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Mr. President, I am especially ^{interested} in the welfare of the little farmer. I strongly favor passage of a bill that would guarantee the small farmers of our nation a minimum four-acre cotton allotment.

Such a bill would help the small cotton growers without appreciably increasing cotton production and jeopardizing the present level of government price supports for this basic commodity.

As you well know, Mr. President, cotton is the principal money crop to most of our farmers in the South. The reduction in cotton acreage from 27 million acres in 1953 to 18 million acres for 1955 has adversely affected a large number of our small farmers. Some have had their cotton acreage reduced below four acres, leaving them with an exceedingly small money crop. Even with production of a bale to the acre, any farmer limited to less than four acres would not harvest much of a gross income from his cotton.

In South Carolina, and other parts of our country, our farmers have suffered severe setbacks in the past few years from the scorching drought that has burned up feed and other crops that are vital in maintaining farming operations. Farmers have been forced to buy livestock and other feed because their home-grown supplies have been sharply reduced by the drought.

This, naturally, has raised operating expenses on our farms. But now, in addition to all this, the production of cotton, the principal money crop to many farmers, has been curtailed. This reduces farm income at a time when operating expenses are at a relatively high level.

In view of the hardships our farmers have faced for the past few years, I believe they deserve every possible consideration. This is but a small consideration to ask--a guarantee to be able to plant at least four acres of cotton. As I previously pointed out, this small increase in acreage allotments will have little, if any, affect on our overall cotton supplies.

Mr. President, I know that many of my colleagues are deeply concerned over this problem of cotton acreage allotments. In ~~any~~ my opinion, all of us who are disturbed by this vital matter can help most at this time by supporting a bill that would guarantee a minimum four-acre cotton acreage allotment for our small farmers.