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The following is a KSCO commentary. Here is Kay Zwerling:

While awaiting my turn in the dentist's office last week, I read a compelling story in last month's Readers Digest, which many of you will find most unusual and interesting. It was written by Michael Crowley. It is titled "Phony Farmers" and the author laments how our federal government for many years has foolishly spent billions in tax dollars to frauds who never had hands-on involvement in farming.

Furthermore, because of the powerful pressure of lobbyists in federal government, these foolish mistakes are forced to continue to perpetuate.

How did this system become so corrupt, and under the circumstances will it ever be possible to balance our out-of-control federal budget?

This astonishing story came to light almost a year ago when a Miami television station analyzed records of federal farm subsidies paid to South Florida residents.

By cross-referencing payments against death notices, the reporter found that at least 234 people listed as deceased were still getting checks from Washington – and some had been dead for over eight years.

Clearly those government checks are being endorsed by certain entities, most of them new companies.

While the original owners of the subsidized small farms were individuals – the present endorsements show that companies now own the farms which could be large and profitable.

According to members of the Heritage Foundation, farm subsidies are America's largest corporate welfare program, also the most irritating.

Also, get this – the agricultural industry has 1200 registered lobbyists in Washington, and they spend $133 million a year to make sure the money keeps flowing.

So, it looks like this grotesque program will not go away so easily.

My personal feelings are that lobbyists should be outlawed. They surely were not part of our government when it was born. Their power is grossly unfair, and they pressure those in government who vote in our behalf. In fact, they instruct those who vote.

Unfortunately, lobbyists have already become very entrenched and very powerful, and may never be removed from the lawmaking process.

P.S. – How naïve of me to think that lobbyists can ever be eliminated from government. I just did a brief research and learned that even Presidents to be take money from special interests by way of lobbyists.

For KSCO, this is Kay Zwerling.

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