

Washington, DC – 12th District Georgia Congressman John Barrow (D-Savannah) today issued the following statement after the Agriculture Subcommittee on Specialty Crops, Rural Development, and Foreign Agriculture met this morning to discuss of the price support program for peanut farmers in the 2007 Farm Bill:

“Those of us who represent peanut producing states have been working on securing a fair price support level since the beginning of the year – and we’ve been working in a completely bipartisan way. But this proposal of \$375 per ton isn’t an adequate safety net in today’s markets for Georgia growers, especially with fuel prices on the rise, input costs skyrocketing, and unchecked foreign competition increasing.

“The market is currently at \$415 per ton, but growers are not signing contracts at that level because it’s not profitable. According to the Georgia Peanut Commission, 53% of Georgia farmers say that over-production won’t occur until we get to \$500 or more.

“We’ve seen wildly fluctuating numbers come out on the cost of increasing the support level for peanut farmers. The USDA and CBO assumptions about what a more adequate support program would cost don’t make sense. We need to look further into their projections, and find out where these numbers come from.

“All of us on this committee have worked hard to increase the baseline, and I intend to continue working with Chairman Peterson, and the rest of our colleagues between now and the full committee markup to try to find a better solution for growers in Georgia and the Southeast.”

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