

## G.O.P. Senator Joni Ernst's Farm Family Received more than \$460,000 in Federal Subsidies, Despite her being Against Federal Aid for Everyone Else!

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*State Senator Joni Ernst speaking at a campaign rally outside Gilmore Hall at the University of Iowa*

Despite Sen. Joni Ernst's (R-IA) rhetoric about growing up poor when responding to President Obama's 2015 State of the Union Address, her family actually received hundreds of thousands of dollars in government aid between 1995 and 2009, the *District Sentinel* news co-op reported.

Last year, her campaign ad bragging that she cut the testicles off pigs while a girl down on her family's farm got her great attention from farmers, and earned widespread disgust from many others. The "tea party" loves her for her stance against federal aid, balancing the budget through cuts to social programs she doesn't approve of.

But she's OK with farm subsidies, when it benefits her own "impoverished" farm family. Farm subsidy records indicate that the Iowa freshman Senator's father, Richard Culver, received \$38,395 in commodity subsidies and conservation payments, with all but \$12 of the money being used for support of his corn crops. Ernst's uncle, Dallas Culver, has reportedly received \$250,000 in federal corn subsidies and \$117,141 in additional aid.

And her paternal grandfather, Harold Culver, got an additional \$57,479 in aid between 1995 and 2001.

Ernst did not mention her family's use of Federal programs during her response to the State of the Union. Instead, she said she was raised "simply" and taught to live within her means. "I had only one good pair of shoes. So on rainy school days, my mom would slip plastic bread bags over them to keep them dry," she said. "But I was never embarrassed. Because the school bus would be filled with rows and rows of young lowans with bread bags slipped over their feet. Our parents may not have had much, but they worked hard for what they did have."

She later promised that the new Republican-controlled Congress would "propose ideas that aim to cut wasteful spending and balance the budget."

Radio Iowa reported last May that Ernst said she "philosophically opposed" to federal farm subsidies during a GOP primary debate. However, she added, she would continue to support them if elected. "Reality is that with the subsidies, unless we're eliminating all of them across the board at the same time for every sector out there, then I'll go ahead and support those subsidies," she said at the time.

It was reported last October that Ernst's father received more than \$200,000 in local contracts for his construction company during her stint as auditor for Montgomery County, despite a state rule requiring that contracts be voided if a county official or employee "had an interest" in the contractor.