

JONATHAN W. COPPESS

Curriculum Vitae

2020

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS, DEPT. OF AGRICULTURAL AND CONSUMER ECONOMICS · *Urbana, IL*

Assistant Professor of Law and Policy · September 2013 to Present

Director, Gardner Agriculture Policy Program; Bock Agricultural Law and Policy Program

- Education and outreach on agricultural law and policy matters pursuant to partial Extension appointment, including farm support policy, risk management, conservation and renewable energy; presenter at numerous farm meetings, conferences and similar events for producers, agribusinesses, and policymakers; frequent contributor of written law and policy communications through the *farmdoc daily* and *Policy Matters* internet platforms.
- Undergraduate classroom instruction pursuant to partial teaching appointment; an undergraduate introduction to common law principles for contracts, property and tort law, as well as related legal issues for agricultural production and natural resources; additionally developed an undergraduate course introducing students to principles of policymaking with a focus on legislative process, procedures and outcomes that includes the history and development of federal farm policy.
- Applied research agenda includes a \$1.6 million grant to develop web-based decision tools to educate farmers on the farm program decisions from the Agricultural Act of 2014; approximately \$300,000 combined from research grants for the development of a web-based cover crop management and decision support tool being developed with the National Center for Supercomputing Applications; contributing policy research and extension efforts for multiple grants with ACES researchers.
- Author of *THE FAULT LINES OF FARM POLICY: A LEGISLATIVE AND POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE FARM BILL* (University of Nebraska Press, 2018); extensive research into the history of American farm and food policy, including legislative history and politics of the development of the omnibus legislation known as the farm bill; additional policy research regarding risk management, natural resource conservation and related agricultural issues for various grants, presentations and written articles.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY · *Washington, D.C.*

Chief Counsel · 2011 through September, 2013

- Responsible for development of comprehensive agricultural policy focused on substantial reforms and achieved reductions in federal spending; participated in extensive staff and Member-level negotiations; consulted with the United States Department of Agriculture, including the Office of General Counsel; involved in extensive consultations and negotiations with various interest groups,

non-governmental organizations, lobbyists and companies; led drafting of omnibus authorizing legislation and accompanying Committee Report consisting of detailed justification for the legislation, section-by-section analysis and implementing instructions.

- Assisted Committee Chair in managing omnibus authorizing legislation through the Senate legislative process, including thirteen Committee hearings on various agricultural policy matters that required research, discussions with and vetting of witnesses, and extensive preparation, two business meetings of the Committee to mark up draft legislative text, each resulting in a super majority of the Committee agreeing to report the bill to the full Senate, and extensive amendment and debate on the Senate floor resulting in bipartisan super-majorities of the Senate twice agreeing to the passage of the legislation.
- Primary policy achievements include market-oriented revenue and price commodity assistance programs, a consolidated conservation easement program; a regional conservation partnership program, complex provisions that link eligibility for crop insurance premium assistance to compliance with conservation provisions regarding highly erodible lands and wetlands, significant revisions of farm credit and rural development programs; innovative agricultural research policies, renewable energy and biofuel programs, and significant revisions to the policies and operational aspects of the Federal Crop Insurance program.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FARM SERVICE AGENCY · *Washington, D.C.*
Administrator and Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs · 2009 through 2011

- Presidential appointment, Senior Executive Service; managed federal agency with more than 14,000 employees located in over 2,200 offices throughout the nation with an operational budget of over \$1 billion each fiscal year, nearly \$5 billion in federal farm lending and over \$5 billion in mandatory federal funds for farm support programs, as well as millions of dollars for the procurement of bulk commodities for school food programs, food assistance programs for domestic and international food aid programs.
- Supervised implementation of complex agricultural support programs created by the 2008 farm bill, such as supplemental disaster assistance, revenue-based commodity assistance and innovative biomass crop production assistance; oversaw drafting of regulations and navigated them through the federal regulatory process; led effort to modernize and upgrade outdated information technology infrastructure in a challenging budgetary environment.
- Testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture and Subcommittee on Agricultural Appropriations multiple times; advised the Secretary of Agriculture and the Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agriculture Service on agency matters and policies within the purview of the agency, including preparing them for testimony before the U.S. Senate and House Committees; delivered numerous speeches and presentations to agency offices, field offices and to constituent groups, farmers, and agribusinesses on matters of Agency operation, IT modernization, civil rights challenges, program operation, implementation and administration, and various initiatives and programs undertaken by the Agency and the Department.

U. S. SENATOR BEN NELSON · *Washington, D.C.*
Legislative Assistant · 2006 through 2009

- Assisted Senator on development of the 2008 farm bill, with focus on policies for a revenue-based commodity support program, crop insurance, ground and surface water conservation, rural microentrepreneur assistance, agricultural research and assistance to farmers for the production of

biomass crops for use in biofuels and renewable energy; conducted policy-based research; drafted policy memoranda, speeches and discussion points; staffed Senator in meetings and conducted meetings with constituents, other Members of Congress and at Committee hearings, meetings and the mark up of the legislation.

- Lead policy advisor to Senator on various issues and legislation including annual agricultural appropriations bills with significant work on behalf of major land grant university, the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 with specific work on the Renewable Fuels Standard and related policy matters, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, comprehensive immigration reform legislation and matters of agricultural trade, including meetings with foreign ambassadors regarding difficult trade matters such as the closing of foreign markets due to sanitary and phyto-sanitary issues.

THIRD-WAY · *Washington, D.C.*

Agriculture and Rural Development Fellow · 2005 through 2006

- Policy fellowship; conducted research on farm and rural economic policy matters; drafted memoranda and assisted with production of policy papers and messaging documents.

CNA SURETY · *Chicago, Illinois*

Surety Claims Counsel · 2004 through 2005

- Responsible for managing bond claims through legal investigative process; conducted legal research; drafted memoranda detailing research and investigative findings; document management; provided legal advice on handling surety bond claims.

FREEBORN & PETERS LLP · *Chicago, Illinois*

Associate · 2001 through 2004

- Participated in case development and litigation for a range of commercial legal matters regarding contract disputes, bankruptcy, intellectual property, real estate and commercial property; conducted extensive legal research; drafted memoranda, court-filed legal briefs and supporting documents; conducted basic document review and management; appeared before state and federal judges on routine litigation matters; prepared for and conducted depositions; attended meetings and worked with multiple commercial clients.

EDUCATION

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL · *Washington, D.C.*

Juris Doctor, *with Honors*, 2001

- Member of *The George Washington Law Review*

MIAMI UNIVERSITY · *Oxford, Ohio*

Bachelor's of Science, Richard T. Farmer School of Business Administration, 1996

BAR ADMISSIONS AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

State of Illinois · 2001 (Inactive)

District of Columbia · 2005

Agricultural Law Section Council, Illinois State Bar Association · 2014-present

PUBLICATION HIGHLIGHTS

Jonathan Coppess, *THE FAULT LINES OF FARM POLICY: A LEGISLATIVE AND POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE FARM BILL*, (U. of Neb. Press, 2018).

Jonathan Coppess, *High Cotton and the Low Road: An Unraveling Farm Bill Coalition and Its Implications*, 23 *DRAKE J. AGRIC. L.* 353 (2018).

Jonathan Coppess, *A Return to the Crossroads: Farming, Nutrient Loss, and Conservation*, 39 *U. OF ARK. LITTLE ROCK L. REV.*, 351 (2018).

Jonathan Coppess, *A Perspective on Agricultural Policy in the Age of Nutrient Loss*, *DRAKE J. OF AGRIC. LAW* (June 2018).

Coppess, J. 2016. “Three Little Words: EPA and the RFS Waiver Authority.” *Choices*. Quarter 1. Available online: <http://www.choicesmagazine.org/choices-magazine/submitted-articles/three-little-words--epa-and-the-rfs-waiver-authority>

Coppess, J. 2016. “The Next Farm Bill May Present Opportunities for Hybrid Farm-Conservation Policies.” *CHOICES*. Quarter 4. Available online: <http://www.choicesmagazine.org/choices-magazine/theme-articles/looking-ahead-to-the-next-farm-bill/the-next-farm-bill-may-present-opportunities-for-hybrid-farm-conservation-policies>

Coppess, J. 2017. “CBO Baseline and the Potential for Conflicts by Expanding CRP.” *CHOICES*. Quarter 4. Available online: <http://www.choicesmagazine.org/choices-magazine/theme-articles/theme-overview-preserving-water-quality-challenges-and-opportunities-in-policy-innovation/cbo-baseline-and-the-potential-for-conflicts-by-expanding-crp>

Paulson, N.D., B.A. Babcock, J. Coppess. 2014 “The potential for crop insurance reform.” *Agricultural Finance Review* 74(4): 464-476

Mykel R Taylor, Glynn T Tonsor, Nicholas D Paulson, Brenna Ellison, Jonathan Coppess, Gary D Schnitkey; “Is it Good to Have Options? The 2014 Farm Bill Program Decisions,” *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*, Volume 39, Issue 4, 1 December 2017, Pages 533–546, <https://doi.org/10.1093/aep/px044>

Brenna Ellison, Nicholas D Paulson, Mykel R Taylor, Glynn T Tonsor, Jonathan Coppess, Gary D Schnitkey; “Evaluation of Educational Offerings Associated with the 2014 Farm Bill,” *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*, Volume 39, Issue 4, 1 December 2017, Pages 547–558, <https://doi.org/10.1093/aep/px043>

Over 100 articles on *farmdoc daily*, available at:
http://farmdocdaily.illinois.edu/authors/jonathan_coppess/