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United States. Congress. House. Committee on Agriculture

E. De la Garza

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news release

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

(NR93-075)

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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Statement by Rep. Kika de la Garza (D-Texas) Chairman, House Agriculture Committee

Clinton Administration's Food Safety/Pesticide Proposal Tuesday, Sept. 21, 1993

The Administration set out to achieve a single voice on these contentious issues and offer Congress a reasonable and workable set of proposals to improve our pesticide laws. I believe their proposals pave the way for a concerted effort in Congress to bring about broad-based pesticide reform.

The Administration has recognized that the two laws that govern pesticide regulation, FIFRA and FFDCA, must be made to work together better. The Administration's proposal to use a science-based, public-health standard of negligible risk in the setting of pesticide tolerances makes sense. It's time to give food safety regulators the flexibility they need to take into account our ever increasing knowledge of pesticides and their effect on human health and the environment. The standard of the 1950's makes no sense in the 1990's.

It's encouraging that the Administration at least recognizes the importance of benefits to consumers in setting pesticide policies. I think our country has a tendency to take for granted the availability of an affordable, diverse and nutritious food supply.

There are many details in the Administration's proposals that are left vague or are yet to be worked out. The Administration has suggested the use of a new "phase-out" system, in addition to the current suspension and cancellation procedures. We need to determine whether this new tool would improve the current system. I look forward to hearing more about this particular proposal and the rest of the package at the upcoming hearing before the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Department Operations and Nutrition.

With the Administration's leadership, Congress has the opportunity to restore credibility and effectiveness to our Federal pesticide laws. The House Agriculture Committee is ready to seize this opportunity. I hope other committees in Congress will join us in this effort to improve our nation's pesticide laws to everyone's benefit.