

SENATE FALLS SHORT ON BIDEN

ADMINISTRATION'S BUILD BACK BETTER ACT

December 23, 2021

By Kody Bessent

Congress is now officially adjourned for the remainder of 2021, with the Senate vacating Washington, DC after a series of scheduled votes December 18. Despite an aggressive attempt by President Joe Biden and House and Senate Democratic Leadership, the President's signature domestic policy bill - the Build Back Better Act (BBB) - failed to gain the support of all 50 Senate Democrats needed to pass the legislation through budget reconciliation.

Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV), the lone uncommitted Senate democrat who was in negotiations with the White House for several months, has now publicly opposed the nearly \$2 trillion spending package in its current form, derailing the end of year initiative.

"My Democratic colleagues in Washington are determined to dramatically reshape our society in a way that leaves our country even more vulnerable to the threats we face," Manchin said. "I cannot take that risk with a staggering debt of more than \$29 trillion and inflation taxes that are real and harmful to every hard-working American at the gasoline pumps, grocery stores and utility bills with no end in sight."

In addition to Senator Manchin's distaste of the BBB, there are also many procedural steps senators have yet to go through in vetting the package with the Senate Parliamentarian to ensure the bill complies with the "Byrd rule" that governs which policies can be passed through reconciliation.

The BBB's setback means, in the near term, that the enhanced child tax credit provisions authorized by the American Rescue Plan, a pandemic-relief law enacted in March of 2021, will expire going into 2022. The provision has provided qualified families up to \$300 per month for each child under the age of 6 and \$250 per month for each child ages 6 - 17.

While the BBB in its current form seems to be on life support going into the New Year and many Democrats have expressed frustration or disappointment at the delay, most have indicated they still expect to pass the reconciliation bill next year, even if it requires the bill to be paired down even further.

**COTTON NEWS will not be published next week.
We Wish you a very Blessed and Merry Christmas!
From the Staff of
PLAINS COTTON GROWERS, INC.**

CANO NAMED STATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF TEXAS FARM SERVICE AGENCY

December 23, 2021

By Kody Bessent

Last week, President Biden appointed Benancio "Benny" Cano Jr. as the new State Executive Director for the U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency (FSA).

Cano, Jr., a native of Pharr, Texas in the Rio Grande Valley began his career with FSA in 1994 as a County Operations Trainee. In 1995, he served as the Starr County CED and was named the District Director for the southern area of Texas in 2002.

Cano, Jr received a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Economics from Texas A&M University Kingsville. He and his wife Sonia are the proud parents of three children.

Plains Cotton Growers, Inc., with Texas Farm Bureau and other regional and state-based commodity organizations, supported Cano's nomination for the SED position.

"Plains Cotton Growers is pleased to have Mr. Cano at the helm of the Texas Farm Service Agency (FSA)," PCG CEO Kody Bessent said. "Mr. Cano's experience and service throughout his career advancement in FSA will serve him well in the administration and oversight of FSA programs. We look forward to working with Mr. Cano and the FSA State Committee on current and future farm policy for Texas."

FSA State Executive Directors oversee Farm Service Agency operations and agricultural policy implementation in the state. Each State Executive Director works with the State Committee to administer FSA programs and County office operations, develops, and maintains stakeholder relationships with customers and other agencies and governments.

Additionally, last month, USDA announced the appointment of Ms. Debra Barrett to serve on the Texas Farm Service Agency State Committee.

Barrett, of Edroy, Texas (San Patricio County), is owner/operator of a family cotton, grain, and livestock operation. She is active in several national, state, and local civic and agricultural organizations including the Cotton Board, the South Texas Cotton and Grain Association, and the San Patricio County Drainage District.

More appointments are expected in the coming months as USDA seats the three to five member FSA state committees for each state. The state committee chairperson will be named when all committee members have been appointed.