

AMENDMENT TO RULES COMMITTEE PRINT

119-22

OFFERED BY Ms. STANSBURY OF NEW MEXICO

Add at the end of subtitle D of title XII the following:

1 **SEC. 12___. MINIMUM PHYSICAL PRESENCE REQUIREMENT**
2 **FOR FARM SERVICE AGENCY AND NATURAL**
3 **RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE LOCAL**
4 **OFFICES.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall ensure that
6 each county or area office of the Farm Service Agency
7 and each field office of the Natural Resources Conserva-
8 tion Service—

9 (1) has at least 1 full-time equivalent employee
10 physically present at the office location not fewer
11 than 20 hours per week during regular business
12 hours;

13 (2) is able to offer in-person appointments to
14 producers on not fewer than 3 days per week; and

15 (3) during the period beginning March 1 and
16 ending June 30 of each year, and during the period
17 beginning September 1 and ending November 30 of
18 each year, has at least 1 full-time equivalent em-

1 ployee physically present at the office location not
2 fewer than 30 hours per week during regular busi-
3 ness hours.

4 (b) NOTICE TO PRODUCERS.—For any week in which
5 an office is unable to meet the requirements under sub-
6 section (a), the head of the relevant office shall—

7 (1) post conspicuous notice of reduced avail-
8 ability at the office location and on the website of
9 the relevant agency; and

10 (2) ensure that producers are able to reach a
11 qualified employee by telephone or electronic means
12 during regular business hours on any day the office
13 is unstaffed.

14 (c) EXCEPTIONS.—The requirements under sub-
15 section (a) shall not apply with respect to a particular of-
16 fice during any week in which—

17 (1) a natural disaster, public health emergency,
18 or other exigent circumstance prevents physical
19 staffing; or

20 (2) the office is temporarily co-located with an-
21 other Farm Service Agency or Natural Resources
22 Conservation Service office that itself meets the re-
23 quirements under subsection (a) and serves the same
24 producer population.

1 (d) PROHIBITION ON CIRCUMVENTION.—The Sec-
2 retary may not close or consolidate a county or area office
3 of the Farm Service Agency or a field office of the Natural
4 Resources Conservation Service for the primary purpose
5 of avoiding the requirements under subsection (a).

