

*Adams on Agriculture*

**Interview with House Ag Committee Ranking Member Collin Peterson**

**September 21, 2018**

---

*Note:* This is an unofficial transcript of a discussion with Mike Adams and House Agriculture Committee Ranking Member Collin Peterson (D., Minn.) from the *Adams on Agriculture (AOA)* radio program.

Adams: Now we're very happy to start things off with the ranking member of the House Agriculture Committee, Minnesota Congressman Collin Peterson, for a Farm Bill update. Thank you for joining us.

Well, it...what we're hearing and reading doesn't sound real positive. Are you at a stalemate? Is there any compromise or breakthrough that you can tell us about?

Peterson: You know, actually I'm the most encouraged this week that I've been [through] the full process. We've made very good progress this week. We've had a number of calls. Right now we're waiting on scores on a couple of things. And that's kind of what held us up yesterday afternoon, because we don't have these couple of things that were put on the table by Chairman Conaway, I guess it was Tuesday, which get us, in my opinion, in the range of getting this thing done.

You know, it would have been good, I think Senator Roberts said it would have been good if we could have got here a month ago. But you know, these things have a way of just kind of, you know, taking their own path. So at least we're here now. I think we're really at a point here where I can see how we can get this thing done. But we've got to get a couple scores and there's still some compromises that need to be made. You know, I'm optimistic.

Adams: So on the SNAP provisions, you think you can come to some middle ground here?

Peterson: Well, that's going to really be between Chairman Conaway and Senator Roberts and Stabenow. They...you know, I have said I think the best way for us to get to resolution there is whatever Roberts and Stabenow can agree to that they think can get through the Senate-- I really have no concerns that I won't be able to live with that. So that's kind of where it's at.

We're really down to waivers now, which is what I tried to encourage the Chairman three months ago to focus on, because we have work requirements, we've had them since '96. And the majority of people are working. The big problem we've had are the waivers. And now we're kind of finally down to that part of the process. You know, a number of other things have been kind of put

aside. And so we're...I think we can get this worked out but, you know, it's really how far Senator Roberts and Stabenow think they can go to maintain the Senate support for this bill and how far Chairman Conaway is willing to go.

I told him I think if we come up with a reasonable compromise here, I can deliver a significant amount of Democrats for this bill. So I think we can get...this is really not what's held the bill up-- the bill up the last couple weeks. It's really not been SNAP. It's been these other issues. And as I say, we're making good progress, and I can...having been through a number of these, I can kind of see where this thing can come together.

Adams: What about conservation? Have you come to agreement there?

Peterson: Close. You know, we're a lot closer. That's not as big a sticking point as the commodity title has been, so I think we can work that out. It's...I don't think there's a disagreement about what we're trying to do here at the end. It's just kind of almost semantics and so forth, so I think it'll get worked out.

Adams: Do you think we could have a new Farm Bill passed by the end of this month?

Peterson: I think it's going to be difficult. You know, because I don't...at this point, you know, when these CBO scores are going to come through, we don't know if it's going to be today or whatever. My staff, who have been through a lot of these, they tell me that even if we get all this stuff wrapped up, you know, by Sunday or Monday, it's still going to be very difficult to get this final thing drafted, to get it scored, to get it to the conferees, you know, to be signed and so forth by the end of next week.

So you know, it maybe could happen. I think it'd be difficult, but people need to remember that, you know, we've kind of been through this before. For farmers, the real crunch time on having a new bill is December. You know, they...maybe November. They...they need to know in my part of the world, December is plenty of time. So they need to have certainty. They need to know what the Farm Bill is. You know, very few people are making cropping decisions in September. You know, or deciding for next year.

So I think if we can get this resolved this week and come to an agreement and then we're in the process of drafting it and finalizing it. You know, I think...I don't know exactly...the Senate's in...whether we're going to be in, I think I've heard there's a possibility that we will be around to be able to pass a bill in October. So that's the majority's decision, but I think we can get this done.

Adams: Wow, I am pleasantly surprised. Based on what I've been reading and hearing, I was afraid this thing didn't look good at all. And I always considered you the great gauge and barometer of how this goes. And to hear you encouraged is very encouraging.

Peterson: Yeah. No, I think we had a good week. We had good progress. We're not there yet, but you know, the members...the four members from the start of this thing, we want to get this done. And we're now in the range of where I can see this coming together and I'm...what I've tried to do in this process is be someone who helps us get to where we need to be. You know, I'm not bringing any new problems into the situation and, you know, I think we can get there.

Adams: Well, that is great to hear. And thank you for being with us. Thank you for the update, and we look for more positive news on getting this done very soon. Thank you very much.

Peterson: Yeah, thank you. And so do I.

Adams: All right. Take care, sir. Thank you.

Peterson: Yeah.

Adams: That is the ranking member of the House Agriculture Committee, Collin Peterson from Minnesota, and you heard him say he is encouraged, feels they've made progress on the Farm Bill. That is more positive news than we've heard in quite some time. And wow. He's been through a lot of these. He's been heavily involved and lead the way many times in writing Farm Bills. He's very experienced on this, and as I said, a very good barometer on things.

*[End of recording]*