

last 7 years; and it is very difficult to pay for water that you do not get. The farmers are not asking that the loan be forgiven. What they are asking is that the length of time to pay the money be extended until such time as the Good Lord sends the rain and that we might use the project for that which it was created originally.

So, without further ado, I thank, again, the chairman and ranking member for their bringing this bill up. I thank them for their support, and I urge support for this bill.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 856, legislation I introduced to extend a repayment period for the Tom Green County Water Control and Improvement District No. 1.

The Tom Green County Water Control & Improvement District No. 1 has an outstanding loan with the Department of Interior for the construction of an irrigation canal. The remaining balance is approximately \$2.4 million. The farmers in the District have made diligent efforts to make timely payments on the contract. They have paid 38 percent (about \$1.5 million) of the original debt owed to the Department of Interior despite the fact that they have yet to receive a fair return on their investment.

In West Texas, there is virtually nothing of a higher daily concern than the availability of water. In recent years, Texas has been devastated by drought. As a result, the farmers have received a full year's allocation of irrigation water only 50 percent of the time. Moreover, for the other 50 percent of the time, they received either less than the annual allocation or no irrigation water at all.

Payment on the debt has never been forgiven, even in years when the District received no water. Deferments have been granted seven times; however, those payments still have to be made. They are added to the remaining balance and the payments continue to get higher annually because the original contract end date does not change.

To make matters worse, the concrete lining placed in the canal in 1960 has started to deteriorate after forty-two years and repairs are necessary. These repairs are very expensive. Farmers simply cannot sustain paying the costs of the annual operation and maintenance costs due to the irrigation district, the Bureau of Reclamation annual payment, and extensive repair costs when little or no water is available.

The Bureau of Reclamation has stated that the increased payments, as a result of continued deferments due to the drought conditions, are making it increasingly difficult on the farmers' ability to repay the annual payments. The increased annual payments place additional financial burdens on the District and increasing these payments further will only lead to future difficulty that the Bureau of Reclamation cannot remedy. Only Congress can remedy the long-term problem, which is why I have introduced H.R. 856 to get this loan restructured.

This legislation would allow the Secretary of Interior to revise the repayment contract (No. 14-06-500-369) by extending the period authorized for repayment of reimbursable construction costs of the canal from 40 to 50 years.

These Tom Green County farmers have been doing their part to meet their responsibilities. When year-after-year the water was unavailable, their only recourse was to ask for an

extension on the loan. I'm glad Tom Green County Commissioner Clayton Friend brought this to my attention and I'm very appreciative of the speedy Resources Committee action. I have high hopes that we will be able to get this bill to the President within the next few weeks.

On behalf of the farmers in my district, I urge members to support H.R. 856.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. RADANOVICH) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 856.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may be given 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1577, H.R. 1012, H.R. 856 and H.R. 255.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

#### MICROENTERPRISE FOR SELF-RELIANCE ACT OF 2000 AND FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961 AMENDMENTS

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 192) to amend the Microenterprise for Self-Reliance Act of 2000 and the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to increase assistance for the poorest people in developing countries under microenterprise assistance programs under those Acts, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 192

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. AMENDMENTS TO THE MICROENTERPRISE FOR SELF-RELIANCE ACT OF 2000.

(a) PURPOSES.—Section 103 of the Microenterprise for Self-Reliance Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-309) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking “micro-entrepreneurs” and inserting “microenterprise households”;

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking “and” at the end;

(3) in paragraph (5)—

(A) by striking “microfinance policy” and inserting “microenterprise policy”;

(B) by striking “the poorest of the poor” and inserting “the very poor”;

(C) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(6) to ensure that in the implementation of this title at least 50 percent of all micro-

enterprise assistance under this title, and the amendments made under this title, shall be targeted to the very poor.”.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—Section 104 of such Act is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking “for micro-entrepreneurs” and inserting “to micro-entrepreneurs and their households”;

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) VERY POOR.—The term ‘very poor’ means individuals—

“(A) living in the bottom 50 percent below the poverty line established by the national government of the country in which those individuals live; or

“(B) living on the equivalent of less than \$1 per day.”.

#### SEC. 2. AMENDMENTS TO THE MICRO- AND SMALL ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT CREDITS PROGRAM UNDER THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961.

(a) FINDINGS AND POLICY.—Section 108(a)(2) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151f(a)(2)) is amended by striking “the development of the enterprises of the poor” and inserting “the access to financial services and the development of microenterprises”.

(b) PROGRAM.—Section 108(b) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2151f(b)) is amended to read as follows:

“(b) PROGRAM.—To carry out the policy set forth in subsection (a), the President is authorized to provide assistance to increase the availability of financial services to microenterprise households lacking full access to credit, including through—

“(1) loans and guarantees to microfinance institutions for the purpose of expanding the availability of savings and credit to poor and low-income households;

“(2) training programs for microfinance institutions in order to enable them to better meet the financial services needs of their clients; and

“(3) training programs for clients in order to enable them to make better use of credit, increase their financial literacy, and to better manage their enterprises to improve their quality of life.”.

(c) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA.—Section 108(c) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2151f(c)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence of the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking “credit institutions” and inserting “microfinance institutions”;

(B) by striking “micro- and small enterprises” and inserting “microenterprise households”;

(2) in paragraphs (1) and (2), by striking “credit” each place it appears and inserting “financial services”.

(d) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENT.—Section 108(d) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2151f(d)) is amended by striking “micro- and small enterprise programs” and inserting “programs for microenterprise households”.

(e) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Section 108(f)(1) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2151f(f)(1)) is amended by striking “for each of fiscal years 2001 and 2002” and inserting “for each of fiscal years 2001 through 2004”.

(f) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 108 of such Act (22 U.S.C. 2151f) is amended in the heading to read as follows:

#### “SEC. 108. MICROENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT CREDITS.”.

#### SEC. 3. AMENDMENTS TO THE MICROENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT GRANT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM UNDER THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961.

(a) FINDINGS AND POLICY.—Section 131(a) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2152a(a)) is amended to read as follows:

“(a) FINDINGS AND POLICY.—Congress finds and declares that—

“(1) access to financial services and the development of microenterprise are vital factors in the stable growth of developing countries and in the development of free, open,