomona Grange.

7.8.2 All members of Pomona Granges shall be on the alert to aid the Subordinate Granges in their jurisdiction and shall be prompt in communicating to them all matters affecting the interests of the Order. Pomona members shall plan to attend all meetings of their Subordinate Granges with punctuality and, by their example, influence and encourage the membership to promote and participate in activities that support the purposes of our Order.

It shall be the duty of the Pomona Granges to assume responsibility for Grange growth (in membership and service) in their county or district and assist in social, educational, legislative and business interests of the Order.

## POMONA GRANGE

11.4.1 All Fourth-Degree members of a Subordinate Grange in good standing may receive the Fifth Degree.

11.4.2 The Fifth Degree may be conferred or the Official Fifth Degree Obligation Ceremony may be conferred conducted in a State or Pomona Grange only when the such Grange is opened in that Degree. ; and by a Pomona Grange only when the candidate has been elected to membership by that Pomona Grange.

11.4.3 The Fifth Degree may be conferred by a State Grange or the National Grange in full form at any annual or special meeting of said Granges. A member receiving the Fifth Degree from a State Grange or the National Grange becomes an unaffiliated Fifth Degree member, said member is not entitled to the Annual Word from the Master, unless said member has been elected to membership in a Pomona Grange.

11.4.4 An unaffiliated Fifth Degree member, if a member of a Subordinate Grange in good standing, may sit in a Pomona Grange as a visiting member in the Fifth Degree on proof of membership in the Fifth Degree, however, such member is not entitled to the Annual Word or to vote.

11.4.5 All Fifth-Degree members, including unaffiliated Fifth Degree members, are entitled to receive the Sixth Degree, provided that they are currently members of a Subordinate Grange in good standing.

11.4.6 Pomona Grange meetings must always be opened in the Fifth Degree and may close in either the Fourth or Fifth Degree.

11.4.7 Pomona Grange officers' sashes shall be made of medium weight, dark green material, shall be four inches wide - 40 inches long and lined with dark green material. Sashes to be edged with a half inch gold colored rayon braid and a one and a half inch gold colored rayon fringe across the ends. Officer's title to be designated by gold colored embroidered letter.

11.4.8 The Pomona Grange color is dark green.

*PRESENT POLICY IS REPRESENTED IN THE CURRENT DIGEST OF LAWS.*

# LABOR, JUDICIARY, TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT

## POLICY STATEMENT

### Labor

The National Grange has long fought for the rights of both employers and employees to live and thrive, understanding that worker protection and prosperity are not in conflict with company success and solvency. We believe that the hardworking men and women of America's workforce deserve the opportunity to earn a fair wage in a safe work environment and the guarantee that their pensions and subsequent benefits will be protected and preserved. We encourage businesses, municipalities, school districts, and state governments across the country to be proactive in ensuring the future growth and stability of employee pension benefits and to guard against their loss in the unfortunate event of a company merger or bankruptcy.

We support legislative efforts to streamline the H2A process to ensure that all agricultural operations can have access to guest workers. The National Grange supports an Agriculture Guest Worker Program for the establishment of the H-2C visa program for skilled agricultural workers to be administered by the USDA. This provides an option to both seasonal and year-round labor needs, recognizing that not all agriculture jobs are the same or require the same level of skill or experience. The H-2C visa program better understands the unique needs of the American farm and ranch operations and the challenges of processing raw, perishable commodities. This will offer workers and employers more choices in their employment arrangements, with more flexibility and less bureaucratic red tape than the H2A visa program.

The global economy has allowed American businesses to reach markets once inaccessible and has increased the demand for many of our goods, including our agricultural products, in far regions of the world. The National Grange continues to be an advocate for the implementation of fair free trade agreements that encourage international commerce while also incentivizing domestic job growth and economic output for American companies. We do not however, support the bailout of any country, state, or territory that has engaged in wasteful spending and behaved in a financially irresponsible manner.

### U.S. Postal Service

Mail volume has steadily dropped, over the last fifteen (15) years, but it is still an essential service, especially for rural America. Rural America needs the Post Office to deliver mail and bring supplies, medicines, groceries, ballots and more to citizens in remote areas and to isolated populations throughout the country. We also support priority mail delivery for living organism i.e. chicks, bees, plants etc. that are time sensitive. The Post Office will have to operate effectively and efficiently going forward without regular cash infusions from the federal government to continue operations. The National Grange celebrates the passage of the Postal Service Reform Act. This culminates many years of Grange advocacy for Postal Reform.

### Judiciary

Since its founding in 1867, The National Grange has been a staunch defender of our Constitution and the rights and privileges it protects for every citizen. As a nation of law and order we must work to draft, pass, and maintain legislation aimed at ensuring a peaceful society and a fair judicial system. We applaud the Supreme Court on their adoption of the ethical code of conduct. Our first responders work hard and serve bravely on a daily basis. The National Grange will forever strive to grant them the support and respect they deserve.

The National Grange understands that citizens and the officials they elect are the best candidates to write the laws by which we will be governed, and that administrative agencies, commissions and other unelected governing bodies should be prohibited from drafting and implementing such regulations that dramatically impact our daily lives. We urge elected officials at all levels to periodically review and purge outdated laws and reduce burdensome and unnecessary regulations that stifle economic growth and fundamentally impede the free market system.

We vehemently oppose the use of eminent domain to confiscate private property for commercial use or any project that does not directly benefit the general citizenry.

Identity theft continues to be a significant problem in the United States. We support legislation that would increase security of personal, banking and credit card data to prevent fraudulent enterprises from acquiring and utilizing that data. We encourage strong cybersecurity be applied by all internet providers and the citizenry to apply due diligence in protecting themselves.

### Transportation

From its inception in 1867, the National Grange has been an advocate for a strong transportation infrastructure. In many ways, agriculture is the "original" business and as such has driven the establishment of a multitude of subsequent industries down the economic food chain, including infrastructure development. The need for farmers to get their products to consumers drove the establishment of our nation's railroads, highways, and waterways and today continues to drive the development of our national infrastructure. Our nation's overall infrastructure (broadband, transportation services, water and waste management, ports, aviation, parks, schools) is in critical need of repair and upgrade. While recognizing the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021, the National Grange continues to encourage Congress to pass and appropriate the funding to repair/upgrade our nations' infrastructure. We also support the posting of the fuel tax amounts visible at the pump and those taxes be used only for highway repair, refurbishment, construction and maintenance.

The National Grange supports the passage of the Freight Rail Shipping Fair Market Act or similar legislation to reauthorize the Surface Transportation Board, empower it to address inefficient and unreliable rail service for the U.S. commodities supply chain, and to assure the Board has the necessary authority to ensure a competitive and reliable freight rail network to support the agriculture and food supply chain. The National Grange with the Agriculture Transportation Working Group encourages continued negotiations towards satisfactory labor contracts in the rail freight industry to avoid disruption in the agricultural and food supply chain.

We continue to support laws requiring drivers to slow down and move over while passing an emergency vehicle that is stopped with lights flashing and believe all drivers should be held responsible for their driving and guard against distractions from cell phones and other such devices. We strongly support technology that enhances the visibility of vehicles, school

buses, construction, farm equipment, rail cars, bicycles, motorcycles, trucks, etc. We also encourage walkers, joggers, bicyclists, etc. to wear reflective high visibility clothing. The National Grange supports increased aviation safety for all onboard. National Grange supports the designation of English as our national language and thus believe that all road and highway signage should be printed only in English. National Grange urges all states have the same criteria/standards for Commercial Drivers License (CDL) drivers.

*This policy statement covers 801-CO, 802-CO, and 805-OR*

## INDEX OF RESOLUTIONS

RES. #	STATE	TITLE	ACTION
125	PA	Cannabis – Federal Government – Banking	Adopted
131	CA	Cannabis Banking	Adopted
806	PA	Tax Incentives for Vehicle Purchases	Adopted

## ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS

### **125-PA – Cannabis – Federal Government – Banking**

WHEREAS: most banking institutions will not provide services to businesses associated with Cannabis due to it being a Schedule one drug; and

WHEREAS: if the Federal Government seizes the assets of a company operating a legal business as authorized by that state the bank would lose its investment; therefore be it

**RESOLVED: the National Grange support legislation that would prevent the Federal Government from seizing the assets of a company operating and authorized legal business according to in-state laws**

### **131-CA – Cannabis Banking**

WHEREAS: The cannabis industry has become a significant economic sector generating substantial revenue, providing employment opportunities, and contributing to the overall growth of the state's economy; and

WHEREAS: The lack of access to traditional banking services for cannabis-related businesses creates numerous challenges, including safety concerns due to excessive cash transactions, limited financial transparency, and hindrance to the state's ability to effectively regulate and monitor the industry; and

WHEREAS: Ensuring a secure and regulated banking environment for cannabis businesses would promote public safety, facilitate tax compliance, and foster economic growth; and

WHEREAS: It is in the best interest of the growers to address the current banking limitations faced by the cannabis industry and provide a viable solution for banking services; therefore, be it;

**RESOLVED: The National Grange supports cannabis industry access to the regulated and secure banking system, enabling state-licensed businesses to access traditional banking services, fostering financial transparency, and enhancing public safety.**

### **806-PA – Tax Incentives for Vehicle Purchases**

WHEREAS: there is a federal program offering tax credits exclusively for individuals who purchase electrically powered vehicles; and

WHEREAS: most of the electricity in the United States is still being generated by fossil fuels; and

WHEREAS: the environmental benefits of electrically powered vehicles are mitigated by the electricity on which they run being created by fossil fuels; and

WHEREAS: electrically powered vehicles are unable to be recycled because of the current use of lithium-ion batteries; therefore be it

**RESOLVED: that the National Grange oppose government-subsidized tax credits that solely target the purchase of alternatively powered vehicles.**

## PRESENT POLICY

### **PRESENT POLICY: LABOR & TRADE**

#### *Commercial Trade Policies*

1. The National Grange believes that opening trade between nations increases international understanding. We will actively support programs to increase the competitive position of U.S. companies in world markets.
2. The National Grange encourages purchasing American-made products and recommends that all levels of government be required to buy American made products whenever feasible.
3. The National Grange supports a fair and equitable textile import policy that provides assistance to the domestic industry, is beneficial to the producers of fibers and is not price inflationary to the U.S.' consumers.
4. The National Grange supports removal of trade, financial, and travel restrictions to Cuba.
5. The National Grange supports prohibiting the sale or lease of properties and/or businesses within the limits of the United States to any foreign purchaser or leaser whose country prohibits the sale or lease of properties and/or businesses to U.S. businesses or citizens.



6. The National Grange supports national, coordinated policies to combat trade-distorting practices instituted by foreign governments, such as currency manipulation and unilateral repudiation of sovereign debt, especially in those cases where it becomes more difficult for U.S. farmers and manufacturers to sell their products in overseas markets.

#### *Immigration, Non-Citizens, and Migrant Workers*

1. The National Grange supports the strict enforcement of the immigration laws of the United States and regular review of these laws to be sure they meet the needs of our country. We support increased efforts to patrol our borders, preventing the illegal entry of foreigners into our nation, including the assignment of military forces to assist civilian agencies in enforcing our border control policies. We support a prohibition on general amnesty for all persons in the country illegally of any nationality. We support requiring proof of citizenship and/or legal registered immigration to receive government benefits. We also recommend that federal authorities be allowed to detain any foreigners with expired visas for the duration of their investigation and processing and be deported if immigration status is determined to be illegal.
2. The National Grange supports legal programs to bring guest workers into the United States on a temporary basis for the production of seasonal crops. We support reform of current foreign guest worker programs to allow for expedited processing of foreign guest workers employed in the agricultural sector as well as reform of the H2A program so that the wage costs to farmers when hiring under the H2A program more closely reflects the prevailing local wage. We further support an amendment to the Migratory and Seasonal Agricultural Workers Protection Act recognizing that a crew chief is an independent contractor who is responsible for the general care of his crew when it does not conflict with the requirements that are assigned to the landowners.
3. Agricultural employers are responsible for checking the identification, but not for the authenticity, of migrant and seasonal worker documentation at the time of employment. Employers who unknowingly hire persons in the country illegally should not be penalized. National Grange supports legislation or a Constitutional amendment to require that children born in the United States must have one parent who is already a United States citizen in order to automatically receive citizenship and government benefits.
4. The National Grange supports enactment of a practical and enforceable guest worker visa program. The National Grange supports the expansion of the H-1B visa program for professionals/advanced agricultural skills/technical skills to enter the United States to provide services in sectors where there is a documented need.
5. The National Grange supports existing federal law that includes shepherders in the H-2A visa (temporary work visa) program.
6. The National Grange supports legislation that would amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to expand the H-2A nonimmigrant visa category (temporary agricultural workers) to include dairy workers and shepherders with the initial period of admission for such temporary workers being three years and allowing for extensions of additional three-year periods without requiring a period of absence from the United States be necessary for an extension.
7. The National Grange urges all jurisdictions, including sanctuary jurisdictions, to cooperate with federal immigration and law enforcement authorities to detain and incarcerate violent offenders who are in this country illegally.

#### *Wages, Employment, and Unions*

1. The National Grange supports the repeal of the Davis-Bacon Act of 1931. Until that time, the threshold exemption level of the Act should be indexed to the rate of inflation.
2. The Grange opposes the legislative enactment of a Farm Worker Bill of Rights. We oppose legislation that would impose a 40-hour workweek that places a limitation on hours that can be worked in a single day, or that requires time and a half pay for overtime on a farming operation.
3. The National Grange opposes the child labor laws of the U.S. Department of Labor restricting family members under the age of 18 from working with animals, handling pesticides, working in timber operations, manure pits, grain elevators, feed lots, livestock auctions, and cultivating, harvesting, and curing tobacco, as well as restricting family members under the age of 16 from operating power-driven farm equipment; examples: tractors, combines, farm trucks, ATV's, and shredders.
4. The National Grange supports realistic OSHA workplace safety regulations. It should be both the employer and employee's responsibility to follow safe work practices. Any employer who is cited by OSHA for violating workplace safety regulations should be allowed a reasonable period of time to correct that violation before being penalized. The National Grange believes that OSHA reform legislation as well as any other new workplace health and safety standards should exempt farms having fewer than 10 full-time employees.
5. The National Grange favors lifting the bans in the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1943, which outlaws work that is done in the home in embroidery, gloves and mittens, handkerchiefs, buttons and buckles, jewelry and clothing.
6. The National Grange supports allowing individuals enrolled in an accredited job training or vocational education program, who are collecting unemployment compensation, to decline offers of employment without losing their unemployment benefits.
7. The National Grange supports legislation that would require products bearing an "American Made", or equivalent claim, to have U.S. manufacturing costs constituting at least 75% of the total manufacturing costs for the product, and to be substantially assembled in the United States.
8. The National Grange supports legislation that requires all employers to pay at least the federal minimum wage, regardless of whether the employees are tipped. We also support legislation to allow younger teens (ages 13-15) to be given the privilege of working a maximum of ten hours a week for less than the federal minimum wage. After a probationary period, established by the employer, the younger teen should be paid the federal minimum wage.

9. The National Grange urges the necessary changes to the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) that would exempt volunteer worker member co-operatives from minimum wage requirements, allowing members access to quality foods at affordable prices.
10. The National Grange strongly urges that the process to form a new union continue to be by secret ballot. We favor binding arbitration clauses in labor contracts covering public sector employees.
11. We support the right of individuals to join a union and collectively bargain in good faith, as long as employees are not required to join or contribute money to any organization that claims to represent their interests in the workplace. We further support mandatory restrictions on the use of compulsory union dues for political, charitable or social causes without dues-paying members' consent.
12. The National Grange supports legislation that allows employers to hire replacement workers during a strike.

## **PRESENT POLICY: JUDICIARY**

### *Banking and Consumer Credit Law*

1. The National Grange supports strong independent banks in lieu of further concentration of banking and financial powers in interstate and nationwide firms. Banks should be prohibited from entering the field of general commerce.
2. The National Grange believes that any banks allowed to write and sell insurance must be subject to all applicable state insurance regulations and laws as administered by State Insurance Commissions. We believe that any banks that are allowed to offer or underwrite securities must be subject to regulation by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.
3. The National Grange supports the continued independence of the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) and opposes the merger of the NCUA with any other government financial institution insurance fund.
4. The National Grange urges state and federal banking regulators to better monitor fees charged by banks, reduce and eliminate those that are unfair, and provide customers with protection against aggressive banking business practices.
5. The National Grange supports regulations requiring that all dormancy and/or inactivity fees for store gift cards and prepaid gift cards be permanently eliminated, just as these fees have been eliminated for credit cards.
6. We oppose unreasonable delays in the availability of the funds from a deposited check. We support requiring all banks to honor government checks that are presented to them for payment.
7. The National Grange supports cannabis industry access to the regulated and secure banking system, enabling state-licensed businesses to access traditional banking services, fostering financial transparency and enhancing public safety.

2023

### *Bankruptcy*

1. The National Grange favors additional penalties for bankruptcy fraud to combat planned bankruptcies and other abuses.
2. The National Grange supports companies or businesses that file for bankruptcy to ensure that the employees who are owed compensation are the first secured creditors.
3. The National Grange supports legislation, which would classify producers having an ownership interest in agricultural products as secured creditors in bankruptcy cases.

### *Children and Family Law*

1. The National Grange supports efforts to increase public awareness of child abuse and the existence of child predators in our society. All child abuse laws and child predator laws should be reviewed, revised, and enforced so as to secure the safety and wellbeing of all children while remaining protective of the rights of innocent families and individuals. The National Grange supports equalizing sentencing of perpetrators of sexual abuse without regard of the familial relationship of perpetrator to the child. We further support greater notification requirements on convicted child predators, including immediate notification to authorities of address changes, community notification of the presence of a convicted child predator, a national child predator registry on the internet listing the current address of all convicted child predators and substantially increased penalties for failure of convicted sex offenders to comply.
2. The National Grange favors reforms that would consider the best interests of the child in all proceedings, investigations, or rulings by the courts.
3. The National Grange supports requiring that the biological parent's name, if known and proven, be recorded on the child's birth certificate for purposes of determining the child's right to Social Security, and other support that should be provided.
4. The National Grange supports policies that grant legal surrogate decision-making authority to grandparent caregivers in the absence of responsible parents or stepparents. We support financial, social and legal services as needed to grandparent caregivers raising grandchildren. We further support protecting the visitation rights of grandparents. In the case of a child who is legally removed from the parents, the grandparents should be the first to be considered as the custodian of that child.

### *Civil Law*

1. The National Grange supports fairness in the civil judicial system at the state and federal levels through reform of tort, liability, and malpractice law. We favor a civil law system in which the plaintiff, if they lose, will be responsible to pay the defendant's legal and court costs when the court rules the lawsuit was frivolous. We further support limiting the amount of contingency fees that are paid to lawyers as well as putting caps on excessive jury awards for economic and noneconomic damages, such as pain, suffering, and bad faith. We support placing limits on findings of joint and several liability and clearly established standards of bad faith action. We support incentives for alternative dispute resolutions, such as arbitration.

2. The National Grange supports businesses and medical professionals are not required to use Social Security numbers as identification and be allowed to use a different means of identification for customers and patients.
3. The National Grange favors legislation to regulate support animals to reduce the opportunity to fraudulently claim pets as support animals.
4. The National Grange believes that Legal Services Corporations and local legal aid bureaus should not receive any federal funding for suits against farmers. The National Grange also believes individuals should be prohibited from initiating so called "citizen suits," civil litigation against farmers and others for environmental violations without demonstrating any direct loss or damage to initiate such a suit.
5. The National Grange supports legislation that would prevent the Federal Government from seizing the assets of a company operating an authorized legal business according to in-state laws. <sup>2023</sup>

#### *Consumer Protection Law*

1. The National Grange supports legislation to allow the consumer more control over who has access to credit reports.
2. The National Grange supports identification of all products that are foreign-made or assembled.
3. The National Grange supports requiring all companies to comply to the full extent of the law in setting strict limits for lead, lead paint and chemicals known as phthalates, and the mandatory third-party testing of products geared for children 12 and under.
4. The National Grange urges Congress to enact laws protecting an individual's right to privacy and to protect the confidentiality of all personal records from fraudulent use. The National Grange supports a program to educate individual consumers regarding how to report suspected identity theft activities. We also support stronger penalties for those convicted of identity theft including full restitution to all victims. National Grange supports allowing children's Social Security numbers and other private information to be frozen by the child's legal custodian in order to protect the child from identity theft.
5. The National Grange supports allowing nonprofit organizations to make continued "incidental use" of copyrighted music.
6. The National Grange supports regulations be enacted that require companies to give consumers the option of mailed billings or statements without surcharges.
7. The National Grange encourages companies to print product expiration or use by dates in the mm/dd/yy format.
8. The National Grange encourages changes in federal legislation, such that "compounding pharmacies" participating in interstate commerce would be classified as pharmaceutical manufacturers, under the Food, Drug and Cosmetics Act. The National Grange also supports that, as pharmaceutical manufacturers, "compounding pharmacies" be subject to Pharmaceutical Good Manufacturing Practices, FDA inspection and enforcement, and federal drug industry user fees.

#### *Crime and Punishment*

1. The National Grange supports imposing stiff mandatory sentences in criminal cases. We believe plea-bargaining should be restrained. We further believe that convicted criminals should be responsible for restitution to their victims and society. The National Grange believes that persons who are convicted of rape, murder, or any three-felony offenses should serve their full sentence without benefit of parole or furlough. We support the death penalty for premeditated crimes ending in death. We further support the death penalty for all citizens who are convicted of military espionage in either peacetime or war.
2. The National Grange favors classifying the importing, manufacturing, cultivation, or distribution of all illegal drugs as felonies under state and federal statutes. An appropriate prison sentence should be imposed upon conviction for any felony drug offense.
3. The National Grange continues to recommend that the U.S. Congress reauthorize the Trafficking Victims Protection Act to help prevent enslavement of persons and protect those who have been victims of enslavement. The National Grange also encourages its members to educate themselves and others about the dangers of human trafficking.
4. The National Grange opposes federal regulations that force the closings of jails or that require excessive expenditures of State funds to support correctional facilities.

#### *Firearms and the Second Amendment*

1. The National Grange opposes any additional gun control laws until the present laws are strictly enforced. We oppose legislation restricting the rights of citizens to bear arms for protection of their families, property and common defense, except for assault weapons manufactured and designed specifically for military use and stun guns. We favor severe and mandatory sentences, including incarceration, for anyone using firearms while committing a crime.
2. The National Grange supports prohibiting the manufacture and sale of toy guns that are replicas of real guns.
3. The National Grange urges at the federal level, a law of national reciprocity between states be created so that a legal permit to carry weapons from one state be recognized by all states.

#### *General Law*

1. The National Grange supports tort reform to exempt manufacturers of goods and machinery from all lawsuits, fines, liabilities and other civil penalties if they meet all the state and federal regulations that were in effect at the time the product was built or produced.
2. The National Grange supports federal legislation to prohibit gambling on the Internet. We further support legislation to make the unsolicited e-mailing or posting of advertisements for pornographic websites and materials both a criminal and civil offense in order to control the availability of pornographic material to children.
3. The National Grange recommends that there be no changes in the federal laws that currently ban the production and sale of marijuana in the United States.

4. The National Grange supports legislation to place salvia divinorum under the control of the Controlled Substance Act.
5. The National Grange supports legislation, which will create a new 12th Circuit Court of Appeals to meet the needs to the Pacific Northwest, Alaska, Hawaii and the Pacific Territories.
6. The National Grange believes that state law, not federal law, should have jurisdiction over “hate crimes” and state law should be responsible for assigning specific punishment for these crimes.
7. The National Grange believes that cell phone use by inmates should be banned at all state and federal correctional facilities. Prison visitors should be required to surrender all cell phones at the facility entrance until their departure.
8. The National Grange supports legislation requiring that Members of Congress shall deposit all personal investments into blind trusts for the duration of their term of office.
9. The National Grange supports the use of drone aircraft and associated technologies for agricultural purposes.
10. The National Grange opposes any court ordered halting of the harvesting and transporting of any farmer’s perishable crop by declaring the crop as “hot goods” because of violation of minimum wage, overtime and child labor provisions of federal law.
11. The National Grange supports the principle that all federal judges with the exception of the Supreme Court be reconfirmed every 10 years to remain on the bench.
12. The National Grange supports revisions to the Hatch Act to permit federal employees to run for local municipal and county offices so long as no conflict of interest exists.
13. The National Grange urges Congress to keep the number of members of the United States Supreme Court at one Chief Justice of the United States plus eight associate justices and The National Grange opposes any legislation that will remove the lifetime tenure of the justices of the United States Supreme Court.

#### *Insurance Law*

1. The National Grange supports the efforts of the National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies to strengthen and improve insurance guarantee funds.
2. The National Grange believes that the National Flood Insurance Program should operate on an actuarially sound basis. National Flood Insurance Programs (buildings, structures) should not be available for properties that have suffered multiple losses where steps were not taken to protect the property from further damage.
3. The National Grange urges that the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) conduct a public awareness campaign to help property owners understand their rights when there is a flood map reclassification.
4. The National Grange urges the National Flood Insurance Program to change policy provisions to allow blanket coverage over multiple structures on a property. Additionally, we support the continuation of the ‘Write Your Own’ (local insurance agent) model of securing Flood Insurance.
5. The National Grange urges state and federal regulators to establish the necessary safeguards that will make it possible for the viatical industry to serve viators and investors in a responsible way.
6. The National Grange opposes any legislation that would require insurance companies to comply with “The Community Reinvestment Act,” 12 U.S.C. 2901.

#### *Protection for Victims and Jurors*

1. We support increased protection for those who serve on juries. All jury deliberations should remain confidential. The National Grange supports legislation to forbid public disclosure of information about criminal investigations that could be detrimental to the case of either the prosecution or the defense, until after the case’s final disposition.
2. The National Grange supports legislation to assure that victims and witnesses of violent crimes must be notified in writing at least 60 days before any hearings in which the person who has been convicted of that crime seeks release or a change in release status from either a prison or a mental institution.
3. The National Grange supports legislation to protect the language interpreter with an interpreter/client privilege just as lawyers have attorney/client privileges.
4. The National Grange supports federal legislation to create a reliable, national database of DNA evidence acquired during previous investigations of sexual assault to be used in the investigation of other sexual assault cases across the nation that will balance the rights of the accused to due process and the presumption of innocence with the rights to privacy of the victims of sexual assault and the assurance of swift and certain justice. The National Grange further supports federal grants to the states to audit the quality of the inventory of prior evidence acquired from sexual assault investigations by local law enforcement agencies in order to increase the value of this evidence in the investigation of sexual assault cases across the nation.
5. The National Grange supports the establishment of a consumer-oriented national conviction registry of medical professionals who have been previously convicted of ethical or criminal activity and barred from the practice of medicine.

## **PRESENT POLICY: TRANSPORTATION**

#### *Air Travel*

1. The National Grange supports the continuation of assignment of Air Marshals on random flights.
2. The National Grange opposes legislation authorizing the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to establish fees for air traffic control and related activities, services, facilities, and equipment that increases user fees and taxes for general aviation

such as crop dusting, the patrol of pipeline and power lines, and forest fires and commuting to rural communities. We also oppose legislation creating a board dominated by airline representatives that would recommend FAA user fee pricing schedules.

#### *General Transportation Policy*

1. The National Grange believes that a balanced transportation system, at the lowest cost consistent with adequate and efficient service, is in the best interest of farmers and consumers. We oppose efforts by state governments to toll expanses of the Interstate Highway System built and operating as toll free.
2. The National Grange urges federal and state weed control agencies to control noxious weeds on their highway rights-of-way and to work with the railroads to control noxious weeds along railroad rights-of-way but always respecting the landowners' property rights and preferences.
3. The National Grange supports inter-modal ownership of transportation carriers only when that intermodal ownership is consistent with the public interest, will not unreasonably restrain competition and will not result in segments of agriculture and rural areas being held by captive shippers.
4. The National Grange supports creating a national uniform vehicle Identification Placard system to be used by disabled drivers. Legislation should be enacted to include blindness as a provision for issuance of a disabled parking permit.
5. The National Grange strongly supports a multi-media simple public announcement system that meets the needs of special-needs citizens transportation systems.
6. The National Grange supports legislation that allows independent vehicle maintenance facilities or car dealership garages to have access to the technology/programming needed to repair all makes of vehicles so that consumers have a choice of where to take their vehicle for maintenance and repair.
7. The National Grange supports safety and educational programs for individuals 17 years and younger for the use of all non-roadway vehicles such as ATV's, snowmobiles, dirt bikes, sleds, etc. and also endorses the use of helmets and other protective gear.
8. The National Grange supports a standardized toll road transponder that works on all roads across the USA.
9. The National Grange opposes government -subsidized tax credits that solely target the purchase of alternatively powered vehicles. <sup>2023</sup>

#### *Highway Policy, Interstate System and Federal Highway Trust Fund (HTF)*

1. The National Grange strongly supports the continuation and reauthorization of the Highway Trust Fund (HTF). We support removing the HTF from the federal budget. We oppose any proposal that would change the concept of dedicating all federal motor fuel taxes to the HTF to be used for highway and highway related purposes. The National Grange supports the creation of a Federal Mass Transportation Trust Fund from user tax revenues separate from the HTF and highway user taxes.
2. The National Grange opposes increasing the federal gasoline tax for purposes other than the HTF and reaffirms its position that all funds received from highway fuel taxes be used only for construction and maintenance of roads and bridges. The federal and state governments should not use these funds to balance their budgets or fund other programs. We oppose impounding HTF monies as a means of enforcement of federal laws.
3. We support federal legislation to remove federal fuel tax from fuel used to operate farm trucks, including legislation that would use a federal motor fuel tax increase to reduce federal budget deficits.
4. The National Grange favors full compensation for homes, farming operations and businesses when displaced by eminent domain for highway rights-of-way.
5. The National Grange calls for increased border surveillance to ensure that commercial vehicles and drivers based in Canada and Mexico are in full compliance with the United States' motor vehicle equipment standards and requirements.
6. The National Grange supports streamlining environmental requirements to expedite the completion of transportation congestion-relief projects in order to reduce pollution while promoting efficient land use and road capacity.
7. The National Grange supports the following provisions as part of any future reauthorization of the federal highway programs and/or the Federal Highway Trust Fund (HTF) additional funding for core safety programs that are properly directed to lifesaving roadway safety projects.
  - a. provisions to reduce administrative delays at federal and state agencies responsible for approving highway planning.
  - b. financial incentives for states to obligate new congestion relief funding for projects that reduce highway bottlenecks.
  - c. full funding by the Congress for all "guaranteed" highway funds in future Transportation Appropriations bills.
  - d. full enforcement of additional new fuel tax fraud provisions and additional credit for the HTF for revenue enhancements related to the new tax collection on ethanol.

#### *Highway Policy – Non-Interstate*

1. The National Grange urges government agencies to conserve land for agricultural purposes when considering the location and design of highways including planting trees and shrubs along highways in places where such growth could stop soil erosion and aid in snow control.
2. The National Grange supports the federal-aid system of highways being continued as a federal-state partnership with more flexibility in the states' use of money for safety, construction, and maintenance of state and local highways, including rural roads and bridges that are built to the community's needs as determined by county and local road commissions.

3. The National Grange recommends that the Highway Safety Administration require surface highway reflectors on the center lane divider of all two-way highways on the federal-aid highway system and adopt standards to ensure a better and more durable road surface.
4. The National Grange supports expansion of rural intra-city bus, air and rail services.
5. The National Grange supports funding to construct adequate parking or rest areas to allow commercial and other drivers to stop and rest. We encourage the use of "Weigh Stations" as rest locations.
6. The National Grange continues to uphold the States' rights to regulate the farmer's transporting of equipment and crops and opposes any federal legislation or regulations that would require farmers to obtain commercial drivers' licenses to operate farm equipment.
7. The National Grange supports legislation to increase federal funding to maintain and repair local bridges throughout the nation.

#### *Impaired Driving*

1. The National Grange believes the dangers of drinking and driving should be included in all federal anti-drug information and education programs.
2. The National Grange supports maintaining the minimum age for the consumption of alcoholic beverages at 21.
3. The National Grange recommends that transportation authorities, both government and privately owned, be vested with the authority to randomly test employees for illegal drug and alcohol use or impairment.

#### *Railroad Transportation*

1. The National Grange supports scheduling more commuter trains to offer better service to the public.
2. The National Grange urges all appropriate state and federal agencies to consider economic impact and public interests when undertaking transportation planning with regard to the impact of rail line abandonment. We support integration of rail and highway system planning in advance of possible abandonment to maximize economies to the public and private sectors as well as federal assistance to states for this purpose and to assist in rail takeovers by states where maintenance of service is cost effective to local or state governments and to local shippers. We support economic and social impact statements from railroads as well as meaningful local public hearings in the areas affected as a part of the abandonment process.
3. The National Grange supports the development and maintenance of a strong and effective rail network to enhance competition among and between rail carriers to ensure efficient rail service and reasonable rates.
4. The National Grange supports legislation requiring warning reflectors to be placed on both sides of all railroad cars in the United States.
5. The National Grange supports legislation that would require railroads to reveal to each landowner, before abandonment, the full and complete legal basis on which the railroad has claimed its right to occupy the corridor. If the railroad's right is less than fee simple ownership, the railroad should disclose to each landowner that its occupancy right would be extinguished upon abandonment.
6. The National Grange supports efforts to create a Commuter Bill of Rights that would guarantee that rail passengers, stranded on railway trains, would have access to food, and water, as well as assure their timely removal from the disabled train.

#### *Roadway Safety*

1. The National Grange supports the enforcement of weight limits on vehicles operating on our highways.
2. The National Grange supports truck regulations requiring the use of brushes and/or flaps that will channel the water down reducing the spray.
3. The National Grange supports legislation that would require rear and side impact/under ride guards on all newly manufactured semi-trailers.
4. The National Grange requests that the Federal Highway Administration establish and promulgate standards for the minimum walk light time, type of visual images, and audible sound level for controlled crosswalks throughout the United States.
5. The National Grange supports requiring railroad crossings in rural areas should have ripple strips installed in road surfaces on approaches to crossings, be clear of brush and other vision-inhibiting material and be equipped with flashing warning lights.
6. The National Grange supports requiring that all motorcycle, bicycle, and moped riders wear protective helmets, and wear high visibility clothing or have an apparatus to make them more visible to other motorists.
7. The National Grange supports requiring all motor vehicles to have a rear bumper or undercarriage guard coming within 16 inches above the ground.
8. The National Grange urges automobile manufacturers to include the following modifications on their new models: uniformly located door latches; louder and more visible interior direction signal indicators; spare tires of equal quality and size as regular tires; uniform tow points; light sensitive sensors that would automatically turn on automobile headlights at a certain degree of darkness; at least one mirror on the right side of a vehicle to reflect an undistorted view of images and a curvature type mirror to pick up blind spots; and headlights that turn on automatically with the windshield wipers.
9. The National Grange supports standardizing the cellular emergency numbers for the interstate highway systems throughout the country.
10. The National Grange supports legislation that would penalize a driver for using a cell phone when it is the cause of an accident.

11. The National Grange supports regulations that would strengthen the safety standards for smaller cars and opposes any weakening of the safety standards of sport utility vehicles.
12. The National Grange strongly supports state and national laws that require reflective tape on all existing and new trucks to help reduce under-ride accidents.
13. The National Grange supports legislation banning high intensity discharge (HID) headlights and/or driving lights and/or Xenon lights.
14. The National Grange encourages all states to use the same laws pertaining to school bus operations and traffic control around school buses. We support legislation requiring all newly manufactured school buses to be equipped with strobe lights that are highly visible in all types of weather. We further support, all school buses being required to have a sign on the back stating "Stay Back 50 Feet," and that all school buses manufactured have blind spot sensors or devices.
15. The National Grange supports present U.S. Department of Transportation requirements for random drug and alcohol testing for school bus drivers.
16. The National Grange supports legislation restricting the placement of any visual entertainment device within the driver's area of vision within a motor vehicle.
17. The National Grange supports requirements that newer vehicles be equipped with blind spot indicators visible by the driver and that after-market suppliers have blind spot indicators available for earlier models.

#### *Truck Transportation Policy*

1. The National Grange supports legislation and regulatory policies that enhance stability and competition in truck operations for cost-effective and dependable service.
2. The National Grange supports regulations requiring brake lights to be activated on commercial motor vehicles when a Jake Brake is used.
3. The National Grange supports legislation that would require reporting of positive drug tests for drivers with any commercial license to the Department of Motor Vehicles of the issuing state so long as there is a mandatory right of appeal and a second test to eliminate false positive results. The report of a positive drug test should remain in the driver's file for a period of two years.
4. The National Grange supports Department of Transportation (DOT) reclassifying light-, medium-, and heavy-duty utility vehicles separate from on-highway (cross-country) trucks. However, we recommend that logbooks not be required on light, medium, and heavy-duty utility vehicles.

#### *Water Transportation*

1. The National Grange supports a moratorium on user fee increases for agricultural products transported on coastal and inland waterways. All user fees on waterways should be based on the percentage of federal expenditures attributable to opening waterways to barge traffic and should be placed in an Inland Waterways Trust Fund and used only for construction and maintenance of inland waterways.
2. The National Grange supports maintaining the current United States Corps of Engineers' season for transporting grain on the Missouri River.
3. The National Grange supports the immediate upgrades to the locks on the facilitating greater barge traffic and providing an economic engine to fuel growth and prosperity.
4. The National Grange recommends the repeal of the Jones Act, which requires all freight moved between American ports being carried in American ships.
5. The National Grange supports legislation to prevent any company controlled by a foreign government from taking over management of U.S. port facilities.

### **PRESENT POLICY: FOREIGN & DOMESTIC AFFAIRS**

#### *Foreign Aid*

1. The National Grange urges the U.S. government to unconditionally extend foreign aid only in cases of natural disasters. We further support basing a greater use of agricultural products in lieu of cash transfers for humanitarian assistance; closer monitoring of International Monetary Fund (IMF) loans to encourage developing countries to provide self-help; considering the recipient countries' present foreign debt, repayment schedule, and record before providing them with new financial assistance; and keeping in mind the needs of domestic programs when Congress considers the appropriate amount of foreign aid.
2. National Grange recommends that all countries share in the economic assistance to developing countries through the United Nations. The National Grange supports requiring any country receiving U.S. foreign aid to purchase products made or grown in the United States.
3. The National Grange favors canceling all U.S. aid and supplies to foreign countries that take, hold, or kill American citizens, refuse to recognize international law, willingly permit the production and shipment of illegal drugs into our country, or allow the takeover of U.S. embassies or any property belonging to the U.S. government.
4. The National Grange encourages agricultural research and development in and for developing nations.

#### *International Relations and the United Nations*

1. The National Grange supports a friendly relationship with the Republic of China (Taiwan).

2. The National Grange supports a positive non-military program promoting the democratic form of government to roll back or contain dictatorial forms of government.
3. The National Grange supports actions by our government in condemning terrorist acts and supports efforts to secure the release of all hostages.
4. The National Grange supports a U.S. foreign policy that only allows American troops to be committed to foreign countries in turmoil when it is in the strategic interest of the United States and adequate safeguards are provided. We support the United States' involvement in United Nations' military operations including funding such military operations only with the approval of Congress.
5. The National Grange strongly supports extending and maintaining the protections of U.S. Constitutional law, guaranteeing individual rights, under all international law.
6. The National Grange urges the United States government not to ratify or sign agreements or treaties that limit individual rights guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution or Bill of Rights, or that impose taxation on the citizens of the United States.
7. The National Grange continues to support the US non-participation in the International Criminal Court and prohibit the use of appropriated funds for the establishment or operation of the Court. We further urge the U.S. government to use all of its diplomatic and political influence to protect U.S. Service persons or U.S. citizens from being subject to the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court.
8. The National Grange and in turn United States Government request the International Boundary and Water Commission take immediate action to have Mexico meet its treaty obligations.

#### *National Defense*

1. The National Grange supports international agreements leading toward a balanced reduction and eventual elimination of all nuclear weapons and chemical weapons. To complement this objective, we further support the development of strategic and civil defense systems.
2. The National Grange recommends that the federal government negotiate with foreign countries for compensation for the military defenses that we provide to their countries.
3. The National Grange supports a strong effective military. We urge Congress to appropriate sufficient funding, including adequate pay for all branches of the military. We support policies which will re-establish effective security and intelligence capabilities.
4. The National Grange supports the continued presence of United States Armed Forces in South Korea.
5. The National Grange supports expanding our military capabilities using unmanned aerial vehicles.
6. The National Grange favors all citizens between the ages of 18 and 26 be required to register with the Selective Service.

#### *U.S. Postal Service*

1. The National Grange supports efforts by the Postal Service to eliminate waste, hold down operating costs and increase services and reliability. We support the following postal reforms:
  - a. We urge that any future postal rate increases be no greater than the rate of inflation.
  - b. We will support stable rates or eligibility requirements for nonprofit organizations' postal rates. We support the retention of the third-class bulk mail rate for not-for-profit-organizations at a reasonable rate.
  - c. We support the reorganization of the Postal Rate Commission to include representation of the interests of mail users.
2. The National Grange supports Rural Free Mail Delivery Service as an essential part of universal mail service. We support the continuation of rural Saturday mail delivery and all other mail services to rural areas. Patrons of rural post offices must be given six months' notice before their post office is closed and must be provided with an opportunity to express their viewpoint at a public hearing.
3. The National Grange encourages the Postal Service to make their patrons aware that handicapped persons may apply for mail delivery to their door.
4. The National Grange encourages Congress to allow the U.S. Postal Service to be innovative and flexible in the modern business world and develop a competitive culture within its employees so it may return itself to financial and operational soundness and continue to fulfill its mission.
5. The National Grange urges the United States Postal Service to utilize guidelines such as the 10-mile proximity rule, in relation to the proposed post office closures, taking into consideration the special needs of the community as well as the statistical analysis developed for closure criteria.



**FOUNDING OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE:**  
**December 4, 1867 - Washington, D.C**

**HISTORY OF THE CONVENTIONS OF THE NATIONAL GRANGE**

Session #	Year, Month	Place	Master
1	1868, Jan.	Washington, DC	William Saunders
2	1869, April	Washington, DC	William Saunders
3	1870, Jan.	Washington, DC	William Saunders
4	1871, Jan.	Washington, DC	William Saunders
5	1872, Jan.	Washington, DC	William Saunders
6	1873, Jan.	Georgetown, DC	William Saunders
7	1874, Feb.	St. Louis, MO	D.W. Adams
8	1875, Feb.	Charleston, SC	D.W. Adams
9	1875, Nov.	Louisville, KY	D.W. Adams
10	1876, Nov.	Chicago, IL	John T. Jones
11	1877, Nov.	Cincinnati, OH	John T. Jones
12	1878, Nov.	Richmond, VA	S.E. Adams
13	1879, Nov.	Canandaigua, NY	S.E. Adams
14	1880, Nov.	Washington, DC	J.J. Woodman
15	1881, Nov.	Washington, DC	J.J. Woodman
16	1882, Nov.	Indianapolis, IN	J.J. Woodman
17	1883, Nov.	Washington, DC	J.J. Woodman
18	1884, Nov.	Nashville, TN	J.J. Woodman
19	1885, Nov.	Boston, MA	J.J. Woodman
20	1886, Nov.	Philadelphia, PA	I.P. Darden
21	1887, Nov.	Lansing, MI	I.P. Darden
22	1888, Nov.	Topeka, KS	James Draper
23	1889, Nov.	Sacramento, CA	J.H. Brigham
24	1890, Nov.	Atlanta, GA	J.H. Brigham
25	1891, Nov.	Springfield, OH	J.H. Brigham
26	1892, Nov.	Concord, NH	J.H. Brigham
27	1893, Nov.	Syracuse, NY	J.H. Brigham
28	1894, Nov.	Springfield, IL	J.H. Brigham
29	1895, Nov.	Worcester, MA	J.H. Brigham
30	1896, Nov.	Washington, DC	J.H. Brigham
31	1897, Nov.	Harrisburg, PA	J.H. Brigham
32	1898, Nov.	Concord, NH	Aaron Jones
33	1899, Nov.	Springfield, OH	Aaron Jones
34	1900, Nov.	Washington, DC	Aaron Jones
35	1901, Nov.	Lewiston, ME	Aaron Jones
36	1902, Nov.	Lansing, MI	Aaron Jones
37	1903, Nov.	Rochester, NY	Aaron Jones
38	1904, Nov.	Portland, OR	Aaron Jones
39	1905, Nov.	Atlantic City, NJ	Aaron Jones
40	1906, Nov.	Denver, CO	N.J. Bachelder
41	1907, Nov.	Hartford, CT	N.J. Bachelder
42	1908, Nov.	Washington, DC	N.J. Bachelder
43	1909, Nov.	Des Moines, IA	N.J. Bachelder
44	1910, Nov.	Atlantic City, NJ	N.J. Bachelder
45	1911, Nov.	Columbus, OH	N.J. Bachelder
46	1912, Nov.	Spokane, WA	Oliver Wilson
47	1913, Nov.	Manchester, NH	Oliver Wilson
48	1914, Nov.	Wilmington, DE	Oliver Wilson
49	1915, Nov.	Oakland, CA	Oliver Wilson
50	1916, Nov.	Washington, DC	Oliver Wilson
51	1917, Nov.	St. Louis, MO	Oliver Wilson
52	1918, Nov.	Syracuse, NY	Oliver Wilson
53	1919, Nov.	Grand Rapids, MI	Oliver Wilson
54	1920, Nov.	Boston, MA	S.J. Lowell
55	1921, Nov.	Portland, OR	S.J. Lowell
56	1922, Nov.	Wichita, KS	S.J. Lowell
57	1923, Nov.	Pittsburgh, PA	S.J. Lowell

58	1924, Nov.	Atlantic City, NJ	L.J. Taber
59	1925, Nov.	Sacramento, CA	L.J. Taber
60	1926, Nov.	Portland, ME	L.J. Taber
61	1927, Nov.	Cleveland, OH	L.J. Taber
62	1928, Nov.	Washington, DC	L.J. Taber
63	1929, Nov.	Seattle, WA	L.J. Taber
64	1930, Nov.	Rochester, NY	L.J. Taber
65	1931, Nov.	Madison, WI	L.J. Taber
66	1932, Nov.	Winston-Salem, NC	L.J. Taber
67	1933, Nov.	Boise, ID	L.J. Taber
68	1934, Nov.	Hartford, CT	L.J. Taber
69	1935, Nov.	Sacramento, CA	L.J. Taber
70	1936, Nov.	Columbus, OH	L.J. Taber
71	1937, Nov.	Harrisburg, PA	L.J. Taber
72	1938, Nov.	Portland, OR	L.J. Taber
73	1939, Nov.	Peoria, IL	L.J. Taber
74	1940, Nov.	Syracuse, NY	L.J. Taber
75	1941, Nov.	Worcester, MA	L.J. Taber
76	1942, Nov.	Wenatchee, WA	A.S. Goss
77	1943, Nov.	Grand Rapids, MI	A.S. Goss
78	1944, Nov.	Winston-Salem, NC	A.S. Goss
79	1945, Nov.	Kansas City, MO	A.S. Goss
80	1946, Nov.	Portland, OR	A.S. Goss
81	1947, Nov.	Columbus, OH	A.S. Goss
82	1948, Nov.	Portland, ME	A.S. Goss
83	1949, Nov.	Sacramento, CA	A.S. Goss
84	1950, Nov.	Minneapolis, MN	Henry D. Sherwood
85	1951, Nov.	Atlantic City, NJ	Herschel D. Newsom
86	1952, Nov.	Rockford, IL	Herschel D. Newsom
87	1953, Nov.	Burlington, VT	Herschel D. Newsom
88	1954, Nov.	Spokane, WA	Herschel D. Newsom
89	1955, Nov.	Cleveland, OH	Herschel D. Newsom
90	1956, Nov.	Rochester, NY	Herschel D. Newsom
91	1957, Nov.	Colorado Springs, CO	Herschel D. Newsom
92	1958, Nov.	Grand Rapids, MI	Herschel D. Newsom
93	1959, Nov.	Long Beach, CA	Herschel D. Newsom
94	1960, Nov.	Winston-Salem, NC	Herschel D. Newsom
95	1961, Nov.	Worcester, MA	Herschel D. Newsom
96	1962, Nov.	Fort Wayne, IN	Herschel D. Newsom
97	1963, Nov.	Portland, OR	Herschel D. Newsom
98	1964, Nov.	Atlantic City, NJ	Herschel D. Newsom
99	1965, Nov.	Topeka, KS	Herschel D. Newsom
100	1966, Nov.	Minneapolis, MN	Herschel D. Newsom
101	1967, Nov.	Syracuse, NY	Herschel D. Newsom
102	1968, Nov.	Peoria, IL	Herschel D. Newsom
103	1969, Nov.	Daytona Beach, FL	John W. Scott
104	1970, Nov.	Boise, ID	John W. Scott
105	1971, Nov.	Charleston, WV	John W. Scott
106	1972, Nov.	Hartford, CT	John W. Scott
107	1973, Nov.	Lincoln, NE	John W. Scott
108	1974, Nov.	Sacramento, CA	John W. Scott
109	1975, Nov.	Columbus, OH	John W. Scott
110	1976, Nov.	Atlantic City, NJ	John W. Scott
111	1977, Nov.	Greensboro, NC	John W. Scott
112	1978, Nov.	Denver, CO	John W. Scott
113	1979, Nov.	Lancaster, PA	John W. Scott
114	1980, Nov.	Cedar Rapids, IA	Edward Andersen
115	1981, Nov.	Spokane, WA	Edward Andersen
116	1982, Nov.	Providence, RI	Edward Andersen
117	1983, Nov.	San Antonio, TX	Edward Andersen
118	1984, Nov.	Portland, ME	Edward Andersen
119	1985, Nov.	Eugene, OR	Edward Andersen
120	1986, Nov.	Madison, WI	Edward Andersen
121	1987, Nov.	Syracuse, NY	Edward Andersen
122	1988, Nov.	Redding, CA	Robert E. Barrow
123	1989, Nov.	Greensboro, NC	Robert E. Barrow
124	1990, Nov.	Wichita, KS	Robert E. Barrow
125	1991, Nov.	Burlington, VT	Robert E. Barrow

126	1992, Nov.	Denver, CO	Robert E. Barrow
127	1993, Nov.	Cleveland, OH	Robert E. Barrow
128	1994, Nov.	Peoria, IL	Robert E. Barrow
129	1995, Nov.	Harrisburg, PA	Robert E. Barrow
130	1996, Nov.	Spokane, WA	Kermit W. Richardson
131	1997, Nov.	Springfield, MA	Kermit W. Richardson
132	1998, Nov.	Greensboro, NC	Kermit W. Richardson
133	1999, Nov.	Portland, ME	Kermit W. Richardson
134	2000, Nov.	Fresno, CA	Kermit W. Richardson
135	2001, Nov.	Cedar Rapids, IA	Kermit W. Richardson
136	2002, Nov.	Portland, OR	Kermit W. Richardson
137	2003, Nov.	Burlington, VT	Kermit W. Richardson
138	2004, Nov.	Rochester, NY	William A. Steel
139	2005, Nov.	Columbus, OH	William A. Steel
140	2006, Nov.	Springfield, IL	William A. Steel
141	2007, Nov.	Reno, NV	William A. Steel
142	2008, Nov.	Cromwell, CT	Edward L. Luttrell
143	2009, Nov.	Grand Rapids, MI	Edward L. Luttrell
144	2010, Nov.	Charlotte, NC	Edward L. Luttrell
145	2011, Nov.	Tulsa, OK	Edward L. Luttrell
146	2012, Nov.	Boise, ID	Edward L. Luttrell
147	2013, Nov.	Manchester, NH	Edward L. Luttrell
148	2014, Nov.	Sandusky, OH	Edward L. Luttrell
149	2015, Nov.	Lincoln, NE	Edward L. Luttrell
150	2016 Nov.	Herndon, VA	Betsy E. Huber
151	2017, Nov.	Spokane, WA	Betsy E. Huber
152	2018, Nov.	Stowe, VT	Betsy E. Huber
153	2019, Nov.	Minneapolis, MN	Betsy E. Huber
154	2020, Nov.	<i>Virtual</i> – Washington, DC	Betsy E. Huber
155	2021, Nov.	Wichita, KS	Betsy E. Huber
156	2022, Nov.	Sparks, NV	Betsy E. Huber
157	2023, Nov.	Niagara Falls, NY	Betsy E. Huber
<b>UPCOMING</b>			
158	2024, Nov.	Bettendorf, IA	
159	2025, Nov.	TBD	
160	2026, Nov.	TBD	



## NATIONAL GRANGE

Founded in 1867 as the National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry, we proudly serve as America's oldest agricultural advocacy organization with deeply held nonpartisan ideals.

We are headquartered at the historic National Grange Building at 1616 H St. NW, Washington, DC 20006.

However, the heart of the Grange is located in the more than 1,500 communities in which fraternal local Grange chapters operate today. More than 135,000 members initiate policy resolutions through a grassroots process and advocate for issues of importance to themselves and their neighbors. In addition, they serve as part of the social safety net and network that improves the quality of life for those living in rural America or following agricultural pursuits.

We welcome you to learn more about the Grange at [nationalgrange.org](http://nationalgrange.org) or by visiting a local Grange meeting.