

Taking the Christian Message to Capitol Hill



**Speak up for those who cannot speak
for themselves, for the rights of all who
are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly;
defend the rights of the poor and needy.**

Proverbs 31: 8-9



How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

1 John 3:16-17



The order of society is based on two virtues: justice and charity.

Charity is the Samaritan who pours oil on the wounds of the traveler who has been attacked.

It is justice's role to prevent the attack.

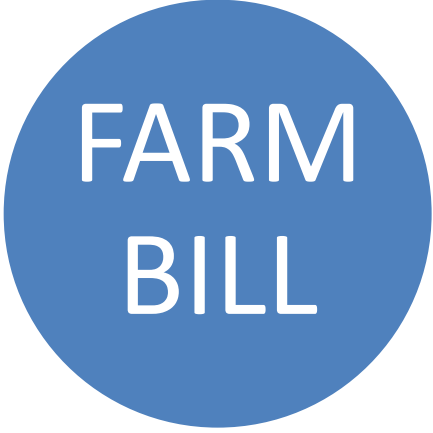
- Blessed Frédéric Ozanam



Charity and Justice



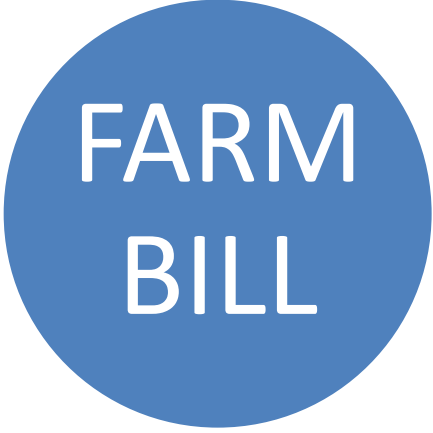
- Faith-based people are known for their great charity – taking in and caring for relatives, neighbors and even strangers.....
- However, there are still hungry people, there are still those who need more than a family can give, they need **POLITICAL CHARITY**
- **POLITICAL CHARITY=ADVOCACY**



FARM BILL

What is the farm bill?

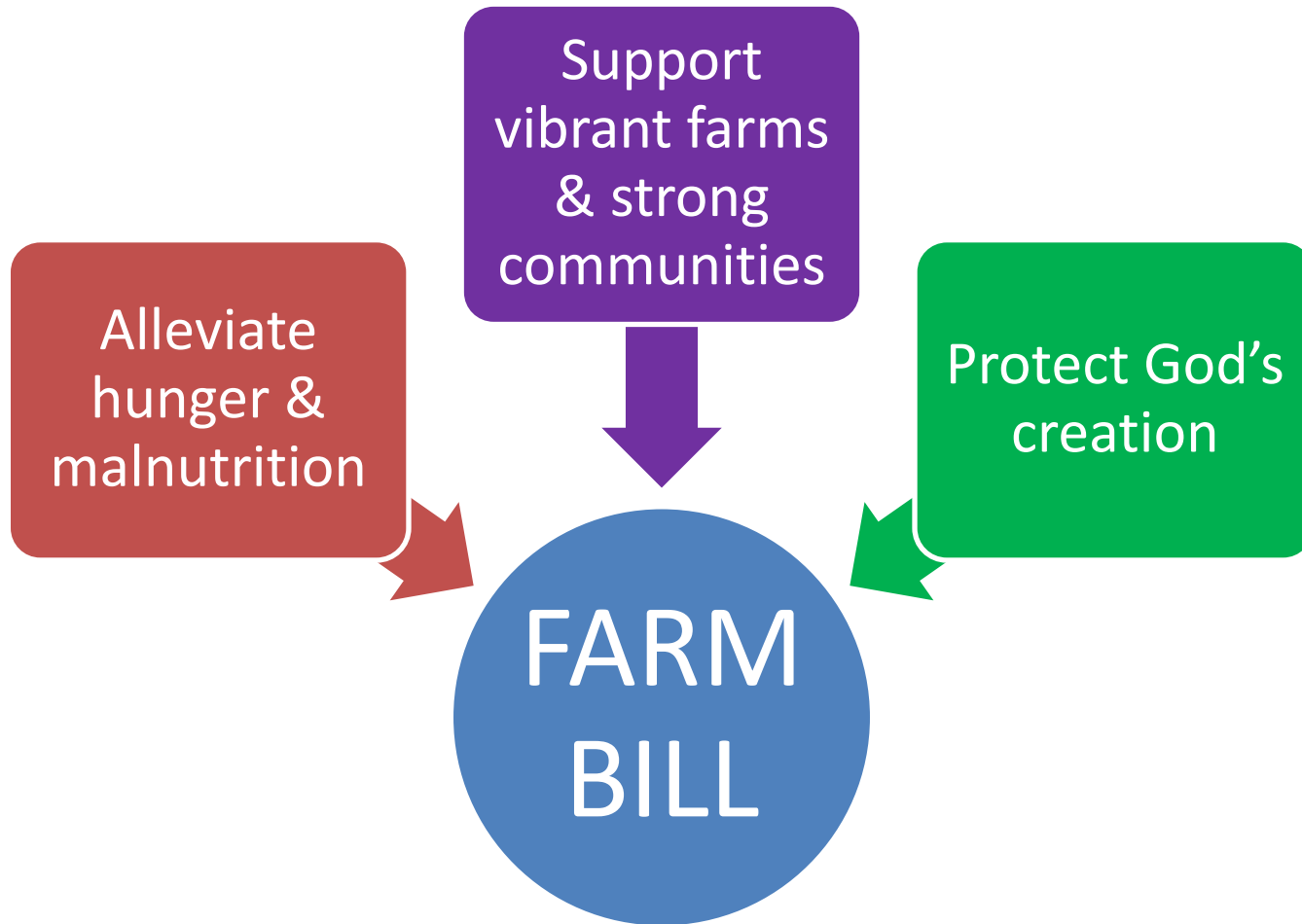
- Defines our food system
- 2008 farm bill
 - \$288 billion
 - 15 titles
- Rewritten and reauthorized once every five to six years

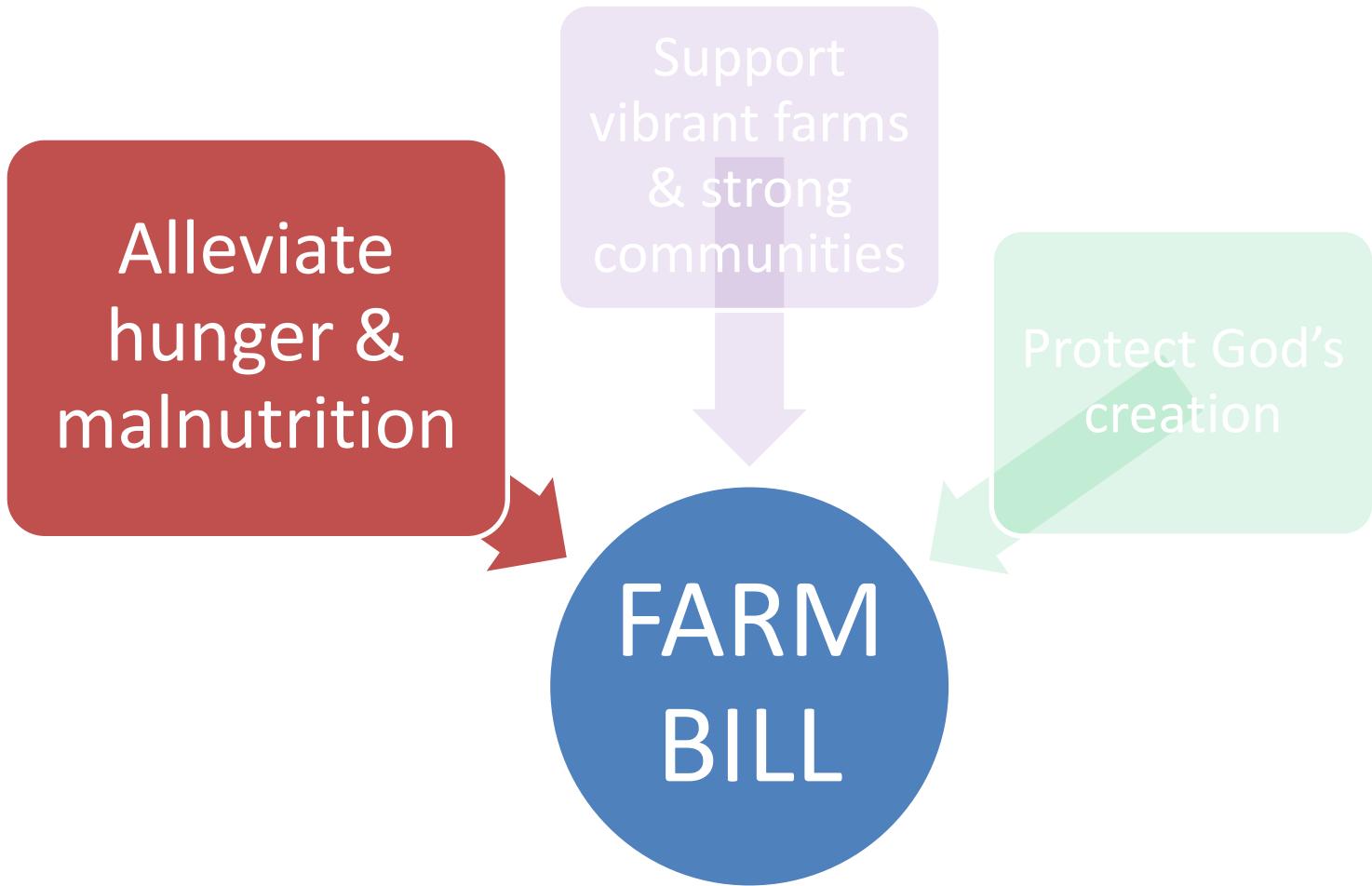


FARM BILL

Legislative Update

- Expired on October 1, 2012
- Extension passed in January 2013, expires September 30, 2013
 - Extension didn't affect all programs
- **Multiyear reauthorization** of the farm bill





Alleviate hunger
& malnutrition

Protect **SNAP**

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

- Formerly “food stamps”
- 48.8 million Americans at risk of hunger
 - One in six adults; one in five kids
- Largest federal nutrition program
- Majority of recipients are either children, elderly, or persons with a disability
- “Mandatory” program

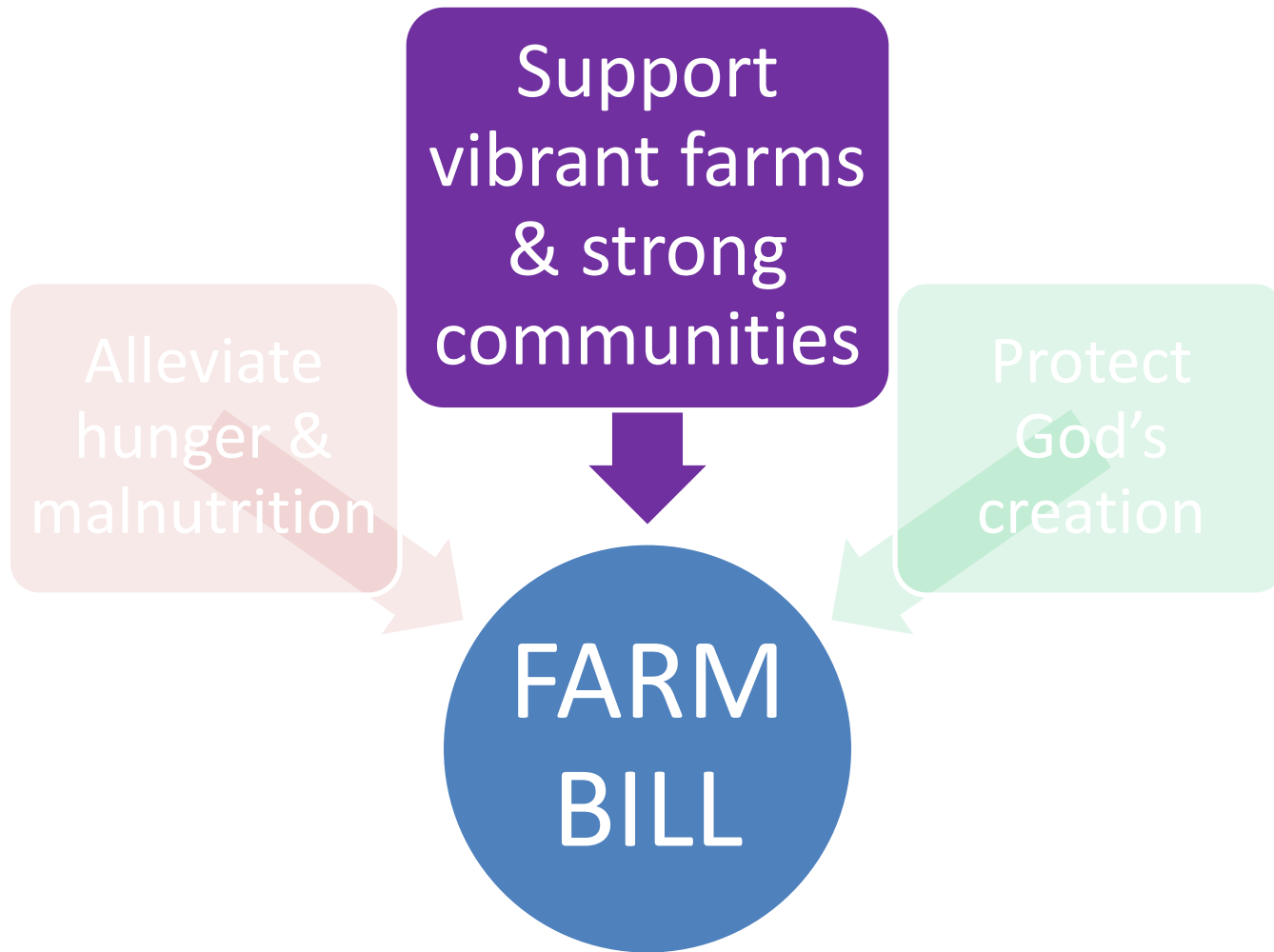
International Food Aid

Alleviate hunger
& malnutrition

Protect SNAP

Sustain
**International
food aid**

- *Food for Peace; McGovern-Dole*
- Amounts to less than 0.6% of total farm bill
- High food prices, natural disasters, humanitarian crises
- Reducing maternal and child malnutrition
- Leaving the farm bill?



Support vibrant
farms & strong
communities

Help **beginning
& socially
disadvantaged
farmers**

Support for new & diverse farmers

- Difficult for farmers to get started
- Small farms operated by younger, more diverse farmers are increasing due to assistance
- *Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program*
- *Outreach and Technical Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers program*

Local and Regional Food Systems... *in the U.S.*

Support vibrant
farms & strong
communities

Help beginning
& socially
disadvantaged
farmers

**Build local &
regional food
systems**

- Farmers markets = win-win
 - *Farmers Market Promotion Program*
 - *Farmers Market Electronic Benefit Transfer Program and Senior Farmers Market Program*

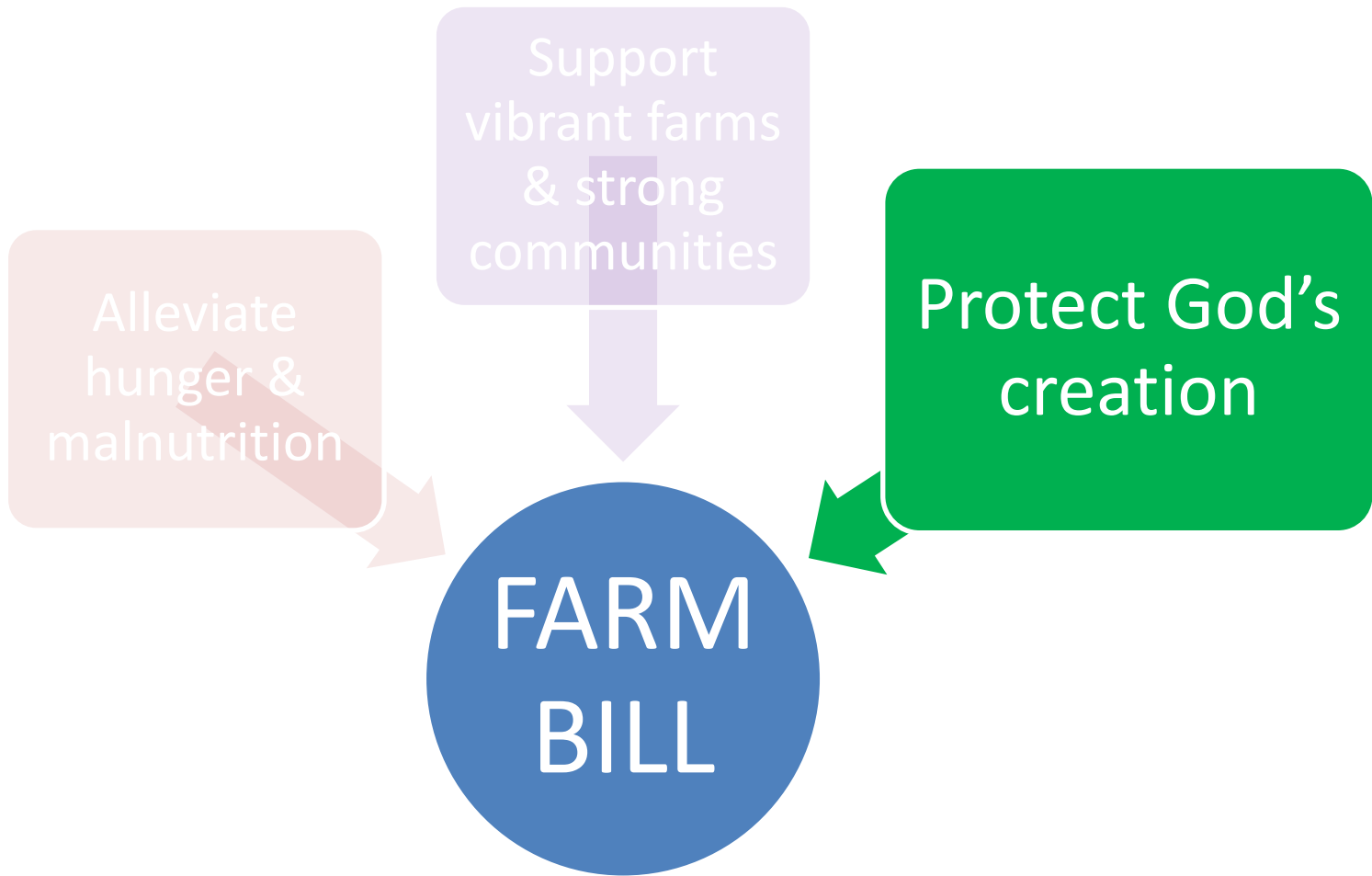
Local and Regional Food Systems... *around the world*

Support vibrant
farms & strong
communities

Help beginning
& socially
disadvantaged
farmers

**Build local &
regional food
systems**

- Support long-term, flexible solutions to global hunger
- Shipping is expensive; delay in food arrival
- *Local and Regional Procurement Program*
 - More efficient with U.S. tax dollars
 - Helps local farmers grow and sell



Protect God's
creation

Promote conservation

Prioritize funding for programs that **promote conservation & protect from degradation**

- Helps reduce soil erosion, enhance water supplies & quality, increase wildlife habitat and reduce damages caused by floods and other natural disasters
- *Conservation Stewardship Program*
- Not a piggy bank!

FARM BILL

Multiyear reauthorization

Alleviate hunger & malnutrition

Protect **SNAP**

Sustain **International food aid**

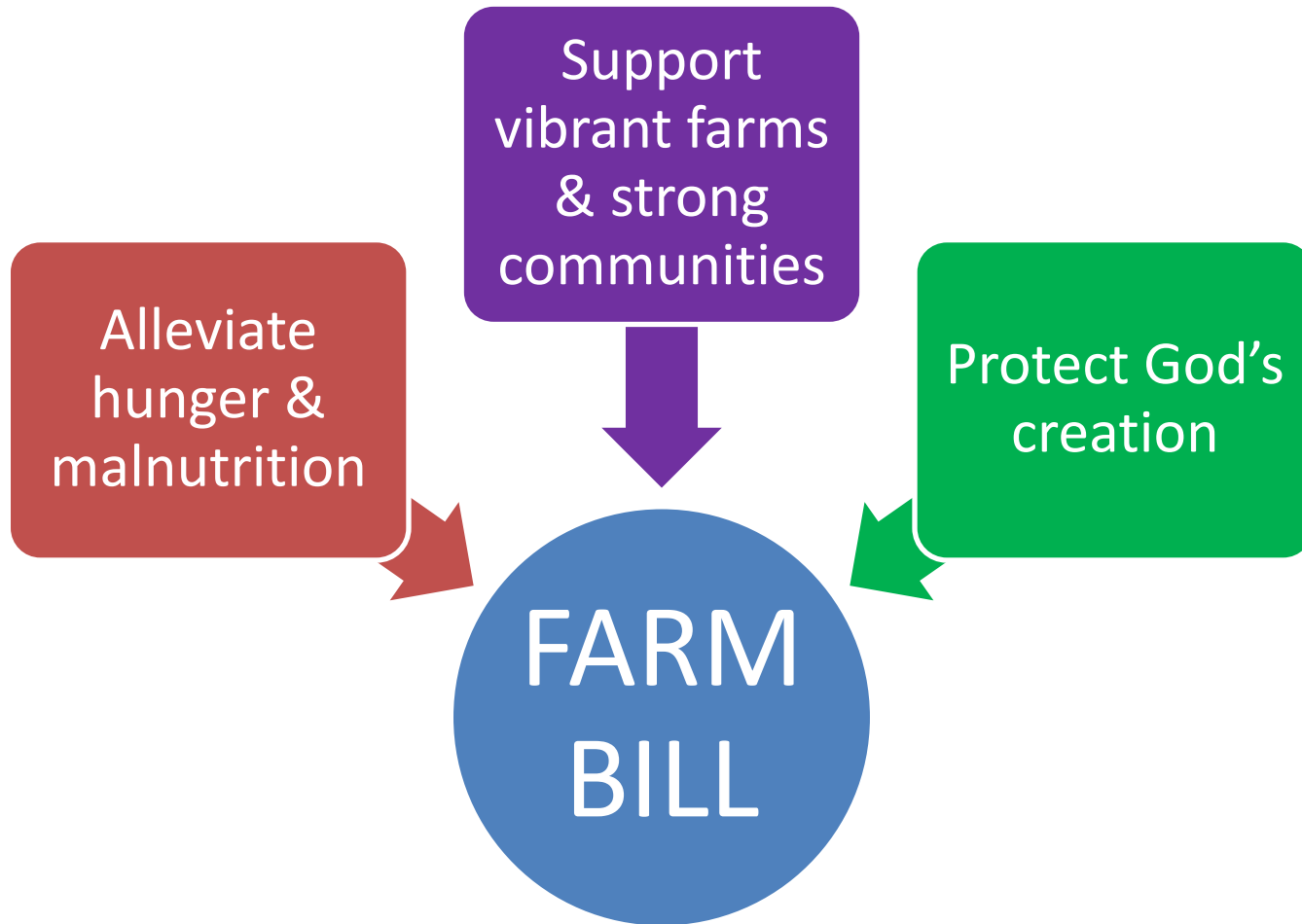
Support vibrant farms & strong communities

Help **beginning & socially disadvantaged farmers**

Build **local & regional food systems**

Protect God's creation

Prioritize funding for programs that **promote conservation and protect from degradation**



Ecumenical Advocacy Days 2013 Visiting Your Member of Congress

The “ASK” for the EAD Lobby Day:

Congress should enact a farm bill this year that alleviates hunger and malnutrition, supports vibrant farms and healthy communities, and protects God’s creation. We urge Congress to support a full, multi-year reauthorization of the farm bill that: (see your backgrounder, talking points and leave behind sheets for the six specifics)

Prepare for the Visit

- Know something about your Congressperson's position on issues; your Congressperson's web site is a good source of information
- Review background on the issue – *in your packet*
- Prepare a one-page summary of your position to leave with your Member– *done for you, in your packet.*
- Make a plan for the visit:
 - Choose a spokesperson to start. Decide who will say what – *in the Sunday 5:15 session*
 - Determine who will complete the Lobby Report Form, and leave it at the Church*
 - Think of questions and counterpoints that may come up and plan a response
- Practice the visit – *on Monday morning before your visit.*

Make the Visit

- Be on time, meet in the hall about 5 minutes before the meeting is scheduled, be organized
- Explain who you are why you are there
- Connect with the Congressperson by **thanking** her/him for something they have done
- Explain the needs - nationally and internationally - addressed in a fair Farm Bill
- Be clear, concise, compelling and credible
- Be polite and firm in explaining your position; avoid criticism

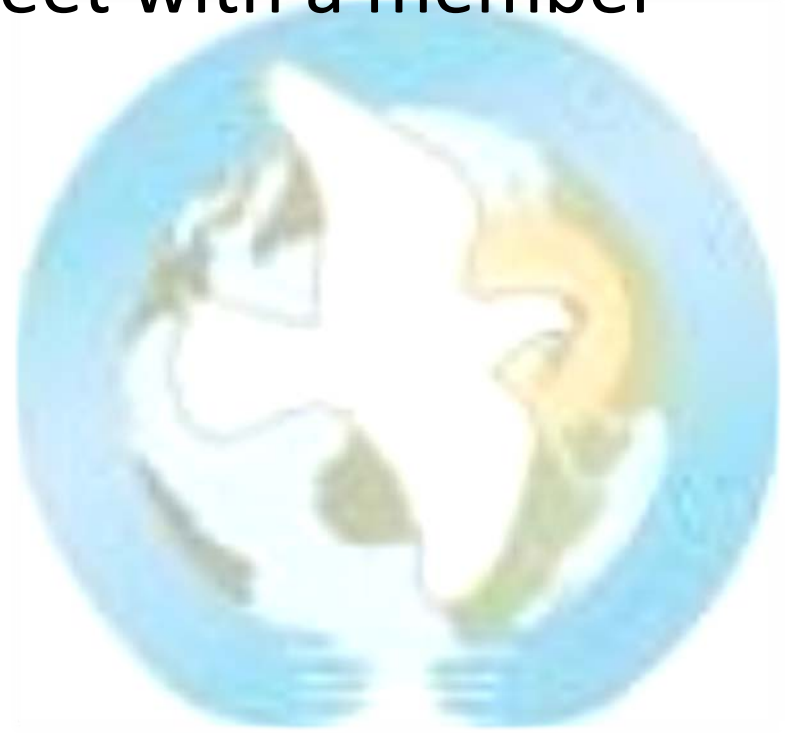
Lobby visit



Lobby visit

Basics

- Be on time
- Realize you won't always meet with a member
- Engage in a conversation



Lobby visit

Don't be insulted...

- by meeting space
- if you're not meeting with the member.
- by the staffer's age
- if you don't have the full block of time you anticipated.



Lobby visit

Be focused.

- Chit-chat only briefly– get to the point.
- Personalize your message based on regional knowledge and the official's interests or voting records.



Questions?

