

Sat. March 11, 1978

# \$272 Billion In Conservation Funds Restored By House

United States Representative Tom Coleman told members of the Grundy County Soil and Water Conservation District last night that the administration's cutback of soil and conservation programs had been restored.

Speaking to the conservation district's 11th annual meeting in the Trenton High School commons, Coleman said the House Agriculture and Appropriations committees had reinstated a total of \$272 million.

The Sixth District congressman said \$240 million of the total was for Agricultural Conservation Practices programs of the United States Department of Agriculture and the other \$32 million was for Resource Conservation and Development funds.

President Carter had cut \$272 million of conservation funds from his 1979 budget request, said Coleman, but had increased money for food stamps and the agriculture secretary's staff.

Coleman pointed out the need to preserve farmland and restore its good health saying, "We may be able to find an alternative to one form of energy or another, but no one has suggested any alternatives

to eating."

Coleman said the farmers' debt had risen to \$118 billion. He said that even though grocery prices had gone up, only 31 percent of the consumer's food bill went to the farmer, which was less than the middleman for the first time in history.

Coleman said the next few weeks would be critical for farmers, who, he added, do not want more credit but more help with the credit they have.

Coleman said USDA personnel needed to be upgraded in seeking out foreign markets to bring the price of crops up. He said U.S. Special Trade Representative Robert Strauss was making farm exports a priority in the current international trade talks being held in Geneva, Switzerland and wanted to raise farm exports by \$5 billion.

Coleman said an amendment had been passed on the Humphrey-Hawkins full employment bill which set 100 percent parity for farm crops as a national goal.

"Rural America is beginning to be heard," said Coleman.

Coleman said the coal strike pointed out the bad situation the nation is in concerning energy

and the need to get a positive energy bill passed. He said the problem in the Sixth District would be the people having to face up to a much higher utility bill.

Before Coleman's speech, the conservation district held a brief program, including reports and awards.

District Conservationist Millard Blaine reported that in 1977 230 individuals and groups had been assisted by the district, there had been 877 requests for services, 113 referrals from the ASCS and 70 farm ponds had been checked out.

Blaine said 86,200 feet of parallel terraces had been built while another 21,000 feet had been staked out but not built due to the late summer rains. He said 3,451 acres of cropland had been adequately treated.

A total of 20 awards were given out to sixth graders who made conservation posters. A total of 89 posters were shown.

First place went to Renee Harrison, second place to Ricky Hutchinson, third place to Teresa Herring, fourth place to Jeff Guillory and fifth place to Tommy Keller.

The other 15 winners were:

M.L. Hatcher, Sherry Spurgeon, Beckie Robinson, Missy Hosto, Kenneth Koon, Rhonda Miller, Susan Senf, Naomie Williams, Patricia Williams, Troy Slagle, Teresa Bowe, Theresa Kramer, Kathy Adams, Norman Schieb and Jerry Lou McCracken.

Making the presentations to the children were Dan Kenney of People's State Bank and Eugene Hutson, conservation district treasurer.

The outstanding cooperator award was presented to Mr. and Mrs. Bill Tharp by Charles Owens of the Production Credit Association of Unionville.

The Goodyear Award was given to Jim Witten by Bob Ward, territory sales manager.



Four sixth graders displayed their winning conservation posters at the Grundy County Soil and Water Conservation District's 11th annual meeting held last night in the Trenton High School commons. Awarded cash prizes along with 15 other sixth graders were (from left to right): Renee Harrison, first place; Ricky Hutchinson, second; Teresa Herring, third; and Tommy Keller, fifth. Jeff Guillory, who made the fourth place poster, is not pictured. (R-T Photo)