WASHINGTON, D.C. -- U.S. Sen. Bill Armstrong (R-Colo.) today reintroduced the "sodbuster bill," legislation which is designed to head off the growing threat of another dust bowl. The measure has 19 Senate cosponsors.

The bill, which was added as an amendment to the Senate Agriculture Appropriation bill in September, 1982 but was eliminated by the House Senate-Conference, died at the end of the 97th Congress this past December. Armstrong reintroduced it today and vowed to continue the fight to protect the nation's fragile grasslands from being plowed under and blown away.

The bill would prevent the payment of government price supports and other subsidies for crops grown on newly plowed fragile grasslands. It is endorsed by the Farm Bureau, the National Association of Conservation Districts, the Reagan Administration and a number of Colorado farm and conservation groups.

"We should not tell farmers what they can and cannot do on their own land, but we can stop subsidizing soil erosion," Armstrong said. "Using government programs to encourage the plowing of these grasslands puts the taxpayer in the position of supporting the destruction of our most precious natural resource for growing our food -- soil."

Citing the increased interest among his Senate colleagues and the interest expressed by many House Members, Armstrong added, "I think - more -
the bill has some momentum in Congress as a result of the continued public interest and I am confident that Congress will act to stop paying people to destroy our topsoil."

Cosponsors of the bill are Senators Max Baucus (D-Mont.), Dale Bumpers (D-Ark.), John H. Chafee (R-R.I.), Charles E. Grassley (R-Iowa), Gary Hart (D-Colo.), Orrin G. Hatch (R-Utah), Paula Hawkins (R-Fla.), Roger W. Jepsen (R-Iowa), Nancy L. Kassebaum (R-Kan.), Bob Kasten (R-Wis.), Carl Levin (D-Mich.), Richard G. Lugar (R-Ind.), James A. McClure (R-Idaho), Don Nickles (R-Okla.), Larry Pressler (R-S.Dak.), Dan Quayle (R-Ind.), John W. Warner (R-Va.) and Edward Zorinsky (D-Nebr.).