

J. MICHAEL SCHMIDT

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Volunteer, Agency Review Team for the United State Department of Agriculture,
Biden-Harris Transition Team, 11/2020-present**

Participated in review of the USDA as part of the Biden-Harris Transition's agency review process.

**Senior Professional Staff, Ranking Member Debbie Stabenow,
U.S. Senate Committee for Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry 1/2017 - 11/2020**

Managed and assigned work among a small team of staff and fellows. Drafted, analyzed and negotiated provisions related to crop insurance, commodities, disasters, and select conservation programs, including major portions of three titles of the 2018 farm bill. Portfolio of agencies and programs encompass \$15-20 billion in annual mandatory spending at USDA and also additional oversight of disaster and ad-hoc farmer assistance programs that exceeded \$50 billion over the past three years. Conducted oversight of USDA programs through development of hearing materials, participating in briefings, drafting letters and staff reports including a Senate Democratic caucus report on USDA's flawed trade assistance program that received national press and was highlighted by Senate Minority Leader Schumer. Collaborated with other staff, groups and constituents to develop policy and legislative proposals that cross issue areas such as climate change and efforts to protect the food supply chain during the COVID pandemic. Acted as a liaison between and resource for other staff members on budget, economic and scoring issues with the Congressional Budget Office and during analysis of the annual President's Budget. Used past experience at USDA to inform and advise on oversight of USDA administrative functions such as information technology, staffing, regulatory process and office structure.

**Associate Administrator for Policy and Programs, Farm Service Agency (FSA),
United States Department of Agriculture, Washington DC, 8/2015 – 1/2017**

Managed the divisions of FSA responsible for external affairs and all programs and policies related to external customers including commodity operations, farm programs and farm loan programs. This portfolio delivered more than \$8.8 billion in safety net, conservation and disaster programs along with loans and loan guarantees of over \$6.3 billion in FY 2016. Oversaw the user-fee supported warehouse examiners and disposition of both forfeited commodities and commodities involved in warehouse bankruptcies. Continued to lead efforts to broaden the outreach and program offerings beyond traditional row-crop customers including soliciting and selecting \$2.5 million in cooperative agreements focusing on outreach, technical assistance and financial assistance. Developed strategic plans and coordinated communications plans for major agency initiatives. Led implementation of high profile Departmental initiatives such as the Biofuel Infrastructure Partnership. Continued to act as primary agency liaison on policy matters with senior officials within USDA and other internal and external agencies such as OMB. Addressed a variety of internal and external audiences from small groups to speeches and interviews. Member of the senior management team that made budgetary and information technology decisions on how to allocate an annual budget of over \$1 billion.

**Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs, Farm Service Agency,
United States Department of Agriculture, Washington DC, 3/2013 – 8/2015**

Directed management of more than 100 person division responsible for implementation of FSA Farm Programs that is responsible for delivery of 20 programs including conservation, commodity safety net, energy, disaster response and related compliance with environmental and payment limits. Implemented more than a dozen regulations and related policy related to the 2014 Farm Bill, with program highlights including one of the largest conservation programs, delivering over three years of retroactive disaster relief in one year to more than 500,000 livestock producers and successfully implementing the new flagship safety-net program to more than

1.7 million farmers. Annual payments from the deputy area are typically in excess of \$5 billion. Established and approved policy followed by 2,200 offices covering every state and territory. Led effort in developing policy, drafting regulations and implementing more than ten new or significantly modified programs in the 2014 Farm Bill. Responsible for developing a framework to implement sequester in 2013. Regularly developed decision options and briefed senior USDA leadership including the Secretary and Deputy Secretary and congressional offices on program implementation and challenges. Regularly negotiated with OMB regarding policy, apportionments and administrative PAYGO. Consider whether to grant relief and settle disputes on hundreds of individual program appeals. Was part of the executive leadership team for the agency that met weekly and advised, communicated and represented the agency and mission area as appropriate. Developed several process improvements that saved taxpayers and producers through more efficient program delivery. Conducted interagency, state government and stakeholder briefings

Senior Advisor and Acting Chief of Staff, Marketing and Regulatory Programs (MRP), United States Department of Agriculture, Washington DC, 3/2012 – 3/2013

Advised and represented Under Secretary, Deputy Under Secretaries as well as MRP agencies on policy development, operational planning, communication of Department and Administration priorities and day-to-day management. Managed weekly issues and docket agenda, advised and represented MRP to the three agencies within MRP (AMS, APHIS & GIPSA) including requesting, reviewing and revising materials for the Office of the Secretary and other relevant offices or mission areas. Served as liaison with other USDA and external entities including other federal agencies, state and local governments and stakeholders. Duties included the preparation of analyses, reports, statements, and talking points. Managed the review and approval of agency dockets and regulations with MRP agencies and the Office of the Secretary including advising on necessary revisions, timing and roll-out plans. Worked with the two Deputy Under Secretaries to analyze statutory and regulatory constraints and policy alternatives. Coordinated and developed MRP public affairs plan including preparing the Under Secretary for interviews, developing blogs, planning travel and events and reviewing and revising correspondence. Followed and predicted relevant Congressional activity, coordinated Congressional meetings, and prepared testimony and Under Secretary for hearings. Acted as an advisor to the Under Secretary on management and budget issues for the internal MRP budget and that of the MRP agencies that total over \$2.4b including the development of budget alternatives and contingency planning for possible shut-downs or sequestration. Represented the Under Secretary in his absence at relevant USDA departmental and external meetings and events. Represented MRP agency views and developed strategy and materials for cross-Departmental initiatives such as the Blueprint for Stronger Service. Oversaw and worked closely with MRP agency chiefs of staff to communicate sensitive information back-and-forth between the agencies and the Senior Advisor to the Secretary and other senior leaders.

Acting Chief of Staff, Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA), United States Department of Agriculture, Washington DC.

Served as the primary liaison with other USDA and external entities including other federal agencies, Congress, and media. Duties included the preparation of analyses, reports, statements, and talking points. Responsible for public affairs, which includes handling reporter and stakeholder inquiries, providing background, drafting releases, roll-out materials and correspondence. Acted as legislative director for the agency, which included following and predicting Congressional activity, scheduling and participating in Congressional meetings, preparing testimony and answers to questions, evaluating rule-making alternatives and regulatory documents. Developed background, mock questions and coordinated mock hearings to prepare Administrator and MRP Under Secretary for congressional oversight and budget hearings. Acted as advisor to the Administrator on management and budget issues for an approximately \$150m agency, which included the preparation of special reports, development of budget alternatives, and contingency planning for possible shut-downs. Represented the Administrator in his absence at relevant mission area, USDA departmental and external meetings and events. Coordinated, assisted with drafting and prepared rollout plan and materials for a major final rule related to competition in the livestock industry.

Senior Legislative Assistant, Legislative Assistant, Office of Senator Russ Feingold, Washington DC, 1/2005 – 2/2011

Served as advisor to the Senator and his representative to congressional and external entities on agriculture, nutrition, telecommunications, transportation and science issues; covered additional issue areas during vacancies/leave; developed Senator's annual and long-term agenda relative to reauthorizations; drafted amendments and legislation; negotiated legislative and report language with Committee and leadership staff; prepared and reviewed press materials and strategy; staffed, prepared background and represented Senator as needed for meetings with constituents, state and federal officials and policy groups; staffed and developed questions, statements and strategy for Senator at relevant Budget and Judiciary Committee hearings; supervised relevant legislative aides and legislative correspondents; supported caseworkers and state regional representatives; followed-up with participants from Senator's town-hall style listening sessions. Some specifics:

- **Agriculture and Nutrition**
 - Farm Bill—Drafted legislation as a marker for the 2008 farm bill and worked to include provisions via amendments or report language.
 - Competition—Sought to improve transparency and oversight of agricultural markets. Specific actions include GAO report on possible manipulation of the cash cheese market, USDA IG report on dairy price reporting errors, pushing DOJ Antitrust Division to examine competition in the dairy industry and supply chain that resulted in a June 2010 USDA/DOJ dairy competition workshop
 - Producer assistance—Pressed for USDA action and legislation to assist producers following price crashes and disasters.
 - Trade—Sought to defend domestic producers from harmful trade concessions, while pushing back against arbitrary and unscientific trade barriers to US agricultural exports.
- **Telecommunications**
 - Competition & Payola—Drafted bill and worked with FCC to improve radio and concert industries.
 - In-state television—Developed hearing materials and legislation to allow in-state TV signals to be seen
 - Cell phone fees—Developed legislation that was included in a veteran's omnibus bill to require cell phone providers to waive early termination fees for deployed servicemembers.
- **Transportation**
 - Wasteful spending—Developed multiple provisions in Control Spending Now Act including a provision to rescind old earmarks, which received USDOT support and passed the Senate on a bipartisan basis
 - 2005 Highway Bill—Worked with the congressional delegation to ensure a fair state rate of return
- **Environment, energy, public lands, forestry, higher and K-12 education**
 - Served as interim legislative assistant for several months to a year during vacancies

Volunteer and Policy Advisor, Feingold Senate Committee, 2010 and 2016

Congressional Science Fellow, Office of Senator Charles Schumer, Washington DC, 1/04-12/04

Worked in the role of Legislative Assistant for agriculture. Experience with dairy, fruit, specialty crop, trade, food safety and environmental issues. Developed topics and materials for press calls, conferences and releases. Competitively selected and sponsored by the Agronomy / Crop Science / Soil Science Societies of America

Research Assistant, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA 5/98-9/02

Collected and analyzed soil, plant and water samples to assess success of created wetlands

Instructor, Honors Freshman Seminar, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA, 8/97-12/97

Teaching Assistant, junior-level soils laboratory course, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA, 8/96–12/98

EDUCATION

University College London, Geography Department, London, England

Master of Science in **Public Understanding of Environmental Change**, September 2003

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia
 Master of Science in **Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences**, May 2002, **GPA 4.0 / 4.0**
 Thesis examining the ecological function of created versus natural wetlands

Honors Baccalaureates in **Environmental Science (B.S.)** with Waste, Aquatic and Land Resources
 degree options and in **Biology (B.S.)**, May 1998, **GPA 3.96 / 4.0**
 Undergraduate research examining use of organic materials to improve disturbed soils

SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

USDA Abraham Lincoln Honor Award for Personal and Professional Excellence, U.S. Warehouse Act
 Resolution Team, Team leader, 2016
 Farm Service Agency Administrator's Award for Outstanding Team Accomplishment, Farm Bill
 Implementation Team, Team leader, 2014
 Outstanding Recent Alumnus Award, Crop and Soil Environmental Science, Virginia Tech, 2007
 Fulbright Graduate Student Grant for the United Kingdom, 2002
 Outstanding Student Leader Graduate Award, Virginia Tech, 2000
 Science to Achieve Results (STAR) Fellowship, Environmental Protection Agency, 1999-00
 Leader of the Year, Omicron Delta Kappa, Virginia Tech, 1999
 Phi Kappa Phi Graduate Fellowship, 1998
 Powell Graduate Fellowship, Virginia Tech, 1998
 Senior of the Year, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Virginia Tech, 1998
 All-USA College Academic First Team, USA TODAY, 1997
 Morris K. Udall Scholarship for Environmental Public Policy, 1996
 Barry M. Goldwater Scholar for Science, Mathematics and Engineering, 1996

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS & HONOR SOCIETIES

Soil Science Society of America, 2003	Society of Wetland Scientists, 1998
Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, 1997	Phi Beta Kappa, 1997
Golden Key National Honor Society, VP, 1996	Omicron Delta Kappa, President, VP, 1996

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Presented or served as a panelist on behalf of the Senate Agriculture Committee at various national and regional
 farmer, commodity and crop insurance stakeholder meetings in the run-up to and following passage of
 the 2018 farm bill, various in 2017-2019
 Presentation, "Farm Bill Update," Future of Farming and Rural Life in Wisconsin Conference, May 2007
 Panelist, Future of Music Policy Summit, Washington DC, September 2007
 Panelist, Congressional Science Fellow panel, Agronomy/Crop Science/Soil Science Societies of America
 annual meetings, November 2007, October 2008, November 2009
 Abstract and Presentation, "Physical Decomposition of Leaf Litter in Constructed and Natural Reference
 Wetlands in Eastern Virginia," Society of Wetland Scientists, Chicago, IL, May 2001
 Paper and Presentation, "Determining Optimal Sawdust/Biosolids Mixtures to Manage Nitrate Leaching,"
 American Society for Surface Mining and Reclamation, Albuquerque, NM, June 2001