

NATIONAL PEACE OFFICERS
MEMORIAL DAY

HON. ADAM H. PUTNAM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 16, 2008

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, a society cannot function properly without a means to enforce its laws and protect itself. However, we know all too well that safety and security does not come without a price. National Peace Officers Memorial Day was established to honor the men and women who have paid that price and I rise today to pay tribute to the one hundred and eighty-one federal, state and local law enforcement officers who gave their lives in 2007.

Sadly, Florida lost sixteen officers last year, two of which were from central Florida. On April 13th, Lieutenant Delmar Teagan of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission died in an automobile accident in Polk County. Then, on August 15th, Hillsborough County Sheriff's Sergeant Ronald Harrison was killed by a gunman in Brandon, Florida.

These officers provided communities with safety and security and we are indebted to their service. Like so many of our nation's law enforcement officers willing to work in harm's way, Lieutenant Teagan and Sergeant Harrison are true heroes.

Since 1962, National Peace Officers Memorial Day has been observed on May 15th. This is a time when thousands of law enforcement officers descend upon our Nation's capital to remember and honor their fallen colleagues. Mr. Speaker, our thoughts and prayers are with these men and women as they gather to recognize the officers who died in the line of duty while serving the people of this great Nation.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2419,
FOOD, CONSERVATION, AND EN-
ERGY ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 14, 2008

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in reluctant opposition to H.R. 2419, the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008.

Although I support many of the provisions included in the legislation before us today, I continue to oppose elements of the commodity title, which fall short of adequate reform. I have long opposed policy inequities in farm law that have resulted in large subsidies going to a few, mostly larger entities, leaving many small and family farms behind, including those in the state of Delaware. Under this legislation, millionaires will still be able to collect subsidies, even with the implementation of a means test, and direct payments are only cut by a minimal amount at a time when farm income is expected to reach a record high. Instead, we should be working toward maintaining an adequate safety net for farmers when food prices drop.

Addressing this issue would bring down the cost of the overall legislation. Conferees working on H.R. 2419 have used last year's base-

line to score the bill, thereby avoiding pay-as-you-go-rules, in order to hide a \$2.9 billion increase in the deficit. It is clear to me that these issues need to be addressed before moving forward with this legislation.

With that said, I am pleased that H.R. 2419 would increase funding for many of Delaware's priorities, including an additional \$7.9 billion for conservation programs. Specifically, I support funding for the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program, which would be doubled above current levels to provide the necessary resources to prevent farmland from conversion into non-agricultural usage. Critical funding of \$400 million would also be provided to aid producers in reducing run-off, improve water quality, and restore the wildlife in the Chesapeake Bay, a project that I strongly support.

This farm bill would also make significant boosts to nutrition programs of \$10.4 billion over current levels, including school nutrition programs, and expands the number of families eligible for food stamp assistance. This legislation provides increased assistance to food banks at a time when many Americans are struggling to pay their monthly bills. Funds would also be authorized to provide relief to those facing hunger around the world.

Furthermore, investments in energy are also included in this conference agreement as the ethanol tax credit is reduced, and instead, the tax credit for cellulosic energy production is increased which may alleviate some of the pressure corn-based ethanol has placed on food prices. With initiatives like these, we are working toward real alternatives to fossil fuels and moving one step closer to decreasing our dependence on fossil fuels.

While I do support many of the provisions in H.R. 2419 and feel that conferees have made significant strides toward a compromise farm agreement, the commodity title has been left without substantial reform, resulting in costs to the American taxpayer. I look forward to working with my colleagues to address these issues.

STRATEGIC PETROLEUM RESERVE
FILL SUSPENSION AND CON-
SUMER PROTECTION ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 13, 2008

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve Fill Suspension and Consumer Protect Act of 2008.

With gas prices at record highs and fast-approaching \$4 per gallon, our constituents are suffering. There are many factors contributing to the rise in prices—ranging from increased global demand, to wild speculation in the futures market, to the weakening dollar. Unfortunately Congress does not have the power to control all these factors. We do, however, have a responsibility to take what steps we can to lessen the burden that the price of gas has on our constituents. That is why I support suspending shipments of oil to the SPR.

The SPR is almost entirely full, and certainly full enough to be used in an emergency. By stopping shipments of oil to the reserve, we can add 70,000 barrels of oil per day to the

global market. There is evidence to show that this could lower at-the-pump prices by about a quarter per gallon. This action is a much needed first step for American families, businesses and the economy.

The supply of oil is finite, and as countries like China and India industrialize, and incomes in such countries enable people to afford cars, the demand on this limited commodity will drive prices upward in the long run. If our economy is to make a full recovery, we must reduce our dependence on ever more expensive and environmentally detrimental fossil fuels. That is why the Democratic 110th Congress raised CAFE standards for the first time in a generation and the House has time and again voted to remove subsidies for oil companies making the highest corporate profits in history and reinvest the money in the energy sources of tomorrow. What America really needs is a wholesale shift in energy policy.

I would like to thank the House leadership for bringing this important legislation to the floor, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting it.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2419,
FOOD, CONSERVATION, AND EN-
ERGY ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 14, 2008

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise with great reluctance to oppose the bill before us, H.R. 2419. After more than a year of negotiations, this is heralded as the best compromise that this Congress could come to. But with commodity prices through the roof, this bill rejects the opportunity to make a difference and instead subsidizes millionaires making up to \$2.5 million. It makes only a cosmetic cut at best to direct payments at a time when some farmers are receiving record prices for their commodity crops.

Taxpayer dollars are not Monopoly money yet this \$300 billion bill treats them as such and at a time when middle-class families are feeling the pinch at the pump and the grocery store and the college admission office that is simply unconscionable.

Additionally, this bill creates a permanent disaster program that is costly, unnecessary, and bureaucratic. The federal government already pays for (1) crop insurance to assist farmers when a crop fails, (2) counter-cyclical payments when prices drop, (3) marketing loans to allow farmers to finance a crop and guarantee a price, and (4) Direct Payments for no particular reason. Adding a whole new program to these existing programs is simply wasteful.

Mr. Speaker, simply put: This is not a farm bill. This is not a bill that provides a safety net for community farmers that need our help. This is not a bill that addresses the skyrocketing costs of farm products that struggling families experience every day. This bill is business as usual Washington-style.

Our agricultural policies are in desperate need of commonsense improvements and this bill fails to deliver. We should reject this bill that does nothing to support family farmers and go back to the drawing board for real reform.

Farming is an important part of Minnesota's culture. A true love of the land and of nature's beauty is ingrained in our collective psyche and I have too much respect for those who live by the land to support this bill which does nothing to reform our farm programs but soaks the American taxpayers—both those who farm for a living and those who do not—with a deluge of unrelated pork and wasteful spending.

TRIBUTE TO EXERCISE TIGER
FOUNDATION

HON. JIM SAXTON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 16, 2008

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Exercise Tiger Association, a National Commemorative Foundation. The Association bears the name of a little known World War II naval battle which claimed the lives of several hundred American servicemen.

"Exercise Tiger" was originally a practice operation, preparing for the upcoming D-Day invasion. On the morning of April 28th, 1944, German submarines stumbled upon the operation, proceeding to torpedo the mostly defenseless landing ships. Three of the landing ship tanks were sunk and 749 servicemen lost their lives.

The Exercise Tiger Association goes to great lengths to commemorate this engagement and honor the memory of the servicemen who lost their lives that day. The Association has a wreath tribute and ceremony each year. The annual ceremony recently became a national tribute, when wreaths were dropped simultaneously into both the Pacific and Atlantic Ocean, honoring veterans nationwide.

Under the leadership of Walter Domanski, the National Director, this organization has also awarded veterans, servicemen, and other noteworthy individuals with numerous accolades, honoring service and sacrifice to our country.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Walter Domanski and the Exercise Tiger Association for honoring our Nation's brave men and women of the Armed Forces and for providing the opportunity to embrace the memory of the lives lost on that day in 1944.

HONORING OUR VETERANS BY
EXPANDING THE GI BILL

HON. GABRIELLE GIFFORDS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 16, 2008

Ms. GIFFORDS. Madam Speaker, I strongly support the passage of H.R. 5740, the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act. This bipartisan legislation, introduced by my friend and fellow Arizonan, Representative HARRY MITCHELL, modernizes the "GI Bill" and provides expanded educational benefits for our veterans.

Let there be no doubt about our iron-clad resolve to support our troops. As a nation, we are acutely aware of the extraordinary sacrifices they are making. I have seen it first-

hand in Baghdad and Bagram. We have a solemn responsibility to our service members, and one way to fulfill that responsibility is to help them prepare for life after they leave the military.

The first GI Bill was enacted more than 60 years ago for World War II veterans. It paid for the full cost of attending a public college, including tuition, fees, book purchases, and a monthly living stipend.

For example, in 1974, retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Bob Gent from Sierra Vista, Arizona, used his GI Bill benefits to obtain his B.A. from Arizona State University in math and computer science as well as a second degree 30 years later in astrophysics from the University of Texas.

Like Bob, over 7.8 million Americans who served our Nation have received a college education thanks to GI Bill. Unfortunately, the current Montgomery GI Bill does not fulfill the original GI Bill's promise—it does not adequately cover the cost of attending a four-year state college or university.

In 2003, Former Marine Corps Sergeant Tommy Mendoza from Sierra Vista served as an Infantry Mortarman in support of Army Special Operation Forces in Afghanistan. When he re-entered civilian life, Tommy had a difficult time finding a competitive job. He exhausted all of his GI Bill payments on a community college education.

The only option he has left is the Veterans Administration's Vocational Education and Rehabilitation Program. The current GI Bill fails to provide him adequate benefits to attain his college education.

Modernizing the GI Bill is an investment in our future. According to the Congressional Joint Economic Committee, for every \$1 the government invests in our veterans' education, approximately \$7 is generated in economic growth. GI Bill benefits also play an important role in military recruitment.

The Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act also creates a new program in which the government matches, dollar for dollar, any additional scholarships awarded to veterans from institutions within tuition costs above the maximum amount allowed by this legislation. In addition, veterans would have up to 15 years after leaving active duty, compared to ten years under the Montgomery GI Bill, to use their educational assistance benefits.

By voting to pass this legislation, we are demonstrating our deep, unwavering commitment to the brave men and women who fight to preserve our freedom.

STATEMENT FROM WESLEY E.
DAVEY, MASTER SERGEANT IN
THE ARMY RETIRED RESERVES

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 16, 2008

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, while I was back in the Fourth Congressional District of Minnesota, I met with Wes Davey, a constituent and master sergeant in the Army Retired Reserves. He fought in Operation Iraqi Freedom and is concerned about the funding of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. As Congress begins to debate providing supplemental appropriations for

these wars, I would like to enter Wes's thoughtful words into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

ST. PAUL, MN,

May 2, 2008.

Hon. BETTY MCCOLLUM,
Western Avenue North,
St. Paul, MN.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE MCCOLLUM: The President has requested additional funding to continue the war in Iraq. Before the members of Congress approve this budget, they should consider doing three things.

First, increase taxes in order to at least partially pay for the current and future war funding requests. If these wars are in our national interest as President Bush and others have often told us, we should be willing to pay for them; if these wars are not in our national interest, we should get out of both countries.

It is wrong for our generation to pass off the entire Iraq and Afghanistan war debt to the future generations of taxpayers, and it is also wrong for President Bush and Congress to abrogate their fiscal responsibilities and expect future presidents and future members of Congress to sort out the funding mess from these wars.

Second, the United States Treasury should sell war bonds (as we did during WW2) to finance the portion of the war costs not funded by increased taxes. We need to stop borrowing money from foreign countries to finance our wars. Countries such as Saudi Arabia and China are not loaning us money because they have America's best interest at heart, and their economic influence in our country is already too great.

Third, Congress should set up a government internet website which explains in detail to the American public how the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been and will be financed. More specifically, where the money has come from, be it China, Saudi Arabia, or other countries, how much each foreign country has loaned us, at what interest rates, and exactly when and how those loans will be repaid.

Thus far in these wars, President Bush has done his very best to place an opaque window between war funding and the American public, which goes against the belief by the founders of our country that good government should transact its business in the open.

Sincerely,

WESLEY E. DAVEY.

FORECLOSURE PREVENTION ACT
OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 8, 2008

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the American Housing Rescue and Foreclosure Prevention Act, and I thank Chairman FRANK and Chairwoman WATERS for bringing this important legislation to the House floor.

Madam Speaker, we are all painfully aware of the fact that communities across the Nation are being devastated by the current housing crisis. The reforms in this legislation will help many homeowners stay in their homes and prevent a similar situation from happening again.

The problems caused by subprime and adjustable-rate mortgages are particularly acute