I am greatly disturbed by the reports from South Carolina that many farmers are being turned away from filing applications for soil bank benefits. The Department of Agriculture is operating on a first-come, first-served basis which leaves many farmers, who could not get in line early enough, without soil bank benefits.

I have wired the Secretary of Agriculture urging him to investigate this situation immediately. Also, I have told him he should request enough funds from Congress to include all farmers who want to enter the soil bank program. Meanwhile, I urged that available soil bank funds and acreage be pro-rated so as to give every applicant an equitable share.

A copy of my telegram was provided for Senator Ellender, chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, to question Mr. Benson, the Secretary of Agriculture, in his appearance before the Committee. I regret that the Secretary did not indicate any immediate change in the policy on accepting applications for the soil bank.

However, I shall continue to urge that action be taken either by the Department of Agriculture or the Congress, or both, to assure the family-type farmer of equal protection under the soil bank with the corporation farmers of the West and the Midwest.

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