

## Oklahoma Farm Report

### **Congressman Frank Lucas Calls USDA Chief Vilsack Out Over Direct payment Criticism**

**February 26, 2009**

On Wednesday afternoon, Ranking Member Frank Lucas sent a letter to the Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, expressing great concern about the Obama administration's position on eliminating direct payments to producers. Tuesday night, in his address to a joint session of the 111th Congress, President Obama called for ending direct payments. This comes just days after Secretary Vilsack made a speech to a joint meeting of the National Association of Wheat Growers and the U.S. Wheat Associates Boards advising farmers that they should be thinking about developing other sources of income rather than direct payments.

"I have real concerns about this administration's position on eliminating direct payments to our producers, which would be detrimental to their livelihoods. Our farmers and ranchers are some of the hardest working people in the U.S. and they are struggling to make a living in a difficult economy. Yet, it's clear that both Secretary Vilsack and President Obama don't understand the problems facing our agriculture community. And, they absolutely don't understand how important rural communities are to our economy," said Ranking Member Frank Lucas.

We have the letter that Congressman Lucas sent to Secretary Tom Vilsack on our website- as well as an extensive interview that our own Ed Richards conducted with him on not just the Direct Payment concern, but also the stimulus and rural America, COOL and the EPA wanting to get into the "dust regulation" business. Click on the link below for that story and audio you can take a listen to.