

but four in our State was declared a disaster county.

Today we debated the emergency supplemental appropriations act. I am very supportive of the efforts to bring disaster assistance to the farmers of the gulf coast and those affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. But, Mr. Speaker, \$500 million was included in that bill but directed only to those farmers and other producers who were in hurricane-affected counties.

It is one thing, Mr. Speaker, for us to deny farmers across the country any assistance due to budget considerations, due to our desire to work toward balancing the budget; but it is not understandable in my State that we would pick and choose which farmers receive assistance based upon whether or not the event is a result of a hurricane. Those farmers who have had inadequate moisture in the Midwest for the last 5 and 6 years are no less damaged than those farmers who were affected by the rains and the breaking of the levee and the saltwater in Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi.

I can explain to my constituents about the desire to hold the line on spending, but I can't explain to them why their problems are not addressed in this emergency supplemental but some other producers, some other farmers have been.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I am hoping to set the stage tonight as we conclude the debate on the emergency supplemental, but as we work our way through the remainder of Congress to see that there is some level of disaster assistance provided to all farmers, regardless of the cause of their losses.

Many in this body will say, but Congressman, isn't it crop insurance's duty to provide that kind of assistance? And isn't ad hoc disaster, isn't this disaster assistance package unnecessary?

Well, Mr. Speaker, I chair the subcommittee responsible for crop insurance. The reality is that crop insurance policies insure about 50 percent of the crop losses. The best policies cover 85 percent of the losses. And there is no insurance coverage for livestock. When you have 5 and 6 years of disaster in which you are only being compensated for 50 percent of your losses and you have paid the premiums for that coverage and your average return on equity as a farmer in our State is 3.66 percent, you can't lose year after year after year and stay in business.

The average age of a farmer in Kansas is 59 years old. Our farmers are reaching the conclusion that there is no future in agriculture, and that is not only detrimental to the communities of Kansas, to that individual farm family, but it is detrimental to the people of this country to lose agriculture as a way of life and as an economic driver of our economy.

So we do need to work to improve crop insurance in our subcommittee. Our agriculture committee is working to do that. But the reality is the problem is with us today, and we are losing

another generation of farmers. We will revisit the issue, I hope. 2005, which should be included in this year, is not in this bill; but 2006 may be even worse.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with my colleagues, the leadership of this House in an effort to make sure that farmers can survive into the future.

EULOGY TO MAYTAG

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I want to identify with the remarks of the gentleman from Kansas and say that this is likely to be the first year in America when we will import more food than we export. It is another sign of what is happening to the innards of this economy. Agriculture has always helped America maintain her independence. We best keep that in front of us as we move forward.

I wanted to come to the floor tonight to talk about and pay tribute to something on the manufacturing side of our economy, a company that has been noted for excellence as a top-of-the-line firm. I talked about it a little bit earlier during the Special Order dealing with the economy; but Maytag Corporation, headquartered in Newton, Iowa, sadly, will be closing. I own no stock in this company. I have no personal worth associated with it, but I am one of the millions of American homeowners and householders who says "thank you" to those who helped build and maintain this great American company. Thank you for the excellence of your products.

The company was founded in 1893 by F.L. Maytag, 35 miles east of Des Moines, Iowa, in Newton, Iowa. Soon it, along with sister plants in Arkansas and Illinois, will be closing, idling 3,000 more people losing their jobs in manufacturing in those places. Hopefully, some of them will be able to find other jobs.

But the point I want to talk about tonight is you just don't replace a Maytag company. The generations of Americans who crafted, built, and serviced this all-American product deserve recognition in this Congress. They should be proud of the heritage of which they are a part and of their commitment to quality. Maytag Corporation when it shuts its doors will be closing a chapter in American history that for generations stood for quality and high performance. It was America's industry leader. Maytag helped define America's manufacturing heartland. In fact, Maytag itself symbolized the words "quality" and "dependability."

Some people will say, well, a washing machine is a washing machine. A dryer is a dryer. What does it matter? Yes, there are other companies, Mr. Speaker. There are other companies. But they don't match Maytag's sterling

reputation for product quality. How often have we seen in the age in which we are living the dumbing down of American manufacturing and its displacement by lesser quality products made with lesser quality parts, many of which are imported from foreign countries?

We have witnessed the demise of the U.S. television industry, the furniture industry, the automotive industry, the loss of our energy independence, and now probably this year the loss of our agricultural independence.

It is correct. The average age of farmers in this country is now 59 years old. What about America's agricultural future? But in this industry of home appliances, an industry leader is brought to its knees as excellence again gives way to global market pressures.

As I have studied Maytag's componentry compared to competing products, I am struck by how much America is really losing. It is losing more than a company. It is losing a standard of excellence.

Mr. Speaker, Maytag's quality was more than marketing. Maytag was real. It really was excellent. Its corporate success began with fine design, careful craftsmanship, investment in research and development, and employment of excellent raw materials. Maytag's employees were proud citizens, living in a proud Republic. They knew they were helping to build a strong America, and they did that every day for over a hundred years.

For Maytag, quality was achieved on several levels. Most Americans know Maytag through its commercials which show the lonely Maytag repairman who never got a call for servicing because America's homemakers simply didn't have problems, or rarely did, with Maytag machines. Quality was number one. Maytag's performance was assured by a long history of investments in research and design that assured that quality. Only recently when they became a victim of the downsizing that is hitting U.S. manufacturing did the firm begin to cut back on research and development. The trickle down effect of foreign competition and the cheapening of componentry affected Maytag.

The list of Maytag's engineering bests compared to competitors has been documented and is extensive. This is what we are losing, to name a few: heavy duty stabilizing springs that assured best performance. That sounds like a simple thing to make, but it isn't. Heavy duty base leveling legs; gauge quality in the metals; high torque motor; counterbalancing tubs. And the type of transmission that had only three parts, not 30, and, therefore, repairs were kept to a minimum.

Mr. Speaker, as I end this evening, Maytag earned our trust: "The value you demand from the brand you trust." America can't afford to lose a company like Maytag.