

# FEDERAL NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY



## AGRICULTURE

### DISASTER DECLARATION VITAL FOR OKLAHOMA

■(WASHINGTON) Oklahoma Senators Don Nickles and Jim Inhofe commented on the USDA disaster declaration announced Monday following their letter to Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman.

"This is good news for Oklahoma farmers," Nickles said. "Last year was one of the toughest years Oklahoma farmers have ever faced. ... The low interest loans provided by this long awaited declaration are badly needed to keep many Oklahoma farmers in business."

"I am pleased with the Administration's quick action in response to our request," Inhofe said. "This is good news for Oklahoma's farmers. Those who have suffered from drought related crop losses will now get the relief they so desperately need."

The declaration was announced Monday making low interest loans available for qualified Oklahoma farmers in all 77 Oklahoma counties.

—US SENS. DON NICKLES & JIM INHOFE  
05/06/96

### USDA REFUNDS \$81.9 MILLION TO DAIRY FARMERS FOR REDUCED 1995 MARKETINGS

■(WASHINGTON) Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said Monday that milk producers who reduced or did not increase their 1995 milk marketings from 1994 levels received refunds of their 1995 marketing assessments totaling \$81.9 million.

Eligible producers filed 37,896 applications and claimed refunds of \$81.9 million based upon reduced milk marketings of 52.0 billion pounds. Producers must have met eligibility requirements and claimed the refund by March 15, 1996.

The Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 terminated the authority to assess marketings of milk on and after May 1, 1996. Assessments collected through April 30, 1996, will be refundable. To be eligible for a refund, a dairy farmer must provide evidence that total milk marketed in 1996 did not exceed total marketing in 1995. However, if a producer quits dairying during 1996, the milk marketings for the months and days of production in the refund year, 1996, will be compared with

such milk marketings in the corresponding months and days of the base year, 1995.

—US DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE  
05/07/96

## BUSINESS & LABOR

### INHOFE SAYS CLINTON VETO BLOCKS "BIGGEST JOBS BILL IN DECADES"

■(WASHINGTON) U.S. Senator James M. Inhofe (R-Okla.) said today that President Clinton stopped "the biggest jobs bill in decades" when he vetoed the Product Liability Reform bill last Thursday.

"Product liability reform is the biggest job creating bill to come up in years, if not decades," Inhofe said. "It means ending frivolous lawsuits and unleashing real economic growth. By vetoing this bill, President Clinton has sacrificed thousands of jobs and helped stifle what the American people desperately want: the resurgence of our domestic manufacturing base and our international competitiveness."

Inhofe, an original co-sponsor of product liability reform legislation in the Senate, had previously pushed through a similar aviation liability reform bill in the House. That measure, which was enacted into law, helped put America back in the aviation manufacturing business after years of decline. It was also one of the first bills to benefit from Senator Inhofe's successful effort in 1993 to end secrecy in the House's discharge petition rule.

The Product Liability Reform bill passed Congress with strong bipartisan votes: 59-40 in the Senate and 259-158 in the House. Opposition to the bill was spearheaded largely by one special interest group—the trial lawyers—which has contributed heavily to Clinton's campaigns. Recently, Clinton's threat to veto the bill was sharply criticized by a Democrat Senator who said: "Unfortunately, special interests and raw political considerations in the White House have overridden sound policy judgment."

Inhofe said he will help lead efforts in the Senate to override the President's veto.

—US SENATOR JAMES INHOFE, R-OKLA.  
05/06/96

*"The only gift is a portion of thyself."  
Ralph Waldo Emerson*

### CLINTON DECLARES MAY LABOR HISTORY MONTH

■(WASHINGTON) In the early 1900s, millions of Americans left their farms to begin new lives as factory workers. Sadly, many of these citizens found neither secure employment nor higher wages at their new jobs, and the industrial economy brought them exploitation, continued poverty, and the risk of injury and death. No student of American history can forget the images of filthy children emerging from mills and mines, the stories of terrible fires and explosions, or the grim legacy of the slums that grew up in factory towns.

Although child labor, sweatshops, and workplace disasters are largely horrors of the past, efforts to eliminate them began to succeed only after workers organized and spoke with a united, independent voice. The American labor movement helped the first generation of industrial employees to express their aspirations and insecurities, empowering them with the necessary tools to define the terms and conditions of their employment and to expand the role of labor in the larger society.

As we approach the 21st century, our Nation's economy is undergoing a transformation as momentous as the change that spurred the exodus from farms to factories 100 years ago. And in facing the challenges posed by global competition and rapid technological advances, the workers of the Information Age need the same effective leadership that allowed their forbears to succeed. Each new generation of workers must embrace the activism that has characterized labor's rich history, and all Americans should recognize the role that labor has played in the continuing progress of our democracy.

Now, therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 1996, as Labor History Month. I call upon Government officials, educators, the media, and all the people of the United States to observe this month with ceremonies, activities, and programs that encourage reflection on the labor movement's heritage and its many contributions to the creation and maintenance of a just America.

—THE WHITE HOUSE  
05/07/96