

## FAIRNESS TO DAIRY FARMERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. JOHNSON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to also address an issue of agriculture, one that I think is of utmost importance to dairy farmers not only in northeast Wisconsin where I come from but all across this country, an agriculture issue that we are familiar with from some innovative television and prints ads that promote milk and dairy products, not only from Wisconsin but across this great land of ours.

One ad campaign asks, Got milk? Well, we have got milk in Wisconsin. And the question is, have we got fairness? It is another issue.

Right now the dairy farmers in northeast Wisconsin, indeed across the country, every one of them hard working farm families, pay 15 cents for every 100 pounds of milk that they sell. It goes into a fund. It promotes and advertises milk and dairy products. All of these ads are a great boost for dairy products in general. The program is helping dairy farmers everywhere, everywhere sell their milk.

However, there are some dairy producers who benefit from these ads but they do not pay into this promotion fund. They are not farmers from my home district in Wisconsin. They are not farmers in the Northeast or in California.

They are foreign dairy producers, places like Australia and New Zealand, and they in fact reap the rewards of dairy promotion. I think dairy farmers think it is time we shared the cost with all dairy farmers.

I have introduced a bill, Mr. Speaker, as a matter of fact, my first bill to try and level the playing field between American dairy farmers and foreign dairy producers when it comes to promotion, which benefits everybody who looks to advertise their product. It is the Dairy Promotion Fairness Act. I urge my colleagues to sign onto the measure and support it in this Congress.

I think this issue of fairness goes beyond the fact that dairy importers are not paying the same fees as dairy farmers. The importers of other commodities, beef, pork, and cotton, are currently paying into their respective promotion programs, yet dairy importers in America do not.

Also our dairy farmers are required to pay into dairy promotion programs in other countries where we do sell our milk. We are exporters. But those agreements unfortunately at this point are not reciprocal.

This past weekend I had a chance to meet with Reuel Robertson, a dairy producer from Oneida, Wisconsin. He pays as much as \$450 a month from his monthly dairy check into a dairy promotion fund to help the industry sell, in effect, milk, cheese, ice cream and other products to Americans. It is for

Reuel Robertson and for farmers everywhere, not just in northeast Wisconsin, but everywhere in this land that I am working to require foreign dairy producers to pay for dairy promotion. We will not be establishing a new program. We are already marketing milk.

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We will be sharing the cost with every producer that sells dairy products in this country. Assessing importers, we will add approximately \$10 million to the resources that pay for milk promotion. That is \$10 million that promotes dairy products all across the country. It is no added extra revenue to dairy farmers in this country, and yet it is added revenue to help promote a product that we do best. Dairy products.

Mr. Speaker, when we ask the question, got milk? The answer should be yes. Got fairness? Unfortunately, for now, the answer is no, but I hope we can change that.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington [Mr. METCALF] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. METCALF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. JEFFERSON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. JEFFERSON addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. KINGSTON addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. GEJDENSON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. GEJDENSON addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

## THE TOBACCO LOBBY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington, Mrs. LINDA SMITH, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LINDA SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I feel like I am running a rerun. Three years in a row, this is my third year in Congress, I have come to the floor and discussed what seems to be a subsidy that makes no sense.

At first, when I saw that we were subsidizing insurance for tobacco, I thought it was a mistake, because I had arrived with a group of people say-

ing they were going to balance the budget and get rid of things that were not important, not only were not important but unnecessary, and that we were going to clean house.

So I was assured that when we brought that amendment to the floor, a bipartisan group from the oldest Members to the newest Members, that surely it would be gone by the end of the day. The bill was stalled, took a while, seemed to take a few days. I thought it would be one day and it moved to the next. Lost by 13 votes. It seemed a little intriguing until the next year we found the tobacco lobby had cut 165 checks within 48 hours of that vote. Unfortunately, some of them had been passed out here, very close to the vote, very close to where we were voting.

The next year, I thought, well, surely people with the disgust at what the tobacco industry is doing, marketing to our children, we will win this vote on a crop subsidy, targeted to children, intended to harm. But no, lost by two votes, just two votes, as even people did not vote, walking from the floor.

Why is that happening? I could not quite understand it. And I still do not understand it. But today, actually now later in the day, or I guess tomorrow now, we will have the vote again and some will say, as we are voting, well, the small tobacco companies need it, or the farmers. The reality is they are not the ones passing out checks here to keep that. It is the large tobacco companies wanting to keep a hold on what they believe is their position here in Congress, making sure that they still have their insurance subsidized.

I heard the argument that, well, it is only right, they are a crop. Then I realized that we have thousands of crops. Only a few dozen have subsidies, and only a few are insured by the Federal Government. Now, I can understand sugar, although I do not understand why we are subsidizing that. I could maybe understand peanuts, because like sugar, at least it feeds children. But tobacco? Subsidizing the insurance? Charging it to those same children that it is aimed to harm?

No, tomorrow I think this Congress is going to have a chance to show whether we believe in balancing the budget and whether we believe in going to those things that are unnecessary first, and also it will show a little bit about what happens here when money flows from large corporations to campaigns and to parties.

Earlier today it was disclosed that hundreds of thousands of dollars in the last few days had been given to both parties from the tobacco industry in what is called soft money, the soft money being given to the party because, see, if that was given to a candidate or used against a candidate in a TV ad, how would taxpayers feel about seeing that R.J. Reynolds paid for this ad at the bottom of the ad, which is the law. They have to show who pays for the ad, so, instead, they give it to the parties. They launder it through and it