

FUNDING FOR SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, earlier today we approved an amendment related to outreach funding for socially disadvantaged farmers. This amendment was offered by our colleague, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), and she is also to be commended. The amendment was accepted by the subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. SKEEN). He, too, is to be commended for his support.

This amendment passed, and the House is to be commended for doing that. Let me tell my colleagues why.

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This amendment permits the Secretary of Agriculture to provide additional funding for USDA outreach programs for socially disadvantaged farmers. Under the amendment, the Secretary may transfer up to \$7 million to this program.

The 2501 outreach program targets small and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. The program is carried out by colleges and universities, including the 1890 land grant institutions. With funds from this program, these institutions are able to conduct the vital and important work of training and management assistance. Individualized farm plans, upgrading accounting systems, effective utilization of the vast array of other USDA programs, and the best approaches to applying for credit are but a few of the services available at the institutions and through this program.

Mr. Speaker, while the additional dollars provided by this amendment will be a great help to our small farmers, especially those who are socially disadvantaged, there are other steps that Congress should take to assist the 1890 institutions in assisting small farmers. It should concern all of us that of the 1,200 Ph.D. degrees recently awarded this year in agriculture science in the United States, almost half were awarded to non-U.S. citizens, while less than 3 percent were awarded to Afro-Americans. We need a program to encourage more Americans, particularly Afro-Americans, to pursue graduate-level education in agriculture.

The 1890 institutions could use additional support in their research and extension efforts. This additional support is especially needed to strengthen the level of performance and the productivity and the research and extension of the 1890 institutions.

A modest increase of not less than 5 percent in formula funding for existing 1890 programs would go a very long way in helping the 1890 schools to help small farmers. Additional funding resources for facility funding and extending such funding to institutional facilities is but another prudent resource that would be a wise investment that

will produce immeasurable returns for small farmers.

We must also work with the administration to produce either legislation or regulations that assures continuation of the Federal support when a State fails to provide the matching dollars for the land grant institutions. Many of the programs Congress intends to make available are not available to these institutions because the State matching funds are not often provided.

Finally, given the state of affairs of small farmers, especially socially disadvantaged farmers, a special appropriation of not less than \$10 million over the next several years should be targeted, and we should consider this now as we are now considering the agriculture appropriation for the next few years. Targeting to reduce the rapid decline of these farmers will be a meaningful investment if we are to stop the erosion and the demise of small farmers.

Mr. Speaker, there can be no doubt that small farmers and ranchers are struggling to survive in America. In fact, small farmers and ranchers are a dying breed. Indeed, in my home State of North Carolina, there has been a 64 percent decline in minority farmers just over the last 15 years, from 6,996 farms in 1978 to 2,498 farms in 1992. All farmers, all farmers, are suffering under the severe economic downturn we are now facing, but particularly small and disadvantaged farmers are facing severely.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) and the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. SKEEN) for their sensitivity to the needs of socially disadvantaged farmers, but there is very much more we need to do. I hope Congress will be committed to do that in the coming years.

THE PROBLEM OF DRUG ABUSE IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor again tonight to talk about the problem of drug abuse in our Nation and the tremendous toll that illegal narcotics have taken across our great land.

It is getting so that almost every family, certainly every community across the United States, can today claim that they are victimized by illegal narcotics trafficking in their communities and their schools, among their family members. The statistics are really mind-boggling and do not make the front page of today's newspaper, Mr. Speaker, but indeed they are dramatic.

Last year, over 14,000 Americans died in drug-related deaths. That is only the tip of the iceberg, because now we find

that many thousands more that were killed in other accidents and suicides and other causes of death are not counted in that toll. In fact, the figure is much, much higher.

I said before on the floor of the House when we had the terrible tragedy at Columbine with a number of students and faculty who were killed in that tragedy, that we have multiple Columbines across our Nation every day. They are sometimes in the silent but violent deaths of our young people through the use of illegal narcotics.

Today heroin has become the drug of choice, and it is destroying lives by the thousands. I come from Central Florida and represent the area from Orlando to Daytona Beach, a relatively peaceful area. But Central Florida now has had such an epidemic, particularly among our young people, of deaths from illegal drugs and overdoses, that a recent headline in the Orlando Sentinel said that illegal drug overdoses now exceed homicides in Central Florida. That is how severe the problem is in my district.

That is one reason why I chose to accept the Speaker's appointment as chairman of the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice Drug Policy and Human Resources. I had the great privilege and opportunity to serve in the last Congress with the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), someone who folks are just learning more about, who is the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

When the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), the gentleman I refer to, served as chairman of the Subcommittee on National Security Criminal Justice and International Affairs, I served with him and at his side. I had the privilege of watching the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT) bring together a consensus in this Congress and in the House of Representatives to re-start the war on drugs. You must remember, and I will detail that in just a few minutes, that the war on drugs basically stopped with the election of this President and his taking office in 1993. I will talk more about that in a minute.

But, again, someone who restarted our national effort now leads the House of Representatives, and I am very proud to have served with him in that effort during the past several years as the new majority gained control here in the House of Representatives.

The record of death and destruction across our land we were very much aware of when we took control of the House of Representatives and we saw the change from the Reagan and Bush administration, where we saw a decline year after year in drug use and drug deaths across the Nation. What should be astounding is that since we really had this new policy with this new administration, that the figures began to really go off of the charts. In fact, I brought a chart tonight to illustrate the problem that we had.

Remember what I said just a minute ago. If you look at this chart for a