

admitted their use of the term "consumer" means the "first buyer" not the "final consumer of the product." The GAO also interviewed both small and large manufacturers of peanut products and were told that they "may not pass the costs [savings] directly on to the final consumer" of peanut products. This report was the basis of the attempt to phase-out the peanut program and quite simply the factual basis for that argument was truly flawed.

Those statistics give you the economic impact of the peanut program, but I want to put a human face on this debate. Peanut is concentrated in the rural regions of nine southern states, with these regions being poverty-dense and agriculture-dependent. Peanuts is the largest cash crop and industry in many of these regions. For example, every one of the 31 counties in the 2nd District of Georgia, which I represent, is a peanut producing county. The peanut farms are on average 100 acres, not exactly giant agribusiness. Twenty-nine of those counties have poverty exceeding the national average of 13 percent. It's not just my district. Alabama and Florida have a significant number of peanut producing counties that also have poverty exceeding the national average. The elimination of the Peanut Program would have cost more than 5,000 jobs. We are not only talking about hard working family-farmers whose average income dropped sharply in 1995 & 1996. We are also talking about the families of the farmers, the small businesses that work in the peanut industry and the rural communities that are sustained by peanut farming.

Last year we forged an agreement between the Government and our farmers. Investment decisions have been based on a 7-year farm bill. This body should never make a 7-year commitment and attempt to break it after one. If we had broken this agreement we would have had zero credibility with the agricultural community. In addition, the banking community would no longer trust us, because they would have made loans based on the 7-year farm bill.

The crop insurance program was designed to protect crop producers from unavoidable risks associated with adverse weather, plant diseases and insect infestations. The crop insurance program was made available to producers of MAJOR crops, including tobacco, for which private insurance is generally not available. The Government underwriting enhances the ability of farmers to obtain credit from commercial lenders who view a crop insurance policy as a form of security on a farm loan. Private insurance availability would not be universal and without federal crop insurance, farmers premiums will more than double. Small farmers couldn't afford that. With the denial of private crop insurance would come the denial of production loans. Farmers would be forced to stop growing tobacco, and many small banks in small towns would be weakened. Simply put, efforts to eliminate multiperil crop insurance for tobacco farmers unfairly harms and discriminates against small tobacco farmers and tobacco communities. In fact, nearly 30 percent of all disaster indemnities go to small, black-operated farms. Larger operations will probably do fine if this amendment is adopted.

The average tobacco farm is less than 10 acres. If we use the sponsors of the amendment's figures and say the gross receipts for tobacco average \$4,000 per acre, we are only talking about \$4,000 a year, gross. Subtract the loan, interest, farmhand salary and inputs needed to grow the tobacco, there is not a lot left. Without any insurance, a single storm could bankrupt a small hard working American farmer, and another generation of people will be out of farming.

If you have listened to these arguments and said "so what, let them grow something else" do this math: To replace the gross income from 10 acres of tobacco, a farmer would have to plant 74 acres of cotton, 149 acres of corn, 232 acres of soybeans or 288 acres of wheat. On what land is the farmer supposed to plant these crops? Are you going to give him the land or loan him the money to buy the land? Unlikely. Once again, if you want to stop people from growing tobacco, just say so.

The USDA and the Administration opposed eliminating this program. According to the Secretary of Agriculture, Dan Glickman, abolishing the subsidy will effectively end our ability to provide crop insurance and non-insured assistance payments for tobacco growers. Additionally, he argues that eliminating the subsidy would have a particularly detrimental effect on thousands of small farmers in tobacco producing states, not to mention the toll it would take on the economic stability of many rural communities.

Tobacco growers in three States received \$77.8 million in indemnities for losses due to back-to-back hurricanes that hit the East Coast last year. These funds helped communities recover from disaster and were paid for in part by the producers themselves. If no crop insurance or disaster assistance were available, these farmers would have been ruined, their farms foreclosed on, not knowing if they would be able to support their families.

We all agree that smoking is something we don't want children to do. I myself have introduced H.R. 2034, the Tobacco Use by Minors Deterrence Act. Through various civil penalties and community involvement, it would help address underage tobacco use. What it doesn't do is prevent anyone from making a living or telling them their livelihood is somehow inappropriate.

Adults should be able to make the decision to smoke. Tobacco farmers should be able to grow a legal product that sustains many communities in my state and across America.

If you think this program is corporate welfare, I invite you to come to my district and meet some of the "wealthy" tobacco farmers. I'll show you hard working men and women who earn an honest living.

I am very pleased that the Conference Committee has also seen fit to maintain research projects through the University of Georgia which are very critical to the future of the well-being of the constituents I represent, and their livelihood: The Peanut Competitiveness Institute; the Urban Insect Pest Management; the Alliance for Food Protection; and Landscaping for Water Quality.

I also am glad that this conference report has included \$3,000,000 for the Outreach for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Program instead of \$2,000,000 as pro-

posed by the House. This is still not the full authorization amount of \$10 million, but we are getting closer because in addition to the funding received through appropriations bills, the program has also received \$4,500,000 from the Fund for Rural America.

The conference agreement provides \$652,197,000 for the Rural Community Advancement Program (RCAP) instead of \$644,259,000 as proposed by the Senate. The crucial areas which are important for my district are the activities under the Rural Housing Assistance Program, the Rural Business-Cooperative Assistance Program and the Rural Utilities Assistance Program.

I think this is a good agreement, and I rise to support its swift passage.

SALUTE TO BROWARD COUNTY'S AFRICAN-AMERICAN LIBRARY

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 21, 1997

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute today to the Broward County African-American Library, which opens in my congressional district this Saturday, October 25. One of the great milestones in learning opportunities, this sanctuary of history, learning, and cultural promises to become one of south Florida's greatest libraries. Its purpose is to showcase the immeasurable contributions of African-Americans in this country as well as in our native Africa. Beyond that, however, it will stand as a beacon for the educational uplift of an entire community.

The great historian, educator, and author David Walker, once commented about the importance of libraries for African-Americans:

"I would crawl on my hands and knees through mud and mire, to the feet of a learned man, where I would sit and humbly supplicate him to instill into me that which neither devils nor tyrants could remove, only with my life—for colored people to acquire learning in this country makes tyrants quake and tremble on their sandy foundations."

This is the kind of idealism that propels the outstanding individuals who have devoted their lives to making the Broward County African-American Library a reality. I am pleased to salute their achievement, and to praise their enormous efforts in this significant undertaking.

The significance of this project to the growth and development of Broward County is immeasurable. I am pleased to commend the individuals who have committed their lives and their livelihood to making this library a dream come true, a dream founded upon the notion that to study each other—our accomplishments, our traditions, our culture—is to know each other.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Broward County African-American Library, as it steers our community toward greater progress and understanding