United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 112th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 157 WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, JUNE 14, 2011 No. 85

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WEBSTER).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 14, 2011.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DANIEL WEBSTER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

WORKING WITH AMERICAN AGRICULTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Today we are starting the most important debate of 2012 in Congress, the reauthorization of the farm bill.

Now, it is true that we are just talking about the ag appropriations bill, and much of the reform agenda will be difficult or ruled out of order due to the restrictive approach of the rules, although in the past some of my Republican leadership friends have had no compunction about legislating on appropriations bills. But here we will be protecting large agribusiness instead of American farmers, ranchers, consumers, and the environment.

This debate matters. Each point that is made on the floor or in the media, each vote that is accumulated against the status quo and towards change and fairness is another step towards reforming the one area that almost every independent analyst agrees is right for reform.

From the far right to the far left, people agree it is time. American agricultural policy is frozen in time through the past collection of farm bills. It misallocates scarce dollars, it spends too much on the richest farming interests who really don't need it, and doesn't provide enough support for the majority of farmers and ranchers who do. It does not place a priority on the nutrition of our children, and it unleashes an assault on the environment.

There must be a better way. There is a better way. Cutting back on unnecessary expenditures for the wealthy and the undeserving would make it possible to give a little more to the farmers and ranchers, the majority of whom don't get anything under the current farm bill.

Now, most farmers and ranchers don't just want money. They would much rather have assistance to make them more competitive. There is far more that can be done by providing for important research to strengthen the production of food. More can be done to market American agricultural products at home and abroad, to establish farmer's markets. More can be done to protect farmers and their crops from disease and pests. And we can do so in a way that is consistent with our environmental values and our budgetary constraints.

Farmers and ranchers as a group are some of the most outstanding stewards of the land and the environment we have in America. But we are looking now at a farm bill that is going to dramatically cut back the money to help them with environmental compliance, even requiring breaking some existing contracts.

But complying with environmental regulations and changing policies is going to take some effort and in some cases is going to cost money. Why aren't we protecting the environmental programs and providing technical assistance to help these agricultural interests do what they want to do, which will not only improve water quality, wildlife habitat and air quality, but will put money in their pockets, supporting small and medium-sized operations?

Then there is the issue of nutrition. By skewing the production to artificially prop up and make profitable sugar, massive subsidies for corn, putting big money behind it, instead of improving the nutrition for our schools, for example, we are literally subsidizing a diet through our tax dollars that is making our kids sick. Instead, we should be helping them both be well-fed and healthy, not just well-fed with empty calories, but with fruits and vegetables that will strengthen their bodies and the prospect for long-term health. But the people who grow food, like fruits and vegetables, are discriminated against under existing American farm policies.

Help farmers and ranchers grow food, protect the environment, and strengthen the economy. It is a simple formula. It is hard to imagine a more pro-American agenda and one that Americans from all across the political spectrum agree with. It is time to listen to them, to work for them, and make it happen.

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CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION ENSURES A COMPETITIVE AND SUCCESSFUL WORKFORCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I serve as cochairman of the Congressional Career and Technical Education Caucus with my friend and colleague JIM LANGEVIN of Rhode Island. The Career and Technical Education Caucus is a group of Members seeking to broaden awareness here on Capitol Hill of the importance of career and technical education.

I take the floor today to offer yet another example of the critical role that career and technical education plays in helping individuals remain competitive in a constantly changing workforce environment.

On June 7, 2011, history was made at the Central Pennsylvania Institute of Science and Technology. Two young ladies, Anna Krishak and Tricia Reich, graduated from their automotive technology program at the highest level possible offered by CPI. These nontraditional students in the automotive technology program earned their diploma along with State, national, and world certifications in their field of study.

The most amazing part about their accomplishments was their path to success. Anna had only one year in the automotive technology program. She quickly earned the respect of her instructor, met the qualifications of CPI's school-to-work cooperative education program, and became employed at a local car dealership just shortly after the school year began. Despite absences due to a medical condition, Tricia completed all of her assignments and exceeded almost all other classmates. Tricia became eligible for CPI's cooperative education program and also later was employed at a local car dealership.

In the process, both young ladies received college credit that can be transferred to many colleges and universities in the United States. In addition, both Anna and Tricia completed evening certification courses geared towards enhancing their education, which ensured a successful career path. Despite tough economic times, Tricia and Anna have found a way to make ends meet. They have broadened their horizons and found their own competitive advantage in the marketplace, despite an ever-changing economy.

This story serves as a reminder for my fellow Members, a reminder that career and technical education programs exist in every congressional district. This also reminds us of how career and technical education can be utilized to assure a competitive and successful workforce.

On behalf of the Career and Technical Education Caucus, I want to congratulate these outstanding young ladies for their achievements.

DRAWING DOWN AMERICAN TROOPS FROM AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, it is now mid-June and we are just weeks away from the July date the President promised for a drawdown of American troops from Afghanistan. But so far, so far, there appears to be little movement towards the kind of redeployment that the moment actually calls for and that the American people are insisting on.

□ 1010

In fact, Mr. Speaker, Defense Secretary Gates, on his way out the door, endorsed a ''modest'' drawdown, even though the President has promised something significant. This is not a moment that calls for modesty. This is a moment for boldness and true leadership. This is a moment to break out of the war default posture—the posture that we've been in for going on 10 years now.

The longer this war goes on, the bloodier it becomes. We were told last year that fatalities would be unusually high in 2010 as the surge troops begin penetrating the Taliban strongholds. But it turns out there's no sign that casualties are tapering off, and we're on pace for an equally deadly 2011. We lost more troops in March, April, and May of this year than we did during the same months of 2010.

And let's not forget—because I don't think it's talked about nearly enough—that it's not just uniformed members of the U.S. military being put in harm's way by this conflict. The United Nations said over the weekend that there were more civilian casualties in May than in any single other month of this war. Needless to say, killing innocent people is certainly not the way to win the hearts and minds of another country.

The American people's patience is wearing thin, Mr. Speaker; and there are many Members of this body—a fair number in the Republican majority—who cannot support this Afghanistan policy either. I for one am tired of being told that the strategy is working and it just needs more time to succeed. How many military families will lose a father or a mother or a son or a daughter in the time it takes for this strategy to go nowhere? How many troops will be physically and psychologically damaged beyond repair?

Mr. Speaker, I think nearly a decade—longer than any war in American history—is more than enough time to admit that the strategy does not work. We don't need simply a token drawdown. We need a fundamental change in policy and a complete reorientation of our thinking about national security. We need to finally end this war and bring our troops home.

WATAUGA HIGH SCHOOL PROSTART PROGRAM IS EXAMPLE OF INNOVATION DONE RIGHT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Today, I want to highlight a remarkable group of North Carolina students from Watauga High School in my district. These students recently competed and won third place in the National ProStart Invitational in Overland Park, Kansas, after winning first place in the Carolinas' ProStart competition earlier this year. They are to be congratulated for this fantastic achievement, and I commend everyone from the parents and students to the teachers and mentors involved in this innovative educational program.

ProStart is a nationwide, 2-year program for high school students that seeks to develop the next generation of restaurant and foodservice industry leaders. Students participating in the program learn everything from culinary techniques to management skills via a hands-on curriculum and real-world educational opportunities. By building practical professional skills, these students are investing in their future careers even while enrolled in high school.

What's particularly impressive about this program is how it combines traditional high school programs with instruction from seasoned professionals in the foodservice and hospitality fields. This program is a wonderful model for how private sector companies can work with schools and students to offer tailor-made educational solutions that set students on the road to successful careers. In fact, in North Carolina alone, the ProStart program has educated more than 700 students in 15 schools, with another 13 North Carolina schools set to join in the next year. Again, congratulations to everyone involved in Watauga High School's ProStart program for excelling in this national program and making your community proud.

Mr. Speaker, one of the joys of serving in Congress is the opportunity to be at celebrations such as the one I attended last week during our district work period. The enthusiasm in the room at their celebration was infectious. A special congratulations goes to the four winning students: Emily Haas, Michael Haynes, Justin Byrum, and Eli Bradford. Of course, these accomplishments were facilitated by the support and hard work of Watauga High School ProStart teacher Lee Ann Williams and ProStart mentors Troy and Sandy Byrum of Troy's Restaurant in Boone, as well as David Gronewoller, a Golden Corral executive and owner, who sponsored the ProStart team. Paul M. Stone, Alyssa Barkley, and Susan Seay, who run the Statewide ProStart program, also deserve congratulations for supporting this successful program

that is already producing talented and enthusiastic North Carolina students.

WALL STREET SPECULATORS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Today, every American who fills up their gas tank is going to pay an extra 70 cents per gallon as a tribute to speculators on Wall Street. That's right. Seventy cents a gallon is due to hedge fund speculation, derivatives and commodity speculation on Wall Street.

It didn't used to be this way. Before Enron, we prohibited this sort of speculation on Wall Street. There was a special law passed for Enron. ''Ken Boy.'' Remember that? George Bush's favorite guy. Enron, bankrupt. Ken ''Boy'' Lay, who knows where he is now. But the law still lives on.

It was changed in Dodd-Frank to give new opportunities for the Commodities Future Trading Commission to begin to regulate speculation on Wall Street. But the Republicans are fighting tooth and nail against the regulation of speculation on Wall Street. Today, we'll consider a bill that would deprive the Commodities Future Trading Commission, the watchdogs, of new computers. Republicans say, We can't afford $60 million for computers at the Commodities Future Trading Commission to track a $400 trillion market; to track speculators that spent $25 billion on supercomputers last year so they could drive up the price of gasoline and manipulate markets without detection. No, we can't afford that. They've got your back, speculators. The Republicans are with you all the way.

Every American who buys an airplane ticket today, who can still afford it—some—to take their family on vacation, you'll will see a little surtax on fuel. That's another tribute to the speculators on Wall Street who have unnecessarily driven up the price of oil and gas. There is at this point a surplus of oil and gas in the world—more than we've seen for years. Production is up. Demand is down. Stockpiles are up. And the price is up. Guess what? The profits at the oil companies are up phenomenally and the profits on Wall Street are obscene.

Do the Republicans want to do anything about that? No. They would like to distract you. They don't want you to look at who's profiting from your pain and from destroying our economy—their generous friends on Wall Street. They are oh-so generous at election time to the Republican side of the aisle. The Republicans' friends in Big Oil, who are oh-so generous to the Republicans at election time. It's not them. Price is driven by supply and demand. If we drill more, drill here, drill now, that will solve the problem. It won't solve the problem because the speculators are controlling the markets. If we could double U.S. oil supply tomorrow, they'd still be charging us 70 cents or more a gallon through unbridled speculation.

We have an opportunity to rein that in. If we reject the Republicans' proposal today to take away computers and staff from the regulators, to prevent the reform from going into place to finally begin to close the Enron loophole created by Republicans for Republicans and for Wall Street, we could almost immediately drive down the price of gasoline 70 a gallon. Nothing they're proposing will do that. What we're proposing will benefit Americans family today, the economy, put people back to work. And yes, unfortunately, it will rein in some of the obscene profits at ExxonMobil and some of the obscene profits at Goldman Sachs and that other speculators on Wall Street are making today. They might have to go out and make honest loans and earn an honest living instead of gambling.

So it's a pretty clear choice. Who are you with? Are you with the speculators or are you with the American people?

□ 1020

AFGHAN STRATEGY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, national syndicated columnist Eugene Robinson recently wrote a piece titled, ''Afghan Strategy: Let's Go.'' It appeared in the June 11 Raleigh News and Observer. I would like to share some of Mr. Robinson's thoughts with the House.

He began his column with this: ''Slender threads of hope are nice but do not constitute a plan. Nor do they justify continuing to pour American lives and resources into the bottomless pit of Afghanistan.''

And he closed this column with these words: ''We wanted to kill or capture Osama bin Laden, and we did. Even so, say the hawks, we have to stay in Afghanistan because of the dangerous instability across the border in nuclear-armed Pakistan. But does anyone believe the war in Afghanistan has made Pakistan more stable?''

Mr. Speaker, these are not my words, again. These are the words of Eugene Robinson who's nationally known and respected, and he is a liberal. He's not a conservative. But the point he's making is exactly right. How many more young men and women have to give their life for a corrupt leader?

I would like to ask my colleagues on both sides to join JIM MCGOVERN of Massachusetts—I am a cosponsor of this bill. It's H.R. 1735, the Afghan Exit and Accountability Act. It gives a parameter to the President as to how we need to start bringing our troops out of Afghanistan before 2014 or 2015.

I look at this young man's face, Mr. Speaker. His name is Tyler Jordan. His father was killed in Iraq. I look at him and he represents all the children in America who are crying because their moms and dads are coming back dead. Many are coming back without arms and legs. So Tyler represents children in America who have their family, loved ones over in Afghanistan. It's time to bring them home, Mr. Speaker.

And then the other poster has the flag-draped coffin—they call it a transfer case—coming into Dover Air Force Base. How many more families in this country have to look at the flag-draped coffin of their loved one?

Mr. Speaker, that's why I hope both sides will join Mr. MCGOVERN and myself in H.R. 1735 because Mr. Gates has already said we will be in Afghanistan until 2014 and 2015. That's what Eugene Robinson is saying: How many more have to die in the next 3 or 4 years for a corrupt leader named Karzai that we're paying $8 billion a month to and we're cutting programs in America for children and senior citizens?

Mr. Speaker, again, I want to make reference to Tyler Jordan and his pain. I want to remember the flag-draped coffin and think how many moms and dads are having to be at the funeral home receiving the flag-draped coffin and, in many cases, cannot even look at their loved ones because they were killed in a horrendous way.

So, Mr. Speaker, I hope the American people will get behind H.R. 1735 and call their Members of Congress and ask them to join us in bringing our troops home before 2014.

Mr. Speaker, before I close, as I do all the time in my district and on the floor of the House, I will ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform. I will ask God to please bless the families of our men and women in uniform. I will ask God in His loving arms to hold the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq. And I will ask God to please bless the House and Senate that we will do what is right in the eyes of God for God's people here in America. And I will ask God to bless Mr. Obama, the President, that he will have the wisdom, the strength, and the courage to do what is right for the American people.

And I will close by asking three times: God please, God please, God please continue to bless America.

[From the News and Observer, Jun. 11, 2011]

AFGHAN STRATEGY: LET'S GO

(By Eugene Robinson)

WASHINGTON, DC.—Slender threads of hope are nice but do not constitute a plan. Nor do they justify continuing to pour American lives and resources into the bottomless pit of Afghanistan.

Ryan Crocker, the veteran diplomat nominated by President Barack Obama to be the next U.S. ambassador in Kabul, gave a realistic assessment of the war in testimony Wednesday before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Here I am using ''realistic'' as a synonym for ''bleak.''

Making progress is hard, Crocker said; but not hopeless.

Not hopeless. What on Earth are we doing? We have more than 100,000 troops in Afghanistan risking life and limb at a cost of $10 billion a month, to pursue ill-defined goals

whose achievement can be imagined, but just barley?

The hawks tell us that now, more than ever, we must stay the course—that finally, after Obama nearly tripled U.S. troop levels, we are winning. I want to be fair to this argument, so let me quote Crocker's explanation at length:

''What we've seen with the additional forces and the effort to carry the fight into enemy strongholds is, I think, tangible progress in security on the ground in the South and the West. This has to transition—and again, we're seeing a transition of seven provinces an districts to Afghan control—to sustainable Afghan control. So I think you can already see what we're trying to do—in province by province, district by district, establish the conditions where the Afghan government can take over and hold ground.''

Sen. Jim Webb, D–Va., a Vietnam veteran and former secretary of the Navy, pointed out the obvious flaw in this province-by-province strategy. ''International terrorism—and guerrilla warfare in general—is intrinsically mobile,'' he said. ''So securing one particular area . . . doesn't necessarily guarantee that you have reduced the capability of those kinds of forces. They are mobile; they move.''

It would require far more than 100,000 U.S. troops to securely occupy the entire country. As Webb pointed out, this means we can end up ''playing whack-a-mole'' as the enemy pops back up in areas that have already been pacified.

If our intention, as Crocker said, is to leave behind ''governance that is good enough to ensure that the country doesn't degenerate back into a safe haven for al-Qaida,'' then there are two possibilities: Either we'll never cross the goal line, or we already have.

According to Obama's timetable, all U.S. troops are supposed to be out of Afghanistan by 2014. Will the deeply corrupt, frustratingly erratic Afghan government be ''good enough'' three years from now? Will Afghan society have banished the poverty, illiteracy and distrust of central authority that inevitably sap legitimacy from any regime in Kabul? Will the Afghan military, whatever its capabilities, blindly pursue U.S. objectives? Or will the country's civilian and military leaders determine their self-interest and act accordingly?

The fact is that in 2014 there will be no guarantees. Perhaps we will believe it incrementally less likely that the Taliban could regain power and invite al-Qaida back. But that small increment of security does not justify the blood and treasure that we will expend now and then.

I take a different view. We should declare victory and leave.

We wanted to depose the Taliban regime, and we did. We wanted to install a new government that answers to its constituents at the polls, and we did. We wanted to smash al-Qaida's infrastructure of training camps and safe havens, and we did. We wanted to kill or capture Osama bin Laden, and we did.

Even so, say the hawks, we have to stay in Afghanistan because of the dangerous instability across the border in nuclear-armed Pakistan. But does anyone believe the war in Afghanistan has made Pakistan more stable? Perhaps it is useful to have a U.S. military presence in the region. This could be accomplished, however, with a lot fewer than 100,000 troops—and they wouldn't be scattered across the Afghan countryside, engaged in a dubious attempt at nation-building.

The threat from Afghanistan is gone. Bring the troops home.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

DEBT LIMIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, in March of 2006, then-Senator Obama was on the Senate floor and this is what he said: ''The fact that we are here today to debate raising America's debt limit is a sign of leadership failure. Increasing America's debt weakens us domestically and internationally. Leadership means that 'the buck stops here.' Instead, Washington is shifting the burden of bad choices today onto the backs of our children and grandchildren. America has a debt problem and a failure of leadership. Americans deserve better.''

But now, Mr. Speaker, a few short years later, President Obama now takes the opposite approach, calling for an increase in the debt limit and threatening doom otherwise. President Obama has failed to send to Congress a budget that would realistically solve our Nation's financial problems. He calls for plans that spend too much and borrow too much and tax too much. When Congress reasonably rejected his plan and proposed a budget with responsible cuts, he turned to political rhetoric rather than meaningful discussions. So, at a time when our Nation must address a fiscal crisis, our President has offered no real solution and has politicized the issue. What we have today more than ever before is a sign of leadership failure, back to his original speech when he was a Senator. America deserves better.

So today, with the debt ceiling already $5.3 trillion higher, higher, than the level President Obama objected to raising 5 years ago, he now asks us to raise it again for the 81st time since 1940. We all know this famous quote that defines insanity as doing the same thing over and over again expecting different results. If we actually want to solve today's problems, we must depart from the insane 70-year tradition of just continuing to spend. If we do not delve into the real spending problems today, we will have this same debate a year later, 3, 5, 10 years later from now, and will again be urged to raise the debt limit or face a financial catastrophe.

The United States Government already owes more than $14 trillion. Less talked about is the Federal Government faces another $114 trillion in unfunded liabilities for Social Security and for Medicare. An estimate by the Congressional Budget Office reveals that by the year 2025, the government will spend 100 percent of every dollar in revenue on entitlements. And Federal debt aside, State and local governments face a combined $3 trillion coupled with their own unfunded liabilities in the form of pensions.

Forcing the government to live within its means is the only solution. Just as a family household does it when it reaches its spending limits, we must begin to closely scrutinize our bills and decide where there is unnecessary waste. When families seek to decrease their utility bills, they remember to turn off lights when they leave a room. We must begin doing this as well. Wasteful, fraudulent programs must be turned off and long-term programs such as Medicare and Social Security must be addressed seriously today. Debt must be paid down instead of piled on.

Although the President, the Senate leader, the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury believe the worst thing that could happen to all of us is that we default on August 2, I believe that the worst thing that could happen for Congress to do is to fail to couple the increased debt limit with meaningful spending cuts. Once again, the private sector has affirmed this. On June 11, 2011, 150 economists called for immediate spending cuts to help support job growth in a letter to Speaker JOHN BOEHNER, which I would like to have placed in the RECORD.

A DEBT LIMIT INCREASE WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT SPENDING CUTS AND BUDGET REFORMS WILL DESTROY AMERICAN JOBS

An increase in the national debt limit that is not accompanied by significant spending cuts and budget reforms to address our government's spending addiction will harm private-sector job creation in America. It is critical that any debt limit legislation enacted by Congress include spending cuts and reforms that are greater than the accompanying increase in debt authority being granted to the president. We will not succeed in balancing the federal budget and overcoming the challenges of our debt until we succeed in committing ourselves to government policies that allow our economy to grow. An increase in the national debt limit that is not accompanied by significant spending cuts and budget reforms would harm private-sector job growth and represent a tremendous setback in the effort to deal with our national debt.

Ryan C. Amacher, University of Texas at Arlington; Michael Applegate, Oklahoma State University; King Banaian, St. Cloud State University; Stacie Beck, University of Delaware; John Bethune, Barton College; Scott Bradford, Brigham Young University; Phillip J. Bryson, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Oral Capps, Jr., Texas A&M University; James E. Carter, Emerson Electric Co.; Robert E. Chatfield, University of Nevada, Las Vegas; Kenneth W. Clarkson, University of Miami; John P. Cochran, Metropolitan State College of Denver; Charles W. Baird, California State University, East Bay; Bruce Bender, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee; Donald R. Booth, Chapman University; Michael Boskin, Stanford University; David A. Brat, Randolph-Macon College; David P. Brown, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Todd G. Buchholz, Two Oceans Management; Samantha Carrington, California State University.

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Kevin Hassett, American Enterprise Institute; Bob Heidt, Indiana University—Bloomington; John P. Hoehn, Michigan State University; C. Thomas Howard, University of Denver; F. Owen Irvine, Michigan State University; Joseph M. Jadlow, Oklahoma State University; Ryan S. Johnson, BYU-Idaho; June O'Neill, Baruch College, CUNY; Marek Kolar, Trine University; Corinne Krupp, Duke University; Norman Lefton, Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville; Larry Lindsey, The Lindsey Group; Jane Lillydahl, University of Colorado at Boulder; R. Ashley Lyman, University of Idaho; David Malpass, Encima Global; Henry Manne, George Mason University; Timothy Mathews, Kennesaw State University; Roger Meiners, University of Texas-Arlington; James C. Miller III, Hoover Institution; Ed Miseta, Penn State Erie, The Behrend College.

Andrew P. Morriss, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa; John E. Murray, University of Toledo; George R. Neumann, University of Iowa; Seth W. Norton, Wheaton College; James B. O'Neill, University of Delaware; Svetozar Pejovich, Texas A&M University; Ivan Pongracic, Jr., Hillsdale College; John A. Powers, University of Cincinnati; Richard W. Rahn, Cato Institute; Glenn MacDonald, Washington University in St. Louis; Yuri N. Maltsev, Carthage College; Michael L. Marlow, California Polytechnic State University; Martin C. McGuire, University of California-Irvine; Allan Meltzer, Carnegie Mellon University; Thomas P. Miller, American Enterprise Institute; James Moncur, University of Hawaii at Manoa; Robert Mundell, Nobel Laureate in Economics, 1999; Richard F. Muth, Emory University; Robert D. Niehaus, Robert D. Niehaus, Inc.; Lee E. Ohanian, University of California, Los Angeles; Stephen T. Parente, University of Minnesota; G. Michael Phillips, California State University, Northridge.

William Poole, University of Delaware; Ronald L. Promboin, University of Maryland University College; James B. Ramsey, New York University; Thomas A. Rhee, California State University, Long Beach; R. David Ranson, H. C. Wainwright & Co. Economics Inc.; Christine P. Ries, Georgia Institute of Technology; Thomas Carl Rustici, George Mason University; Thomas R. Saving, Texas A&M University; Judy Shelton, Atlas Economic Research Foundation; George P. Shultz, Hoover Institution; James F. Smith, EconForecaster, LLC; Houston H. Stokes, University of Illinois at Chicago; Avanidhar Subrahmanyam (Subra), University of California, Los Angeles; Robert Tamura, Clemson University; Clifford F. Thies, Shenandoah University; Leo Troy, Rutgers University-Newark; George Viksnins, Georgetown University; James P. Weston, Rice University; Michael E. Williams, University of Denver; Michael Wohlgenant; North Carolina State University.

Gene C. Wunder, Washburn University; Paul H. Rubin, Emory University; Gary J. Santoni, Ball State University; Robert Haney Scott, California State University, Chico; William F. Shughart II, The University of Mississippi; Timothy F. Slaper, Indiana University; Vernon Smith, Chapman University School of Law; Lawrence Southwick, University at Buffalo; Brian Strow, Western Kentucky University; Richard J. Sweeney, Georgetown University; John B. Taylor, Hoover Institution; Stephen A. Tolbert, Jr., Montgomery County Community College (PA); David G. Tuerk, Suffolk University; Richard Vedder, Ohio University; Sherri L. Wall, University of Alaska Fairbanks; J. Gregg Whittaker, William and Jewell College; D. Mark Wilson, Applied Economic Strategies; Gary Wolfram, Hillsdale College; Benjamin Zycher, Pacific Research Institute; Joseph Zoric, Franciscan University of Steubenville.

The letter specifically says: ''An increase in the national debt limit that is not accompanied by significant spending cuts and budget reforms to address our government's spending addiction will harm private-sector job creation in America. It is critical that any debt limit legislation enacted by Congress include spending cuts and reforms that are greater than the accompanying increase in debt authority being granted to the President.''

If there has ever been a failure of leadership, it is today. We're broke, and the solution lies in reform rather than rhetoric, spending cuts rather than spending increases. Leadership has called for compromise in the next couple of weeks. A compromise does not involve a vote on raising the debt ceiling without these spending cuts. We demonstrated that on May 31 when, 97–318, the House rejected this measure. No Republican supported the vote then, and no Republican should support such a vote in August. Only after we curb the trillions of dollars of debt that we continue to pile up can we consider raising the debt limit.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 30 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

PRINTING OF PROCEEDINGS OF FORMER MEMBERS PROGRAM

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the proceedings during the former Members program be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and that all Members and former Members who spoke during the proceedings have the privilege of revising and extending their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

The following proceedings were held before the House convened for morning-hour debate:

UNITED STATES ASSOCIATION OF FORMER MEMBERS OF CONGRESS 2011 ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS

The meeting was called to order by the Hon. Connie Morella, Vice President of Former Members of Congress Association, at 8:16 a.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Lord God of history and our salvation, when former Members return to Congress it must be similar to any American opening the Bible or their holy book at random. By doing so, people of the Book read between the lines, see the story of America, and rejoice.

Congress, too, holds old and familiar stories, strong exhortations, repeated corrections, and consoling confirmation of hopes that speak anew of love, patriotism, and light. Looking at Congress once again, these former Members, still Your stewards, hear the praise of the Psalms, the lament of Job, and are strengthened by the sentiments of Gideon as well as Paul, the commands of Moses, and the prayers of Jesus.

As the Good Book binds people into community, You tie together the years of Congress and make them a prophetic voice that reverences the past, speaks to the present, and holds promise for the future.

May all former Members be rewarded for their contributions to this Constitutional Republic and continue to work and pray that the goodness and justice of this beloved country be proclaimed to all the nations.

Quicken life, promise and fortitude in all here gathered that we may bring joy to the present age and long for eternal happiness, calling upon Your Holy Name now and forever.

Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Hon. Connie Morella led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Ms. MORELLA. It is now my pleasure and my honor to recognize the President of the Association of Former Members of Congress, the Hon. Dennis Hertel.

Mr. HERTEL. I want to thank the gentlewoman from Maryland, Vice President of the Association. I want to thank her for all her hard work and her dedication. It's made such a great difference in having you be the Vice President this last year for the Association.

And I want to welcome all the membership of our association to the House Chamber today. We're so glad that you are all here. I am going to ask the Clerk to take the roll, please.

The Clerk called the roll of the former Members of Congress, and the following former Members answered to their names:

Mr. Alexander of Arkansas
Mr. Buechner of Missouri
Mr. Bustamante of Texas
Ms. Byron of Maryland
Mr. Clement of Tennessee
Mr. Glickman of Kansas
Mr. Hertel of Michigan
Mr. Hutto of Florida
Mr. Kanjorski of Pennsylvania
Ms. Kilpatrick of Michigan
Mr. Konnyu of California
Mr. LaFalce of New York
Mr. Lancaster of North Carolina
Mr. LaRocco of Idaho
Mr. Michel of Illinois
Ms. Morella of Maryland
Mr. Ruppie of Michigan
Mr. Slattery of Kansas
Mr. Symington of Missouri
Mr. Symms of Idaho
Mr. Tucker of Arkansas
Mr. Walsh of New York
Mr. Warner of Virginia

Mrs. MORELLA. The Chair announces that 23 former Members of Congress have responded to their names.

The Chair now recognizes the President of the Association.

Mr. HERTEL. I thank the Chair.

It is always a distinct pleasure to be back in this revered Chamber, and we appreciate the opportunity to be present today and to give you the annual report of the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress. I will be joined by some of our colleagues in reporting on the activities and projects of our organization.

Before we get to this report, however, it is my distinct honor and pleasure to present our 2011 Distinguished Service Award to Senator John William Warner of the great State of Virginia. Bestowing our association's highest award on John Warner was an easy decision. In all his endeavors and public service, be it in our Nation's military at times of war, be it while serving in the administration, or be it in the United States Senate, John Warner has led by example and commendable distinction.

We have asked another of our colleagues, who has lived a life of public service guided by the same values and principles as Senator Warner, to introduce our 2011 honoree.

I might just add a personal note. When I came to this Chamber 30 years ago, there was a titanic battle going on much as we have today regarding our economy and the deficit; and the minority leader, Bob Michel, was arguing against and solidifying his forces against my Speaker, Tip O'Neill. Here I was a freshman, 31 years old, and watching all of this and feeling all of this. Even in the emotions of the time and the high importance of the debate and the outcome, even being new here, I had the greatest respect for Bob Michel as the opposition leader.

There is something about seeing somebody in the opposition and having that trust and that respect of that person that's an underlying factor that adds to the strength of our democracy and something that's a necessary lesson, I think, of history for people to know today that you can differ with somebody so completely on the issues and not see them as an enemy, but a worthy adversary who themselves love your country just as much. That's what Bob Michel, I think, stood for and does today to all of us, to the Congress and to the people of the United States.

It is my great honor to introduce Bob Michel, Leader Bob Michel, to go forward with the introduction.

Mr. MICHEL. Madam Speaker, and my fellow colleagues of yesteryear and today, I am delighted to have been asked to introduce John Warner this morning. I have known John for many years when we both served in the Congress and now we are currently working together down at Hogan Lovells.

Most of you know him as the recent Republican Senator of Virginia and the sixth husband of the late Elizabeth Taylor.

Well, that's all well and good, you know; but for my introduction for this occasion, I would also like to fill in some of the gaps to prove what a great choice the former Members of Congress organization made in singling him out to receive this year's Distinguished Service Award.

John enlisted in the U.S. Navy during World War II in January of 1945 shortly before his 18th birthday. He served until the following year, leaving as a petty officer 3rd class. He then went on to college, Washington and Lee University.

He joined the Marine Corps in October of 1950 after the outbreak of the Korean War and served in Korea as a ground officer with a 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. He continued in the Marine Corps Reserves after the war, eventually reaching the rank of captain. He then went on to law school at George Washington University here in Washington, D.C.

In 1969, John was appointed Under Secretary of the Navy during the Nixon administration. In 1972, he succeeded John Chafee as Secretary of the Navy, and then President Ford subsequently appointed him director of the Bicentennial Administration.

John actively entered the political arena in 1978 when he was chosen to replace the Republican candidate for the Senate who died in a plane crash 2 months before the election. Some of us older Members remember that tragic day very well. He was narrowly elected, but then reelected five times to become the longest-serving Republican Senator from Virginia.

During Senator Warner's 30-year tenure in the Senate, he served on any number of committees, as you all well know; but I think he will always to be remembered for the lengthy service as chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, where he was viewed as one of the most influential Senators on military and foreign policy issues.

Senator Warner was always elected and reelected as a Republican, but he was no ideologue. In fact, he had a very checkered voting record over the years, but he was always willing to openly debate the issues, priding himself in working hard to reach agreement on the great controversial issues of the day.

In 2008, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence awarded John the first-ever National Intelligence Distinguished Public Service Medal.

In 2009, the Secretary of the Navy announced it would name the next Virginia Class submarine after John Warner.

And, finally, in 2009, the British Embassy in Washington, D.C., announced that Queen Elizabeth II would name John Warner an honorary Knight Commander for his work strengthening the American-British military alliance.

I have just really skimmed the surface of all the awards, citations and plaudits that Senator Warner has received during his long and most distinguished public record of public service. Suffice it to say, John Warner, the individual, is a very humble man and cringes at the thought of receiving another honor and award.

But we fellow members of the Association of Former Members of Congress wanted him to know how revered he is among us and hope one more burst of applause in his honor will extend his life and talents for many years to come.

Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished former Senator Warner.

Mr. HERTEL. Well, it's so wonderful. I want to thank the Leader. I didn't mention, by the way, the Leader won that titanic battle back then 30 years ago as he did many others.

On behalf of the Association of Former Members of Congress, it is my great pleasure and honor for me to present our 2011 Distinguished Service Award to Senator John Warner of Virginia. The plaque is inscribed as follows:

The 2011 Distinguished Service Award is presented by the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress to Senator John William Warner for his lifetime of exceptional public service. While representing the State of Virginia for thirty years, Senator Warner was the Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Vice Chairman of the Select Committee on Intelligence, and Chairman of the Rules Committee. Outside of Congress, Chairman Warner was a sailor in World War II; a Marine Lieutenant during the Korean War; and served as Under Secretary and Secretary of the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam War. In every endeavor, he has fulfilled his duties with honor, distinction, and true patriotism. His service to our country is exemplary. Senator John Warner is an inspiration to us all and his former colleagues from both sides of the aisle salute him.

Washington, DC, June 14, 2011.

Senator Warner.

Mr. WARNER. Madam Speaker, colleagues, friends and others, I remember one time attending a graduation as a speaker; and as we walked down the aisle, ''Pomp and Circumstance'' was playing, and the heart was infused with enthusiasm. I had a sheaf of papers under my arm; and a young student jumped up, one of the graduates, and pressed into my hand a little piece of paper and said, ''Please read this.''

So in the course of the invocation I read it, and it was some of the most prosaic and valuable bits of wisdom I ever received. It simply said, ''Blessed are ye that are brief, for ye shall be reinvited.''

Whether I am invited or not, to have this moment to stand on this floor and, mind you, I believe, I am almost positive in the 30-plus years that I was here I never did it before. It seems to add to me and my family and all others a very significant chapter in my humble opportunity to serve this Nation in many ways.

Madam Speaker, if I may be personal in addressing the presiding officer, it would not have happened without your tenacity and drive and skill in ramming this nomination through. I thank you.

I should recount the many things that the presiding officer and I did. For my colleague, Steve Symms, we represent the Senate, the two of us, we were together many years in that institution.

But dear friends, at moments like these you are struck with humility, but you reflect back on all those who served with you, and you also reflect upon those serving today and tomorrow; and I hope that the individual and collective accomplishments of each of us shall always serve as a guide for those to follow.

Because this country, in my 84 years of life, has never faced a more complex situation, be it with regard to our own internal and external security, as well as our domestic economy, and we need the finest of minds to sit in this Chamber and the other body to try and reach solutions for this Nation because we are becoming more and more the object of derision and less envy than the years in which we were so proud to serve in this institution and America was all powerful.

But we also must be mindful that each of us got here by a certain amount of initiative and drive, but we got here because a lot of others helped us along the way.

Fellow colleagues in Congress and those when I was in the Department of Defense, I learned, I listened and learned and followed their guidance to perform the duties that I was undertaking in those chapters of public service. My years in the Pentagon were during some of the most stressful years in Vietnam; and how well I remember, as Secretary, the evenings when I returned home to sit down and write the notes to the families that had lost a loved one in those battles.

So here we are today, having plucked from the many, another, to stand in that long line of distinguished individuals who so proudly and so humbly have accepted this award. So, once again, let us hope that our contribution has laid a foundation for those who now occupy these seats and those that will follow to guide this great Nation.

I thank you again. I thank you very much. I thank the dear Lord for the guidance that he has given me through these many years.

As I said, blessed are ye that are brief, for ye shall return.

Ms. MORELLA. You are most deserving, Senator Warner. You honor us.

The President resumes.

Mr. HERTEL. I am certainly so happy to hear Senator Warner's remarks, and we also included a scrapbook there of his colleagues' congratulatory statements, and I want to thank again Leader Michel for his wonderful introduction and the honor he does all of us by helping us and giving us advice.

I see that some Members have joined us since our proceedings started, so I welcome you. At the conclusion of our report, you will have the opportunity to give your name to the House Clerk for the roll call.

As President of the organization, it is now my duty to report to the Congress about the activities of the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress since our last annual meeting in June of 2010.

Our association is bipartisan. It was chartered by Congress in 1983. The purpose of the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress is to promote public service and strengthen democracy abroad and in the United States. About 600 former Members, Senators and Representatives, belong to the association.

Republicans, Democrats and independents are united in this organization in their desire to teach about Congress and the importance of representative democracy. We receive no funding from the Congress. All the activities which we are about to describe are financed via membership dues, program-specific grants and sponsors, or via our fund-raising dinner. Our finances are sound, our projects fully funded, and our 2010 audit by an outside accountant came back with a clean bill of financial health.

We again have had a very successful and rewarding year. We have continued our work serving as a liaison between the current Congress and legislatures overseas. We have created partnerships with highly respected institutions in the area of democracy-building and election-monitoring. We have developed new projects and are expanding others, and we again sent dozens of bipartisan teams of former Members of Congress to teach about public service and representative democracy at universities and high schools both in the United States and abroad.

Our Congress to Campus program, our Civics Connection, our People to People programs are the things that we are going to be talking about now when this organization was created over 40 years ago. The former Members who founded our association envisioned this organization to take the lead in teaching about Congress and encouraging public service. They were hoping that former Members could inspire the next generation of America's leaders.

Over the years we have created a number of programs, most importantly the Congress to Campus program, to do just that. The Congress to Campus program was established 35 years ago as a way to reach college students. It has since grown into a civic education effort that also brings former Members into the high school civic education classroom, as well as connects former Members with students as young as middle school age.

When I was in college quite a long time ago, we had Senator Ribicoff come to Eastern Michigan University. The Senator spent an entire evening with us, and he answered all our questions and talked about public service. After, I asked him, I said, Senator, why are you here? What are you running for? Are you running for President? Why are you here?

He said, I'm here to get you people involved in public service. He said, Don't you remember what John Kennedy said?

It just struck me. It struck me that that is the kind of program and the kind of moments that we have with students all across this country all of these 30 years that we have had this program in effect. We continue to work with our great partner, the Stennis Center for Public Service; and we thank them for their invaluable assistance in administering this program.

I now yield to the former President of our association, Jack Buechner of Missouri, along with Matt McHugh of

New York, the co-chairs of this great program.

Mrs. MORELLA. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri.

Mr. BUECHNER. Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I thank the gentleman from Michigan.

When this organization was created, I am sure that the idea was that there is all these old codgers out there that had some free time, they ought to throw it in and improve the overall attitude of the country through the young people towards Congress.

The truth of the matter is that the program is as enlightening for the Members who go to the campuses, one Republican, one Democrat. We usually spend 2½ days. At that time, you meet with political science classes, student governments. You meet with the campus television or various media sources there. You meet with some faculty members, YRs, YDs. Occasionally a town-and-gown meeting where you will go and help conduct political science fora for faculty, students, and the general public. They are just great opportunities.

The Stennis Center is our partner. It is down at Mississippi State. It has helped coordinate, helped raise money. We have to pay our base administrative costs, and we ask the various colleges and universities to pay a small amount of money, a very nominal speaker's fee. It does not go to you. If you show up, you don't get anything, but the Association does. And then the school provides lodging. It will range from a Tom Bodett, keeping the light on, to staying sometimes in a pretty nice alumni center. They don't change the sheets for you, though, so you just have to spend 2 days and get out.

The participating students, what do they get out of it? They get a chance to meet real people who have been there. As was discussed before, the idea about public service, Senator Warner talked about it, Dennis Hertel talked about it, the idea of talking to these young people about the idea and the practice of being involved, involved to the point where it is attractive to them so when they go and sit around and have a beer and some pretzels and a pizza—they want to talk about the people who are in elected office—they don't start off with: Well, those bastards. They start off with something like: You know, I met this woman who served in Congress. She told me how she got involved in politics.

I always tell people that I was president of the Young Republicans when I was in college. Of course, I was at a Catholic men's college during the Kennedy campaign. I might as well have been the head of the young Satanists. But you know what, it was a learning experience.

The students who come to these meetings are not just those majoring in political science. When I was at Northeastern University, one of the interesting things was their drama department wanted to talk about aid to the arts. We had all of these people, and I have to tell you, it was an enlightening experience to listen to people who thought there ought to be some sort of a salary paid to artists and actors and everything. I said: Well, you know, if I can tell you anything, don't expect it from the government; but there should be a cooperation between the government and the arts, and your job will be to be advocates for that.

I don't know whether they believed me or not.

But the hard work that is put in by the Members over that 2½ days is pretty substantial.

I have to give some special note because this program would not work without Bryan Corder. Bryan, stand up and let everyone see you.

He is obviously young and energetic, and his job is to coordinate with Brother Rogers at the Stennis Center to help coordinate these visits.

In fact, one of the shortages we have is getting Members to sign up. And, I mean, it is a commitment. You don't get paid. It is 2½ days. And some of the sites that we go to are not—it is not New York City and it is not Annapolis and it is not Miami. Sometimes it is out where you can honestly say the profit-loss is slipper, and it is not always easy to get in. It is not always easy to get out. But I will say this, it is always an intriguing and educational experience for the Members to go there.

We had 20 different programs last year. In 2011 to 2012, this academic year, the project has continued to reach out, not just to colleges and universities, but community colleges and high schools. They can play an important supplemental role in teaching about representative democracy through the high school level. We have continued our working relationship with the People to People Ambassador program that brings young people to our Nation's capital for a week of events centered on the concepts of character and leadership.

This year we expect the lineup of new schools to be, hopefully, at a record high. I want to be an advocate that after this presentation today, that you might meet with Bryan and sign up, sign up to be a volunteer. You don't have to pick a particular date right away. And very importantly is the fact that if you are an alum and you want your school to be visited, give us the name. Give us a contact person. Perhaps you have been an administrator yourself or are currently a lecturer at a university or college, or you've got one in your old congressional district. We need the contacts so we can contact these schools and take care of it.

The involvement in this program allows our Members living in the Washington area to speak to younger students through the People to People program because they are bringing them in, but then we want Members who live outside to be able to go perhaps 100, 200—although it is not first class travel, I want to advise you, but we will get you there and you will be better for the visit.

Finally, I want to say that there are some people who have been extraordinary in working with us. I just want to name Tom Davis and Martin Frost. They have been participants in this program truly year after year, especially even with the high school students.

So this has been a success for its 35 years. It is getting bigger, and I think it is getting better. I would just want to exhort you all to sign up. And also, we need a word of thanks for Matt McHugh, my co-chair on this, because he has been tireless in his efforts to recruit.

Mr. HERTEL. I thank the gentleman from Missouri for his report and all of his hard work with Matt McHugh, and I want to talk for a moment about a new program that Dan Glickman and I have been developing with the Bipartisan Policy Center, and we will have Jim Walsh of New York give a report on Common Ground.

Mr. WALSH. Thank you, Mr. President. Madam Speaker, colleagues, good morning. It's great to be with you.

As you may recall from our last report to Congress, the Association has put some energy and focus into the question of bipartisanship. Everything we do at the Former Members Association is done in a bipartisan manner. Our leadership is comprised equally of Republicans and Democrats. Our delegations are led by bipartisan teams of former Members of Congress, and our projects involve both Republicans and Democrats equally. We truly are a bipartisan organization where Members from across the political aisle come together for common purpose.

We have found that, for a number of reasons, this type of bipartisan interaction has become more and more difficult for current Members. This development has many causes, many of which are beyond the control of today's Members.

Our association, therefore, has created a new undertaking, the Common Ground Project, with the purpose of finding ways in which Democrats and Republicans can work together for the good of this country. The origin of the Common Ground Project can be found in our Conference on Bipartisanship which we hosted last year at the National Archives in partnership with the Bipartisan Policy Center. Three panels examined our current political discourse, how bipartisanship—or the lack thereof—has influenced our political decisionmaking process, and the way the media influences this Nation's political climate. The concluding panel looked at concrete steps we might take to foster a more civil relationship across the aisle.

Following the conference, we invited our membership to cosign a letter to all candidates for congressional office in the 2010 midterm elections. In the

letter, we asked for a focus on issue rather than divisive demagogy, and I am happy to report that over 150 former Members immediately signed the document.

Next, we decided to put some thought and effort into a structured program that could serve to foster a more civil and productive political discourse in this country.

Our idea is to create an outreach modeled on our very successful Congress to Campus program. Via a Congress to the Community Project, we hope to reconnect America's voters with their political process and encourage a respectful and productive debate on the many issues that we face.

For example, a bipartisan team of former Members will have town-hall-like discussions focused on the budgetary process and deficit reduction. We will go into the community and bring different political points of view to the electorate, invite the voters to participate in this debate, and find some common ground. We will also find ways of bringing current Members into the conversation, and we will create opportunities for current Members to get to know their colleagues from across the aisle a little bit better. It is my hope that when we return to the House Chamber for our report next year, we will be able to describe the first successes of this new undertaking.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. MORELLA. The Chair thanks the gentleman from New York.

At this time it is a great honor to recognize the distinguished Speaker of the House of Representatives, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER).

Mr. BOEHNER. Let me say good morning to all of you and welcome back. I see a lot of familiar faces here.

Let me also congratulate John Warner on receiving the Distinguished Service Award. John and I obviously worked together over the years, about 16 of them or so, and he is truly deserving of this honor.

You have probably recognized over the course of this first 6 months in the new Congress that we are trying to run the House a little differently—a novel concept of allowing the House to work its will, more open debate, more amendments, and respecting the work of the committees. And I have to tell you, so far it has gone very well. I think Members on both sides of the aisle are appreciative of how the process is working. As someone who came up through the committee ranks, who was a committee chair, I feel pretty strongly that the House works best when the House is allowed to work its will. I know a lot of people don't really believe that, but I'm going to tell you, just continue to watch because I just think everybody ought to have a chance to participate. Every one of us represents 650,000–700,000 constituents, and I think every Member should have the ability to play a part in this process. So, so far so good. We have a ways to go, but I am proud of the start that we have made.

In addition to that, I think all of you know that our economy is not doing well. The American people are continuing to ask the question: Where are the jobs?

At least in my opinion, we don't have many options available to us. We all know that we have big mandatory spending programs that aren't sustainable in their current form. Something has to be done. We all know what the problems are. Why don't we just go fix them?

I have had this same conversation with the President over the course of the last 5 months, and I really do think that this is the moment, this is the time for us to deal with these problems like adults: look at the problem and go solve it. You know, the problem around here, as you are all aware, is that the next election always kind of gets in the way of having the courage to do the right thing. So I have encouraged the President: forget about the next election. We know what the problems are; let's just go address them.

So it is going to be something, I think, a little different than anybody has ever seen when this agreement comes together. It is hard to tell you at this point what it is going to look like; but I am going to tell you this, this is the moment. This is the opportunity to address these big, looming problems; and I don't want to allow this opportunity to pass by.

So let me say, welcome back. I would hope that you would also work on getting more of our former colleagues back here. This is a big day for all of you, and I am proud of you, proud of the service you gave this institution, and I am proud of the opportunity I had to work with many of you over the years. Welcome.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. HERTEL. I want to thank the Speaker for taking the time for being our keynote speaker at our dinner this last year and for always helping us with our golf tournament. We know he couldn't make it yesterday. Some of the people are sunburned here today because of that tournament. And, of course, the Democrats won. I think if the Speaker were there, it would have strengthened the Republican side far more.

Mr. BOEHNER. There is always tomorrow.

Mr. HERTEL. We want to wish the Speaker well in his match with President Obama coming up this weekend. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker has been great in taking time out of his busy schedule to come here, but also to be so very supportive of our association, and we appreciate that very, very much.

Let me talk about that charitable golf tournament yesterday. A great example of how powerful and productive bipartisanship can be is our Annual Congressional Golf Tournament. Four years ago, we took a 35-year tradition of the annual golf tournament between Members and former Members which pits Republicans against Democrats for a trophy, and we turned it into a greater mission. We converted it into a charitable golf tournament to aid severely wounded vets returning from the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Our beneficiary, the Wounded Warrior Project of Disabled Sports USA, is as impressive and remarkable an organization as you are likely to find anywhere in this country. They use sports to help our wounded veterans readjust to life after a severe injury. They involve the entire family in the sport, and they take care of providing all of the equipment and training.

We held the fourth golf tournament yesterday; and between the four tournaments, we have raised almost a quarter of a million dollars for this outstanding organization. At yesterday's tournament, we had almost 50 current and former Members from both sides of the aisle come together to support this great charity. We met with over a dozen of the wounded warriors. In addition, we were greatly honored by a visit from three members of the famous Easy Company, the World War II outfit made famous by Steve Ambrose's book ''Band of Brothers'' on which the highly successful HBO miniseries was based.

Yesterday was a very rewarding and memorable day, to say the least. To have these guys there, they are 88 years old from the Band of Brothers. And right now this morning, they are over at the World War II Memorial for the first time in their lives. But to see them there with us yesterday and to be able to thank them for what they have done for our country was a great experience for all of us.

And to be able to play golf with the wounded warriors yesterday and see how much better they are than any of us, to have that kind of fellowship with them and to see what this program can do was really satisfying.

We want to thank Zach Wamp and Chet Edwards for their help in chairing this before when they were Members. They have joined us now as formers, and we gave an award to them yesterday. We are so happy to have our new chairmen, JOE BACA and ANDER CRENSHAW, do such a great job of recruiting more active Members to that tournament yesterday.

I want to thank all four of these fine men, as well as my former co-chair of this undertaking, Ken Kramer from Colorado, who has done such a fantastic job. It has really made a difference. I think all of us have much more satisfaction now in the tournament that we used to enjoy for fellowship, now for having a cause, the Wounded Warriors Sports Program, and it is really an honor to help our Nation's heroes in this small manner.

Now I want to call on Bob Clement from Tennessee. A year ago, we had

this first trip to China. We led eight Members over there; and since then, we have had a delegation of former Senators go over. And now Bob Clement is just back from the latest mission of House Members that have been over to China on behalf of the Association of Former Members of Congress.

Mrs. MORELLA. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

Mr. CLEMENT. Thank you, Mr. President, Madam Speaker.

It was a great honor and privilege for me to be with six former Members of the House of Representatives on the Democrat and Republican sides to go to China. The last time I was in China was 1995. I might say much has changed, and I sure miss those bicycles. I think they've listened too much to the Western World. The bicycles are gone, particularly in the coastal areas, and the automobiles/motor scooters have truly taken over. China, as you all know, has still got a major challenge in being a developing nation. The coastal areas are most prosperous, but in the rural areas, where 700 million people live—half the population—they still live in abject poverty.

I will say, with the Chinese—and I can speak for the entire delegation who were part of this experience sponsored by the Former Members of Congress Association—I was most impressed with their openness. We had the chance to meet with some of the top officials in government, business leaders, even including one billionaire China businessman, as well as the academic community—Chung Hua University, which is looked upon as the number one university in China. All of those experiences were very open.

What I've noticed and observed is the fact that the Chinese Communists still control and dominate in China, but even kids in kindergarten are learning English, all the way from kindergarten up. The Communist Party is still in control, but China is not as isolated as it once was. Also, the Chinese know English, and every place we went, the vendors and the young people knew how to speak English because they realize English is the universal language.

No doubt China is going to be a superpower even though it's a developing nation. We had the opportunity to travel on trains 225 miles an hour, and their airports and rail terminals are phenomenal. I couldn't believe that train. I mean, you could hardly feel any motion at all since it was such a smooth ride. Now they've got a new train that's getting ready to go into operation between Shanghai and Beijing, and that will be launched very soon now.

So what I'm saying to you is that being involved with the Association and what we experienced was an eye-opener. I went on a lot of CODELs just like the rest of you did, but even as a former Member participating through the Association, all of us can make a major difference, and I encourage you to be involved and engaged as much as you possibly can.

Another example of the unique role our association can play in international affairs is the Middle East Fellows Project, which we administer in partnership with Legacy International, a Virginia foundation. We hosted last year almost 20 young professionals from the Middle East here in D.C. Their stay in D.C. was made possible by way of a grant from the U.S. Department of State. The group, which spent about 1 month in Washington, included lawyers, journalists and government employees from Kuwait and Oman. In addition to the time spent with the former Members, our guests spent several weeks on Capitol Hill as visiting fellows in a number of congressional offices, and there were several return trips which enabled former Members to travel to Kuwait and Oman for factfinding visits. Our bipartisan co-chairs for this program were Larry LaRocco and Scott Klug.

I now yield the floor to the gentleman from Idaho so he can give us more detail and more subject matter on this undertaking. Thank you.

Mr. LAROCCO. Thank you, Bob, Madam Speaker.

It was an amazing experience to be involved in this project that Bob just described to you all. We had a great team of young women and men from Oman and Kuwait. They were truly outstanding individuals in this group who were clearly destined to be leaders in their respective countries in the future. I am pleased and proud that our association could establish a dialogue and a learning experience of this type. I use the word ''dialogue'' on purpose because we learned as much from our guests as they did from us. Countries obviously need to build bridges connecting people and decisionmakers. Countries need to find ways to communicate and dispel some myths that may exist, and countries need to lay the foundation so the next generation of leaders has the appreciation for the world beyond their borders. I strongly believe that our great association, via the Middle East Fellows Program, did exactly that. Our former Members have such a unique insight and appreciation of what it means to represent a constituency and how to make the legislative process work. It is therefore altogether fitting that we play this type of role and have this type of outreach.

I want to focus for a minute on the role that the former Members played as mentors to these young men and women who came to our country. It was truly a great effort by our association. Let me focus for just a minute on the outbound part of the program, specifically the delegation I had the pleasure of leading to Kuwait and Oman with Scott Klug.

In both countries, we met with our U.S. ambassadors, who were 100 percent committed to this specific public diplomacy initiative. We had ample time to visit with them and their staffs about regional and global issues. Our busy schedules were designed to put us in touch with many public and private sector entities in order to get a balanced view of the relationships on many levels with the U.S. We were struck by the progress, for example, for women's rights in both Kuwait and Oman. It is clear that they've made a commitment in this area.

Clearly, both countries are building capacity to take their democratic institutions to the next level based on strong commitments to education and transparency. While both countries have economies based on oil, there is also an attempt to diversify their economic bases. These two countries, Oman and Kuwait, remain strong allies of the U.S. in the Gulf, and since our visit, we have not seen the upheaval in these countries as in other countries in the region.

I was very impressed with the dialogue that we had with the students in both countries. Of particular interest was meeting the young professionals we had seen in the U.S. in their native countries and hearing from them the value of their time that they spent with us in our program here in the United States and at the Nation's capital.

In addition to this delegation, another former Member delegation visited the region. My colleagues Martin Lancaster, David Minge and Jack Buechner all had the same experience I had: that the people of Kuwait and Oman are extremely hospitable, eager to meet Americans, and very appreciative of anyone interested in learning more about their great cultures and countries. There are many misconceptions when it comes to the Middle East and America's role vis-a-vis the Middle East specifically. It therefore was incredibly educational for all of us to participate in this experience, and I urge my colleagues to become involved in the Middle East Fellows Program when the State Department contract gets renewed, hopefully, in the very near future.

I also want to extend a special thanks to the wonderful staff of Legacy International, without whom none of the trips or the great D.C. program would have been possible. I hope we will have a long and productive partnership with this fine organization.

Thank you very much for allowing me to give this report to the Association today.

Mrs. MORELLA. The Chair thanks the gentleman from Idaho.

The President continues to have control of the time.

Mr. HERTEL. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Thank you, Larry, very, very much for your report, and Bob Clement.

There are a number of other international projects involving our Former Members of Congress Association. Several years ago, we created the International Election Monitors Institute under the leadership of then-President Jack Buechner. It is a joint project of

the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress with the Former Members of the European Parliament and the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians, a couple of whom are here today whom we'll get to later.

In addition to conducting multiple workshops for former legislators to train them for election monitoring missions, IEMI has sent delegations to monitor elections in places such as Morocco, Ukraine, and—our most ambitious undertaking—Iraq. All IEMI activities have been made possible via a grant from CIDA, the Canadian International Development Agency. We thank them for their support. The original intent of the International Election Monitors Institute was to train former legislators and prepare them for the task of observing an election. We have since had some very productive discussions with our partners in Canada and Europe, and have arrived at the conclusion that this original vision, while still valid, needs to be broadened and expanded. Former legislators from all political walks of life can be a tremendous asset to those organizations that seek to strengthen democracy across the globe. We can help newly elected legislators as they find their footing in the responsibilities that come with representing a constituency at the federal, state or local level. We can help an emerging democracy as it seeks to implement an election result and facilitate a peaceful transition of power. We can help a legislative branch as it tries to assert its oversight power over the executive branch. All our delegations are comprised of legislators from the United States, Canada, and Europe. We are a truly international undertaking, and we do not play any role in implementing the foreign policy of either the United States, Canada or the EU. We simply wish to help those countries that yearn for a transparent and accountable form of government. In addition to changing this focus of the International Election Monitors Institute, we are in talks with our colleagues from Australia and New Zealand to see whether a more global outreach and partnership might be possible. I hope to be able to report to you next year that a truly worldwide effort has been created.

In addition to the great work of the IEMI, our Members play a role in the efforts of the House Democracy Partnership and the U.S. Department of State. The HDP is a current-Member undertaking that brings democracy building and legislative strengthening projects to a select number of countries across the globe. It is chaired by DAVID DREIER of California and DAVID PRICE of North Carolina, and we thank them both for giving us the opportunity to participate. We provide expert opinion to Members and staff of parliaments in emerging democracies, and we conduct workshops and presentations at the direction of HDP staff. Just last month, one of our Members, Earl Pomeroy of North Dakota, traveled to Kosovo to provide some training and advice. Previous missions, all funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, have taken our delegations to Kenya, Georgia, Poland, and Haiti. The missions are issue-specific, have an intense and active program, and give former Members the opportunity to share some of their experiences with current legislators in parliaments overseas. The House Democracy Partnership is an extension of the great work begun by Martin Frost and Gerry Solomon as part of the Frost-Solomon Task Force. Clearly, former Members can play an important and productive role in this type of program, and we are thrilled to be included in the crucial and impressive work of HDP.

As I mentioned earlier, we also have begun working with the U.S. Department of State. This partnership comes in several variations. We have connected bipartisan teams of former Members of Congress with U.S. embassies overseas via webcasts. Our former Members sit in a studio in Foggy Bottom while the U.S. embassy abroad assembles an audience either at the embassy or at a university for a dialogue with our Members. Most recently, we communicated with audiences in Austria and Belgium, first giving an overview of current U.S. politics and then engaging in a lengthy Q&A. Another State Department-sponsored program brings former Members directly to the embassies and consulates overseas. Sometimes former Members travel specifically as part of the State Department's program. Sometimes the State Department will piggyback on a former Member who is visiting a country for business or pleasure. We think this is a great way to communicate with foreign audiences about the United States, about our foreign policy, and about our political process.

In addition to the international work which I just highlighted, our association also focuses on creating a dialogue involving current Members of Congress and their colleagues in legislatures overseas. Mainly, we achieve this objective via the Congressional Study Groups on Germany, Turkey, and Japan.

At this time, I would like to call on the Honorable Jim Slattery from Kansas, the former President of our association, for his report on international programs in Germany, Turkey, and Japan.

Mrs. MORELLA. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas.

Mr. SLATTERY. It is a pleasure to report on the work of the Congressional Study Groups on Germany, Turkey and Japan. These bipartisan programs for current Members of Congress serve as invaluable tools for dialogue between lawmakers, and act as educational forums to create understanding between the United States and three of its most strategic partners.

The Congressional Study Group on Germany is the Association's flagship international program, and is one of the largest and most active parliamentary exchange programs between the U.S. Congress and the legislative branch of another country. Celebrating almost 30 years of active programming, the study group offers German and American lawmakers the unique opportunity to candidly discuss issues pertinent to both nations, including pressing international challenges.

Following the Association bipartisan mandate, the Study Group on Germany is also overseen by a bipartisan team of current Members of Congress. The 2011 Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Congressional Study Group on Germany in the House of Representatives are Representative RUSS CARNAHAN, a Democrat from Missouri, and Representative PHIL GINGREY, a Republican from Georgia. In the Senate, Senator JEFF SESSIONS, a Republican from Alabama, serves as co-chair, and the study group is in the process of finding a new Democratic co-chair since Senator Evan Bayh has retired.

The study group's programming consists of periodic roundtable discussions on Capitol Hill for Members of Congress, featuring visiting dignitaries from Germany or U.S. Government officials, annual seminars abroad or at home, and study tours and events geared toward senior congressional staff. Current Members of Congress chair the CSGC in a bipartisan manner. A few highlights for the Study Group on Germany's events on Capitol Hill during this year's programming included: a luncheon discussion with Dr. Norbert Lammert, President of the German Bundestag; a panel featuring Under Secretary Robert Hormats; and a roundtable with the German Bundestag's Defense Committee members.

The Congressional Study Group on Germany's main pillar of programming is the Annual Congress-Bundestag Seminar that takes place in the U.S. every election year and in Germany every nonelection year. These 5-day-long conferences present Members of Congress and their counterparts at the German Bundestag the opportunity to come together for a series of in-depth discussions focusing on issues affecting transatlantic relations. The seminars also give lawmakers the chance to observe the domestic atmosphere of both nations as they evaluate the effects of their foreign policy decisions.

The 27th Annual Congress-Bundestag Seminar took place the second week of May last year in Washington, D.C., and in St. Louis, Missouri. This year, the annual seminar is scheduled to take place in Berlin, Potsdam, and Wittenberg, Germany, at the end of June. Topics for discussion during the 28th Annual Congress-Bundestag Seminar will include: sustaining economic growth, relations between the European Union and the United States, and energy security. During this programming year, the study group also took a delegation of eight chiefs of staff to Berlin and Frankfurt, Germany, on a Senior Congressional Staff Study Tour.

Since its establishment, the Congressional Study Group on Germany has been receiving generous support from the German Marshall Fund of the United States, and the Association would like to thank Craig Kennedy, the President of GMF, for his trust in our programming. To assist with administrative expenses, the Association also receives additional funding from a group of organizations making up the study group's Business Advisory Council, headed by former Member Tom Coleman of Missouri.

Using the Study Group on Germany as a model in 2005, a Congressional Study Group on Turkey was established. In only 6 years, the Study

Group on Turkey has become another major program of the Association and one of the most active parliamentary exchange programs between the U.S. Congress and the legislative branch of Turkey. Given Turkey's strategic role in its region and position as a gateway between East and West, the Study Group on Turkey is essential in forging communication networks between current Members of Congress and Turkish Government officials to discuss issues such as the Middle East peace process, energy security, and avenues of cooperation in the region.

The Study Group on Turkey is active only in the House of Representatives, and is again led by a bipartisan group of current Members of Congress. Representative VIRGINIA FOXX, a Republican from North Carolina, and Representative STEVE COHEN, a Democrat from Tennessee, are the co-chairs of this group. Representative ED WHITFIELD, a Republican from Kentucky, remains active as the study group's immediate past co-chair.

Similar to the Congressional Study Group on Germany, the Study Group on Turkey hosts events for Members of Congress on Capitol Hill which are dedicated to U.S.-Turkey relations, an annual seminar at home or abroad, and events and study groups geared toward senior congressional staff. The study group held its second Senior Congressional Staff Study Tour to Turkey during the Easter recess this year, bringing together eight chiefs of staff to learn about Turkish domestic politics on the eve of national elections and U.S.-Turkey bilateral relations.

The Congressional Study Group on Turkey regularly features members of the Turkish Grand National Assembly and ministers of the Turkish Government as well as U.S. Government officials in its events geared toward current Members of Congress. During the 2010/2011 programming year, the study group has hosted high-level guests such as the Honorable Egemen Bagis, Turkish Minister for EU Affairs and Chief Negotiator of Turkey in accession talks with the European Union; and Ambassador Dan Benjamin, Coordinator for Counterterrorism at the U.S. State Department.

The Annual U.S.-Turkey Seminar is a significant aspect of study group programming for each year. The seminar brings U.S. and Turkey legislators together with policymakers and business representatives to examine important bilateral topics and transnational issues such as terrorism and energy security. The seminar aims to inform Members of Congress about the concerns of one of the United States' most important allies. Moreover, the seminar is an invaluable tool for creating and reinforcing personal relationships between Members of Congress and members of the Turkish Grand National Assembly.

The sixth Annual U.S.-Turkey Seminar took place in Washington, D.C., in September 2010, and this year, the study group will take a delegation of current Members of Congress to Ankara and Istanbul, Turkey, for its seventh annual seminar. Topics of discussion for this year's seminar will focus on Middle East stability, prospects for the global economy, and growing U.S.-Turkey relations.

The Association also organizes and administers the Congressional Study Group on Japan. Founded in 1993 in cooperation with East-West Center in Hawaii, the Congressional Study Group on Japan brings together Members of the U.S. Congress and Members of the Japanese Diet for a series of discussions covering issues of mutual concern. A group of current Members of Congress chair the Study Group in a bipartisan manner. In the House of Representatives, Congressman JIM MCDERMOTT of Washington and Congresswoman SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO of West Virginia serve as co-chairs. In the Senate, Senators JIM WEBB of Virginia and LISA MURKOWSKI of Alaska take an active role in Study Group programming. The Congressional Study Group on Japan has been funded since its inception by the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission, and the Association would like to give a special thanks to Dr. Eric Gangloff for his continued commitment to the success of the Study Group as Executive Director of the Commission and wish him well in retirement.

The Association is proud of the work that we do in administering and encouraging these study groups, and we are, of course, looking forward to many more years of activity in this area.

It's good to see you all today.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you, Mr. Slattery.

Now the Chair has the distinct privilege of recognizing the very important and distinguished minority leader, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI).

Ms. PELOSI. Good morning, everyone. Thank you, Madam Chair, Madam Ambassador, Congresswoman, many titles, great leader.

Thank you all very much for being at the Capitol today and thank you for your ongoing work on behalf of our country. I am honored to be here as the minority leader in the presence of a great minority leader, Bob Michel. He knows this job with a President of your party and without a President of your party. Again he is, as you know, an icon in this House, and anytime he visits it's a cause for celebration for us. And to be able to do so, to honor Senator John Warner, welcome to the House side, Senator Warner. The respect that we have had for you over the years is only heightened by your ongoing leadership now that you are a former Senator, but the fact is your imprint on this Congress has been a great one, not only substantively but officially in a bipartisan way. You're a great leader. It's an honor to welcome you and to join our Speaker in welcoming you to the House side. Good morning, Senator. Please give my love to Jeanne.

And to Dennis Hertel and Connie Morella, thank you for your leadership. Listening to Congressman Slattery talk about the working groups and the rest, I am so impressed, because that you continue to do this work is very, very important. I just had the Ambassador from Japan in my office, and I could just substitute that name for almost any country, but Japan in particular right now at a time of duress for that country, the appeal was to heighten our interparliamentary relationships, whether with former Members, with staff, or with current Members as well.

JIM, thank you for the work that you're all doing with those working groups to encourage them. Former Members are a fount of so much wisdom for us, Senator and Mr. Leader, Madam Chair, Dennis, you understand the institution, you have time to reflect, I hope—I hope you have time to reflect—on some of the issues while you served here and as you see our service here.

We consider ourselves all colleagues to each other. Abraham Lincoln is our colleague. Anyone who ever served in this House, I believe, is our colleague. Daniel Webster, Abraham Lincoln, we're part of a very proud tradition in the people's House.

I just want to tell you this anecdotally. All of the Speakers, former and present, have been invited to participate in the 200th anniversary, the bicentennial of the election of Henry Clay as Speaker of the House. This will take place in Lexington, Kentucky, pretty soon. So, of course, we're all reading up on Henry Clay to enhance our knowledge of what was going on at the time. It was pretty raucous at the time. He was elected the Speaker the first day he arrived, 34 years old, the youngest Speaker ever, but he was part a of an insurgent group of many, many freshmen who decided that they were going to take over the House, and his imprint here was a great one.

In studying and in looking at his service over the years back and forth, Senator Warner, he started in the Senate and he decided that not much was getting done over there, so he decided to run for the House. And then eventually he went back to the Senate. It's very interesting to see, because as people, shall we say, comment on our combativeness or our enthusiasm for ideas as we compete in this great marketplace of ideas called the House of Representatives what the heritage and what the background is of that expression of difference of opinion. The gentlemen that we have here, Leader Michel and Senator Warner, are examples of the civility we hope will be the hallmark that guides again our enthusiasm for the ideas that we bring to the Congress.

Thank you for your ongoing leadership. Thank you for being an intellectual resource to the Congress in a bipartisan way. I think I served with almost all of you, maybe not every single one but almost all of you, so I have a great appreciation for the contributions that you have made. Again, the imprint, the legacy that you have left. I know you're very proud. I want you to know that we are as well.

You have come at a very interesting time. The issues of budget and budget priorities and the values debate that goes with that is something that is not new to all of you. The challenges that we face in the world, our national security is everything. We take that oath to protect and defend our national security. I know I don't have to say that to Bev Byron, her great leadership on the Armed Services Committee. But also at a time where you have real-time communication, it's so different. When Henry Clay was the Speaker of the House, a message could only travel as fast as a horse could gallop or a ship could sail. Imagine. And today in real time. In fact it's even before real time. Before you even get out of the room, it's been BlackBerry'd outside of the room, so the message is always ahead of you. Imagine the difference that that makes, in the participation of the public, in their reaction to events without any explanation or context in which they have taken place but the fact that they are taking place.

Again, you've seen this all happen. Some of it happened when many of you were here. Every day a new technology enhances our communication. We see that as a plus. We see how it promoted democracy in the Middle East. We hope for the best coming out of all of that, hopefully that it will be democracy, but the change that sprang from it.

So in terms of how we represent, I say to the Members, you're all independent. Your job description and your title are one and the same: Representative. Representative. Sometimes it requires leadership to give a national perspective to some of the decisions that you have to make that might be not clear at home at the time, and again especially with real-time communication, you have to be ahead of all of that. That's called leadership.

Thank you for your leadership. Thank you for continuing your work together in a bipartisan way. Thank you again for being an intellectual resource. Thank you for the work that you do internationally because, of course, again, back to national security, our first responsibility, to keep the American people safe and have our children grow up in a world where they can all reach their potential and their fulfillment because the world is at peace.

I bring greetings from the Democrats in the House, but I hope I could say that we all join together, Democrats and Republicans, in saying thank you to all of you.

Mrs. MORELLA. We thank you, Madam Minority Leader.

Mr. HERTEL. I want to thank the leader so much for taking time today, but also for always being so supportive of our association. The woman that has achieved the highest office in the history of our country, to honor us today to talk about the history of Henry Clay and other former Speakers and leaders of their political party is such a great honor.

I want to report to Leader PELOSI that the Democrats won that golf tournament yesterday, and it will have that trophy.

I want to now call on Beverly Byron.

In addition to the international and domestic programs we have created to either teach about Congress or strengthen democracy abroad, we are tasked with highlighting the achievements of former Members and providing former Members with opportunities to stay connected with their former colleagues. One of the premier events we have is our annual statesmanship award dinner. In March of this year we hosted our 14th dinner, and like the preceding 13 years, we had it chaired by Lou Frey, who's done such an outstanding job. He couldn't be with us today, but he has asked our colleague, Beverly Byron, to report on this last year's dinner. Bev, for all 14 dinners, has been one of our most active dinner committee members. I would like to take this time and opportunity to introduce her and to thank Beverly Byron for all of her tireless work all these years for our association.

Mrs. MORELLA. The Chair recognizes the gentlelady from Maryland.

Ms. BYRON. Thank you, Dennis. Let me also thank Lou for the terrific work that he has done over the years to make this statesmanship dinner such a success. It is greatly appreciated by the organization because it is our major fundraiser.

The dinner this year was on March 15. The Association was proud to host it. As in years past, the event was held at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel on 22nd Street in Washington. We had nearly 400 guests in attendance. The evening was dedicated to celebrate the achievements of the 2011 statesmanship honorees: former Minority Leaders and former Speakers of the House who demonstrated exemplary service during their time in leadership. Speaker Tom Foley, Leader Dick Gephardt, Speaker Dennis Hastert, and Leader Bob Michel accepted the award in person, and although Speakers Jim Wright and Newt Gingrich were unable to attend, they sent their best wishes.

The evening began with remarks by former Member Lou Frey who recognized the many honored guests in the room, including Speaker JOHN BOEHNER of Ohio and the Ambassadors of France, Germany, Taiwan, and the European Union. After thanking the guests for their attendance, we had a moment of silence in recognizing the passing of our good friend and former President Jay Rhodes of Arizona. Lou then introduced former Member Larry LaRocco for what has become a yearly tradition: a live auction of congressional memorabilia to support the Association's civics programs. After dinner, Speaker JOHN BOEHNER gave the keynote address remarking on the importance of Congress as an institution. We then recognized each honoree individually and, at the conclusion of the evening, gathered them along with the Speaker on the stage to accept their awards. It was truly an historic night and the first time these past congressional leaders were assembled on a stage in one group. Their acceptance speeches were remarkable, giving the insight about Congress, what it meant to serve, and the challenges of their leadership. We are especially proud that we were able to bring together Congress's past leaders with Congress's present leaders. It really was a very moving and memorable evening.

The annual dinner assembles former and current Members of Congress, prominent business and community leaders, representatives from the diplomatic corps, and many foundations and NGOs with which the Association has partnered over the years. Past honorees include our former Speaker, NANCY PELOSI, who just addressed us; Dick Cheney; the Greatest Generation; Secretary Lynn Martin; and others. The evening is our sole fundraiser and it makes possible some of the many programs my colleagues have already reported to you today on.

Let me add to the long list another example of what former Members can contribute to today's political education. One of the lessons that we have learned from interacting with the American high school and college students is that there is a void of real life experience and advice when it comes to civic education textbooks. To fill that void, our association, in conjunction with Lou Frey Institute at the University of Central Florida, has collected the words of wisdom our membership has to offer and edited two books which have since become published. The first, ''Inside the House—Former Members Reveal How Congress Really Works,'' was published several years ago and is being used by political science professors across the country. This past summer, we published a follow-up volume entitled ''Political Rules of the Road.'' This book focuses on some of the rules of the road that we have learned during our political careers, and I thank the many former Members who took the time and submitted contributions to this collection. The book has been featured several times on C–SPAN and also was the subject of a 2-hour panel presentation at the National Archives last fall. You can find information about both books on our Web site, and I hope you all will take time to look at our Web site. I recommend them to you and anyone interested in Congress.

With that, I yield back to our Association's President, Dennis Hertel.

Mrs. MORELLA. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. HERTEL. I want to thank Congresswoman Byron for all of her great help for our association.

Let me highlight quickly one more event that is a great way for our Members to stay connected and also educate themselves about a place they may not be completely familiar with. Every year we host a Fall Study Tour and invite our Members to participate at their own expense. We do the organizing and planning, and our membership can join us, time and interest permitting. We have visited some wonderful and interesting places over the years, both in the United States and abroad. Last fall we put together an exceptional Study Tour which brought us to Puerto Rico. Former Member of Congress Carlos Romero Barcelo hosted our group and his wonderful wife Kate was instrumental in creating a program for us which was second to none. Our sincere thanks to both of them. What makes our Study Tours so interesting is that we can combine your usual tourist experience with a unique substantive program tailored to our membership. In Puerto Rico we had meetings with the Puerto Rican Senate, with the Speaker of the Puerto Rican House, with the mayor of San Juan, and with the governor of Puerto Rico, the Honorable Luis Fortuno, who, incidentally, is also a former Member of Congress. This trip was a great learning experience. The people of Puerto Rico are rightfully proud of their island and of their many accomplishments. Puerto Ricans have fought for our country during all of our wars and there are many Puerto Ricans who right now are serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. The people of Puerto Rico are hard-working and industrious. But what struck us most is the great warmth and hospitality that you will find wherever you go on this wonderful island. As I said, the annual Study Tour is like no other trip you can participate in, and it is the best way I have found to discover a country, its people, its culture, and its politics. I highly recommend to my colleagues that they consider participating in one of these trips. The next Study Tour will visit the Baltic Sea in mid-September with highlights that include Helsinki and St. Petersburg. And as I said before, all participants pay their own way, no Association funds are expended on this type of program.

Let me at this point take a second to welcome our dear friends from abroad. We are extremely honored to have with us several representatives of former legislative associations in other countries. From the Australian Former Members of Parliament Association, we are pleased to have and to welcome Barry Cunningham and his wife. Thank you very much for being here. We look forward to working with you continuing into the future. From the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians, it is our honor to be joined by Leo Duguay, Francis LeBlanc, and Don Boudria. Leo and Francis have been subjected to playing golf with me at our annual tournament, so they can attest to how bad I am at golf. We really appreciate them coming for our annual meeting and for our fundraiser yesterday for the golf tournament charity for the wounded warriors. Also from the Former Members of the Ontario Parliament, we thank David Warner for accepting our invitation. Our relationship with like-minded organizations across the globe is tremendously important to us, and we are very appreciative that all of you have come here today to be with us and to spend all this time in support of our efforts.

All the programs we have described, of course, require both leadership and staff to implement. Our association is blessed to have top people in both categories. I want to take this opportunity to thank our board of directors, 30 former Members divided equally between our two parties, for their advice and counsel. We really appreciate it. Also, I would be remiss if I did not thank the other members of our association's Executive Committee: our Vice President, Connie Morella; our Treasurer, Barbara Kennelly; our Secretary, Jim Kolbe; and serving on the Exec as Past President, Jim Slattery. You have all made this association a stronger and better organization than it has ever been, and I thank you all for your time and energy. Your counsel has been most invaluable to me.

To administer all these programs takes a staff of dedicated, enthusiastic professionals. I'm so sorry we're under the deadline here, because I couldn't talk enough about our staff.

First of all, we have Elizabeth Ardagna, our Member Services Officer, and how much work she has done on all fronts. Member Services doesn't cover all the different variety of things that she does. The golf tournament, she's in charge of that. Without her, it wouldn't have happened, and it wouldn't have been so successful. This is a day-in and day-out thing. The pressures of trying to work with Members of Congress and everybody's schedules and fundraising and all the other endeavors that she's done, we just want to thank her so much.

Esra Alemdar, our International Programs Officer, we've never had such success of having such valued speakers but also having such great attendance of active and former Senators and Members that have come forward to it.

Bryan Corder, Legislative Programs Manager, who's again a utility player. He does everything that we need. Regarding this China delegation that Bob was just talking about, all the work that that took, all the work that it takes to keep all of our different study groups in operation; all the things that our members need along the way to help with our fundraising dinner and all the rest. Bryan just does such an excellent job.

I come to Pete Weichlein, who we know is the epitome of our organization. It wouldn't exist without Pete, I guess is the simplest way to say it. He came up first working with our German study program, and then when he took over as Executive Director, we've seen all of the difference of an organization that has the breadth to do international scale operations, to reach with partners in our own country in a way we never had before, with the National Archives, the Bipartisan Policy Center, expanding Congress to Campus, so many different programs on the horizon. Without Pete's leadership and dedication, it would be impossible.

As some of the people said yesterday at the golf tournament, how do you get so much done with such a small staff? That is because of the superiority of our staff compared to any other, I think, in Washington DC.

And then we talk about Sudha David-Wilp, our International Programs Director, who is leaving us to go to the German Marshall Fund in Berlin, Germany. There couldn't be a better association that is benefiting our organization and the German Marshall Fund, that's to be said for sure. She and her husband and her two daughters mean so much to all of us because of the difference she has made in all of these programs and partnerships internationally. We could have never developed that kind of confidence and in-depth discussions and progress without all that Sudha has done. We hope to continue that relationship with her forever. For all of us, it's to our great benefit to have somebody of her superior intellectual ability, but personality, and to combine those two things means that it's been to the benefit of our organization and the people of the United States and the Congress of the United States because of all her hard work and accomplishments. Sudha, we thank you so much.

Finally, in addition to our wonderful staff we benefit greatly from our volunteers who lend us their talents and expertise pro bono. None deserve more appreciation than Dava Guerin, who has taken on the role of our Communications Director. Finally, you might notice we're getting some press coverage, and it's favorable, because of the great and wonderful work that Dava has done. She is just such a tremendous professional. We're just getting started this last month, but looking forward very, very much to going forward with her expertise.

Now I would just take this moment to thank all of you at the Association for all of the effort that you've put forth and all the dedication that you have. After these many years of public service, we have the epitome of Senator Warner and Bob Michel today showing that what can be done when we work together for Members of both parties.

Cokie Roberts, our only honorary member, has said two things about former Members: one, they dress much better than they did when they were Members; and, two, they haven't lost their partisanship, they keep that edge, they keep all those beliefs, but suddenly it's all now for a bipartisan effort in public service, and what a difference that makes. Cokie is exactly right. That's why I thank all of you and our association.

Now we come to our final bit of business before we must leave the Chamber today, in about 4 minutes, and that is

the election of new board members and officers. Every year at our annual meeting we ask the membership to elect new officers and board members. In the past we have done so in a separate business meeting of the membership, but it occurred to us that there is no better place for holding a vote than the Chamber of the House of Representatives, and that's what we're going to do today. I therefore now will read to you the names of the candidates for officers and board members. They're all running unopposed and I therefore ask for a simple ''yes'' or ''no'' as I present to you the list of candidates as a slate. So you couldn't have an easier election, and if we're going to do it on the floor of the House, we want to make sure that it's a sure thing, right?

For the Association's eight seats on the 2011 class of the Board of Directors, the candidates are:

Jack Buechner of Missouri
Martin Frost of Texas
Lee Hamilton of Indiana
Jim Kolbe of Arizona
Bob Livingston of Louisiana
Norm Mineta of California
Jim Walsh of New York

All in favor of electing these eight former Members to a 3-year term as our board of directors, please say ''aye.'' All opposed, say ''nay.'' Hearing no opposition, the slate has been elected by the membership.

Next, we will elect our Executive Committee. Connie Morella and I are finishing up the first year of our 2-year term. Therefore, the candidates for another 1-year term as our Executive Committee are:

Barbara Kennelly of Connecticut for Treasurer
Jim Kolbe of Arizona for Secretary
Jim Slattery of Kansas for Past President Exec Member

All in favor of electing these three former Members to another 1-year term on our Executive Committee, please ''aye.'' All opposed, ''nay.'' Hearing no opposition, the slate has been elected by the membership. I thank you all very much.

Now as we come to the conclusion of our program, it is my sad duty to inform the Congress of those former and current Members who have passed away since our last report. This list contains the names of our colleagues and friends, all of whom will be greatly missed. Let me just highlight one name, my close personal friend and our former President, Jay Rhodes. Just a year ago, Jay stood at this very lectern delivering this report to Congress in his capacity as our association's President. That I am reading his name today and the list of these Members who have passed is so very sad for all of us who have been active with our organization and have known Jay so well. Jay was a great leader and dear friend, and we miss his guidance, intelligence, and his humor very, very much. He was someone who cared about all of us and that we all felt close to. It is a lesson for all of us to appreciate life and to appreciate the friendships that we have and our family and to hold them dear and close to us.

I ask all of you to rise as I read the names as we pay respect to the memory of the people that I am about to list with a moment of silence.

John Adler of New Jersey
Robert Byrd of West Virginia
Emilio Daddario of Connecticut
Robert Duncan of Oregon
Marvin Esch of Michigan
Frank Evans of Colorado
Robert Ellsworth of Kansas
Geraldine Ferraro of New York
Peter H.B. Frelinghuysen, Jr. of New Jersey
Wayne Grisham of California
Robert P. Hanrahan of Illinois
William Harsha of Ohio
Fred Heineman of North Carolina
Arthur Link of North Dakota
Steve Horn of California
James Mann of South Carolina
Karen McCarthy of Missouri
James McClure of Idaho
Owen Pickett of Virginia
Howard Pollock of Alaska
William Ratchford of Connecticut
John J. Rhodes, III of Arizona
Dan Rostenkowski of Illinois
William Bart Saxbe of Ohio
Stephen Solarz of New York
Ted Stevens of Alaska
Tom Vandergriff of Texas
Harold Volkmer of Missouri
Stuyvesant Wainwright, II of New York
William Walsh of New York

Thank you.

That concludes the 41st Report to Congress by the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress. We thank the Congress, the Speaker and the Minority Leader for giving us the opportunity to return to this revered Chamber and to report on our Association's activities. We look forward to another active and productive year. We thank all of you, members of the Association

Mrs. MORELLA. The Chair again wishes to thank the former Members of the House for their presence here today.

Before terminating, the Chair would like to invite those former Members whose names were not recorded as being present to give their names to the Reading Clerk.

The meeting is now adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 9:47 a.m.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Dr. Mark Smith, Ohio Christian University, Circleville, Ohio, offered the following prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father, it is with praise and thanksgiving that we celebrate this day. As Psalm 118:24 says: This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

As we prepare for this session of the people's House, may the wisdom of the Almighty flow to the hearts and minds of all those entrusted with the preservation of our great democracy. May the Spirit of God cause our leaders to detest evil practices and embrace truth and righteousness. May each government official be blessed with Your protection and grace. And may the warmth and smile of the loving God find its place in each person's heart here today.

We also ask for the protection of the great men and women serving around the world who defend our freedom.

We pray these things in the sacred name of our holy God. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CICILLINE led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

> I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

CONGRATULATING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD SPECIALIST TERRANCE McKINNEY

(Mr. STUTZMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. STUTZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I stand honored to represent Indiana's Third Congressional District, which is home to one of the United States Armed Forces' finest members, Army National Guard Specialist Terrance McKinney.

After a 2-day competition between 14,000 soldiers at Camp Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Center, Indiana, from April 18–19, National Guard Specialist Terrance McKinney earned the title of Indiana's Army National Guard Soldier of the Year.

McKinney, at age 25, is now joined with 54 others as the best National Guard soldiers in the country.

McKinney was also recognized for his exceptional achievement Friday, May 20, 2011, at Victory Field in Indianapolis and moves on to compete at the regional level.

McKinney is from Fort Wayne, Indiana, and a member of Detachment 18 Recruiting and Retention Command out of Muncie, Indiana.

I congratulate Army National Guard Specialist Terrance McKinney for his achievements and am proud of Indiana's 14,700 members of the Indiana Army and Air National Guard.

We owe endless gratitude to these men and women in uniform who have devoted their lives to our security, brought justice to the leader of al Qaeda, and continue to bring justice to those who seek to destroy us.

THE BENEFITS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS

(Ms. PINGREE of Maine asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, all over this country, small, independent farmers are making a living by farming in a way our parents or grandparents would recognize—raising high quality food and selling it close to home.

The USDA recognizes the importance of this growing economy and has developed programs like ''Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food'' and research focused on local food systems. These programs are critically important.

Later today, we will take up a bill that is accompanied by a report that will cripple these efforts with unnecessary bureaucratic requirements and by prohibiting research on local and regional food systems. That's right, the committee report actually urges USDA to stop doing research on the benefits of local and regional food systems.

Mr. Speaker, more and more American families want to know where their food is coming from and want to buy it locally. Now is not the time to make it harder for small farmers to give consumers what they want.

CONGRATULATING THE NBA CHAMPION DALLAS MAVERICKS

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the newly crowned NBA champions, the Dallas Mavericks. They came together, persevered, and played exceptionally well as a team.

The MVP of the series, Dirk Nowitzki, will go down in history as a tireless worker and humble team player who shined both on and off the court.

I'm proud of the Mavs' first-ever NBA championship title and hope there are many more to come. It is Flag Day, and I think it's noteworthy that this team is emblematic of the American spirit—as individuals they are good, but when they come together, they are great.

God bless Texas. God bless the Mavs. I salute you.

BEST WISHES TO BRAD ADAMONIS

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the United States Challenge Cup Junior Golf Foundation headquartered in East Providence, Rhode Island, which provides competitive opportunities for young golfers throughout New England.

Recognizing the need to expand access to competition for young golfers, the Challenge Cup was founded thanks to the vision, passion, and dedication of Dave Adamonis, Senior, in 1980, and continues today under the strong leadership of his older son, Dave, Junior.

The Challenge Cup has enabled thousands of young men and women to grow through the game of golf, resulting in hundreds of alumni advancing to compete at the collegiate level, developing the careers of many golf professionals, and fostering the personal growth of all participants.

As the 2011 United States Open begins this week, multiple Challenge Cup alumni are part of the field, including one of the tour's first participants, Dave Adamonis, Senior's younger son, Brad.

I thank the Adamonis family for their immense contributions to Rhode Island and the national golf community, and I wish Brad Adamonis the best of luck as he battles Congressional Country Club this week in hopes of capturing our national golf title.

DERIVATIVES

(Mr. HIMES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to talk about something that most Americans don't know much about: derivatives.

Derivatives are basically big bets on the future of the housing market, the future of oil prices that, amongst other things, AIG used to destroy itself, requiring the Bush administration to put together a bailout package that was so controversial that we got to pay for.

Derivatives are also used by speculators to take position in energy markets. Don't take it from me. Goldman Sachs says that $20 to $30 of the price of a barrel of oil today is associated with speculation in the energy markets.

Now, you'd think given all this that we might regulate derivatives, which we haven't done before, and you'd be right, except for the fact that the bill that we're talking about today, the Agriculture bill, would gut money for the CFTC, which will be the regulator of the derivatives markets.

Now, the majority can't say we shouldn't regulate them. So, instead, in their zeal to deregulate everything, they're saying let's gut the regulators' ability to look after these contractors. Sounds crazy? It is.

WE NEED TO KEEP OUR PROMISES TO OUR SENIORS

(Ms. HANABUSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HANABUSA. Mr. Speaker, during these difficult times, we define ourselves as a society and a country by how we treat those who are less fortunate and those who are dependent. We also define ourselves by how we keep our promises, and this is why it is so important that we keep our promises to our seniors.

I'm speaking, Mr. Speaker, about Medicare and the Republican plan to do away with Medicare as we know of it today. You hear many things, but we owe it to our seniors to be honest and up front with them as to exactly what this plan is going to do.

You will hear that Medicare will not affect those seniors who are on Medicare now. That is not true. Seniors who are on Medicare now will see that doughnut hole reappear. In other words, they're going to pay for prescription drugs again. You will see figures like 3.9 million of them paying $2.2 billion next year, alone, for that doughnut hole.

We will also see that it will cost them a total of about $111 million next year because they will now have to copay for their wellness visit.

This is not the way we keep our promises to the elderly.

□ 1210

SAVE MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

(Mr. CLARKE of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, we must save Medicare and Medicaid. With more and more people growing older and the costs of medical technology skyrocketing, the proposal to end Medicare would result in many seniors on a fixed income going bankrupt. The proposal to gut Medicaid would end up throwing our loved ones out of nursing homes and into the streets. I will tell you how Congress can best balance the budget. Just do these three things: Help create more jobs, help stop foreclosures, and help keep people healthy by providing health care to everyone.

THE DEMOCRATS' JOBS AGENDA

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, the agenda of this House should be jobs, jobs, jobs. And yet here we are in June, and the Republican leadership has not put forth one single jobs bill, not one single jobs bill, and the American people want that. The Democrats have proposed the

Make It in America program, a Make It in America agenda that will close tax loopholes that encourage U.S. jobs to go overseas. It will provide hometown tax credits to small businesses to hire new employees and help sell their products and innovations overseas; to boost incentives to create clean energy jobs so we don't have to spend so much money with our military and lives protecting oil imports from the Middle East; set requirements for the government and its contractors to buy American products and services; and demand that China and other countries honor fair trade principles. Jobs is the agenda. The Democrats are offering a jobs agenda. I support it and ask the other side to come forth and try to help us create jobs.

FUND THE COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, if I mentioned the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, there would be a lot of glazed-over eyes. But if I mentioned high gasoline prices and food prices that are going through the roof, the American public would understand that. So let me tell you that our Republican friends, who want a sea of deregulation so that consumers won't be protected, are attacking the body that regulates speculation on gasoline prices and food. What does that mean? It means that every time you go to the grocery store as a working, middle class family, all you can see is the price of food going up, up, up. Yes, we have had storms, and we have had droughts. But the reason is, the speculators are gambling on food prices. They are gambling on gasoline prices. So the hardworking Americans that are working are getting the short end of the stick.

Can you imagine, here we go with Republicans again, defeating the consumer. Democrats are ready to fight for jobs. We're ready to get rid of those speculators and fund the Commodity Futures Trading Commission that deals with protecting consumers. Is there no shame? Is there no shame? Protect the consumers and fund the CFTC.

WHITE CASTLE'S 90TH BIRTHDAY

(Mrs. SCHMIDT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to the 90th birthday of a restaurant. While it was started in Wichita, Kansas, in 1921, this restaurant then came to Ohio, came to Cincinnati, and it's that little square hamburger, White Castle. And when you look at the Ingram family and what they've done across the Nation with their idea of an entrepreneurship of just a little square hamburger—they now have 400 stores in 11 States. This is a family company, and it employs thousands of people.

The craze that Mr. Ingram created in 1921 has grown in large part due to marketing, innovation, and adaptations of service. It has been reported that White Castle was the first fast-food restaurant to advertise in newspapers. It developed cardboard cartons for hamburgers, French fries, drinks, and even invented its own small type of semipermanent restaurant building. Mr. Speaker, ''White Castle'' was certainly a fitting name for this Ohio institution. Please join me not only in congratulating the Ingram family on the 90th birthday of White Castle but to remind ourselves of the importance of jobs and entrepreneurship in the United States.

THE REPUBLICAN MEDICARE-ENDING PLAN

(Ms. EDWARDS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the Republican ending-Medicare plan. Now some on the other side have complained about the unfairness of characterizing the Republican plan as an end to Medicare. But, Mr. Speaker, I just call it like it is. So here are the facts about the Republican Medicare-ending plan: Seniors will pay approximately $6,000 more in out-of-pocket expenses, double their expenses today. They'll lose benefits. They'll be forced to negotiate—our seniors will be forced to negotiate with the big insurance companies under the Republican Medicare-ending plan. Under the Republican plan, seniors will immediately reopen the prescription-drug doughnut hole that we close. And so, Mr. Speaker, this is not a mischaracterization. It's just speaking the truth to the power of the Republican Medicare-ending plan for our seniors and for those who are approaching the age of 65. So I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to say that the Democrats are going to stand on the side of jobs, of working people, and of those who want to protect Medicare for future generations.

RECOGNIZING KATHRYN TUCKER WINDHAM

(Ms. SEWELL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SEWELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the passing of a great American. Kathryn Tucker Windham was a steward of the community and one of Alabama's most beloved authors and storytellers. Mrs. Tucker was a master storyteller, author of 24 books, a playwright, an accomplished photographer, popular public television and radio personality, and a female reporter in a time when there were so few. Her spellbinding stories of life in Alabama and of the true Southern culture have captivated people all across this world.

On a personal note, growing up in Selma, Alabama, where she lived and did most of her writing, I heard Kathryn Tucker Windham tell her ghost stories, which captivated my imagination and encouraged me to read and write. Her stories were an integral part of my childhood, and for that I will be forever grateful. Over the years, Kathryn Tucker Windham built a well-deserved reputation as a respected writer and reporter. She was a true treasure, and her stories were a gift to all of the people of the Seventh Congressional District and the State of Alabama. Her writings will serve as an outstanding legacy for not only her incredible talent but also for her boundless passion for the life of Alabamians. Therefore, I, TERRI SEWELL, the Representative of the Seventh Congressional District, do hereby recognize Mrs. Tucker for her numerous contributions to the life of those in the Seventh Congressional District and the State of Alabama and our Nation. And I ask those present to join me in honoring her and commending her for her many achievements across this Nation.

REPUBLICAN PLAN TO END MEDICARE

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, first, again, I want to congratulate those Dallas Mavericks for winning the NBA championship, and also to rise in opposition to the Republican plan to end Medicare. The Republican budget replaces Medicare with an underfunded voucher system that eliminates the guaranteed Medicare benefit for everyone under the age of 55.

In the Dallas and north Texas region, the Republican plan would increase the out-of-pocket costs of health care coverage by over $6,000 per year for 630,000 individuals under 55. The Republican plan would immediately cut benefits and would require seniors in my congressional district to pay an extra $47 million for prescription drugs over the next decade. I urge my colleagues to protect our seniors and defend them against these reckless attacks on their health care and economic security, and also their peace of mind.

□ 1220

COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION FUNDING CUTS

(Mr. ELLISON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, the American middle class wants Washington to create jobs and put unemployed people out of work back to work.

But here we go again. The Republicans show that they aren't listening and that they don't really care about protecting the middle class. Today, Republicans are going to spend their time in Washington helping speculators, speculators inflate gas prices and food prices, making sure that oil companies keep getting unnecessary tax breaks.

The Agriculture appropriations bill to be considered today by the House is just another part of the Republican agenda to reward millionaires while leaving everybody else behind.

Tucked away in the end of the appropriations bill we'll consider today is a provision that would cut money for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. Now what is the Commodity Futures Trading Commission? It's a cop on the beat. It's a cop on the beat whose job it is to make sure that the speculators don't drive up the price of commodities like gasoline, like food, like wheat, things like that.

And at a time when the middle class is being squeezed by high gas prices, this is the wrong time to side with the millionaires and billionaires and against the American people.

TRICKLE-DOWN ECONOMICS DOES NOT WORK

(Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, the 90th anniversary of White Castle, the 25-cent hamburger I used to remember, it came in that little cardboard box. You could buy four of them for a dollar. The price has gone up now, but I've got a feeling if this Congress continues to do business like it has, we will be eating about two of those little, small hamburgers, for dinner every single day.

What they want to do, ladies and gentlemen, on the Republican side is to cut Medicare and gut Medicaid and do everything they can to take care of their wealthy patrons with another round of tax cuts. It's like a drunken binge that they have been on with these tax cuts.

Trickle-down economics, ladies and gentlemen, does not work. It has not trickled down. And, in fact, it has closed off to where all of the money stays up top. It never trickles down to the bottom. We have got to change that.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, June 14, 2011.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, U.S. Capitol, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on June 14, 2011 at 10:38 a.m.:

Appointments:

Mexico-United States Interparliamentary Group.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk.

CONTINUATION OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO BELARUS—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 112–35)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency and related measures blocking the property of certain persons undermining democratic processes or institutions in Belarus are to continue in effect beyond June 16, 2011.

The flawed December 2010 Presidential election in Belarus and its aftermath—the harsh violence against peaceful demonstrators; the continuing detention, prosecution, and imprisonment of opposition Presidential candidates and others; and the continuing repression of independent media and civil society activists—all show that the Government of Belarus has taken steps backward in the development of democratic governance and respect for human rights. The actions and policies of the Government of Belarus and other persons to undermine Belarus democratic processes or institutions, to commit human rights abuses related to political repression, and to engage in public corruption pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared to deal with this threat and the related measures blocking the property of certain persons.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, *June 14, 2011.*

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO MEXICO-UNITED STATES INTERPARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276h, and the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the Mexico-United States Interparliamentary Group:

Mr. MACK, Florida
Mr. NUNES, California
Mr. BILBRAY, California
Mr. CANSECO, Texas

AMENDMENT PROCESS FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2021, JOBS AND ENERGY PERMITTING ACT OF 2011

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Rules may meet the week of June 20 to grant a rule that could limit the amendment process for floor consideration of H.R. 2021, the Jobs and Energy Permitting Act of 2011.

Any Member wishing to offer an amendment must submit an electronic copy of the amendment and description via the committee's Web site. Members must also submit 30 hard copies of the amendment, one copy of a brief explanation of the amendment, and an amendment log-in form to the Rules Committee in room H–312 of the Capitol by 5 p.m. on Monday, June 20, 2011. Both electronic and hard copies must be received by the date and time specified.

Members should draft their amendments to the text of the bill as ordered reported by the Committee on Energy and Commerce which is available on the Rules Committee Web site.

Members should use the Office of Legislative Counsel to ensure that their amendments are drafted in the most appropriate format. Members should also check with the Office of the Parliamentarian, the Committee on the Budget, and the Congressional Budget Office to be certain their amendments comply with the rules of the House and the Congressional Budget Act. If anyone has questions, they are asked to please contact the Committee on Rules.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2112, AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 300 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 300

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2112) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and

Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. Points of order against provisions in the bill for failure to comply with clause 2 of rule XXI are waived except for sections 740, 741, 743, and 744. During consideration of the bill for amendment, the chair of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether the Member offering an amendment has caused it to be printed in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 8 of rule XVIII. Amendments so printed shall be considered as read. When the committee rises and reports the bill back to the House with a recommendation that the bill do pass, the previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from North Carolina is recognized for 1 hour.

□ 1230

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 300 provides for an open rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2112, a bill which makes appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans have offered yet another open rule on this legislation, something we did not see when Democrats were in the majority for 4 years. House Republicans are keeping their promise to the American people by submitting a bill that contains no earmarks. House Republicans are keeping their promise to reduce spending and rein in the Federal deficit which threatens our very existence as a free country. This bill addresses many of the glaring inefficiencies of Washington by reducing wasteful and redundant programs.

Mr. Speaker, this is a bill that, under the control of the liberal Democrats, kept growing and growing. In fiscal year 2008, this same bill had a price tag of $90.8 billion. One year later, fiscal year 2009, the liberal Democrats increased spending by 14 percent to $103.3 billion. And for fiscal year 2010, yet another liberal hike in the cost of appropriations to the taxpayer to the tune of $125 billion, representing a whopping 21 percent increase in spending.

The liberals claim that any cuts in spending for any program covered by this bill drives more people into hunger. Strange that they did not say that last year when these very same liberal Democrats cut $562 million from WIC so that they could spend it in unrelated matters. That is only one example of the lack of leadership, courtesy of our friends across the aisle.

Lest we forget, it was their failed policies that ruined the economy when they were in charge of the power of the purse. Their habitual and unending spending increases have not helped the economy as they had promised but, rather, have saddled our children and grandchildren with outrageous debt to pay off.

With better fiscal stewardship, our economy would be stronger and our country's job creators would be able to provide the jobs that our Nation's workforce is hungry for. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in January 2007—the month that the Democrats took over Congress—unemployment was at 4.6 percent. Mr. Speaker, let me repeat that. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in January 2007, the month the Democrats took over Congress, with a Republican President, unemployment was at 4.6 percent. That number has nearly doubled under the eyes of the liberal Democrats and the Obama administration. Last year, the Democrats failed to pass a budget or any appropriations bill. There has been a complete lack of leadership on their side of the aisle and at the White House.

While it got very little publicity from the lame stream media, the Senate this year overwhelmingly rejected President Obama's budget proposal on a unanimous vote of 97–0; unanimous opposition to the President's budget and nothing said about it in the press. The Republican House budget that we sent to the Senate faired much better than the President's budget. Again, Mr. Speaker, we've seen nothing but a lack of leadership from the administration and the liberal Democrats in Congress.

The bottom line is that if we do not make sound and responsible fiscal decisions that focus on reducing spending and making the government leaner and more efficient, we risk forfeiting control of our own purse to debtor nations. The simple truth is that we are currently borrowing 43 cents for every dollar spent at the Federal level. To have foreign nations provide funds for so much of what our country spends is simply negligent and irresponsible. Even the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen, has stated that the national debt is the single biggest threat to our national security.

Taxpayers will be paying around $600 billion in interest on the national debt by 2012. To put that figure in perspective, Mr. Speaker, the fiscal year 2011 defense budget is $685 billion. In order to grow the economy and provide an environment in which Americans can prosper, we need to end expensive and ineffective government programs and remove the barriers of uncertainty that prevent employers from hiring.

Many liberal elites are calling for higher taxes—higher taxes, Mr. Speaker—on hardworking Americans in order to pay for their irresponsible spending and fiscal decisions. The Democrat plan is to continue to borrow, spend, and tax, taking money out of the pockets of hardworking Americans.

A clear difference between liberal Democrats and Republicans is that Republicans do not claim ownership of the salaries of hardworking Americans and businesses that create jobs. Elite Democrats believe that they are entitled to take money from Americans and small businesses in order to carry out their liberal agenda, and job creators are left with whatever the liberal elites deem is necessary for them. You cannot help the job seeker by punishing the job creator with higher taxes and more government red tape.

Mr. Speaker, American businesses need a clear perspective of what the future holds in order to create American jobs and strengthen our economy. The uncertainty and mixed messages that the Obama administration provide are completely counterproductive to achieving any kind of economic prosperity.

President Obama's economic policies have consisted of bullying businesses to help union allies, such as the case in South Carolina where the NLRB is telling a private company where to do business for the benefit of Big Labor bosses at the expense of 1,000 jobs in South Carolina.

When Americans needed a jobs agenda, President Obama and the elite Democrat-controlled Congress gave them a spending agenda. From the President's first day in office in January 2009 through April 30, 2011, the economy has lost 2.5 million jobs, an average of 3,044 jobs lost every day. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 150,000 new jobs are needed to be created each month just to keep up with population growth. The economy is not growing fast enough or strong enough to employ the 13.7 million Americans looking for work.

But the liberal elites seem content on sitting back and watching agencies expand the bureaucracy by coming out with an unending stream of job-killing regulations. This in no way helps create confidence in American business, jobs, or economic prosperity. The Democrat elites, indeed, have made history. The result of their liberal agenda has been trillion-dollar deficits, historic debt, and historic unemployment.

Mr. Speaker, we must empower America's job creators, small businesses, families, and entrepreneurs to

lead us to real job growth. More wasteful Washington spending isn't the solution. That's why Republicans propose saving Americans over $800 billion worth of tax increases by repealing ObamaCare and by adopting the appropriations bills that we are proposing now.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McGOVERN. I thank the gentlewoman from North Carolina for yielding the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, before I get into my statement, I just, for the record, would like to point out to the gentlelady that, in response to her very political and partisan remarks, I want to remind her that George Bush came into office in 2000. Republicans were in charge of both the House and the Senate until 2006. And so if you want to point fingers at why this economy is in a ditch, I would suggest that my Republican friends look in the mirror.

Mr. Speaker, budgets are moral documents. Budgets lay out our priorities and document what we think is important for our country to succeed and our citizens to thrive. A few months ago, this Republican-controlled House made a statement by passing the Ryan budget. With that vote, most Republicans showed that they want to end Medicare as we know it. But their budget did more than just undermine Medicare; it set the stage for the appropriations process.

□ 1240

So here we are today to begin the consideration of the FY 2012 Agriculture appropriations bill. This bill, while not as high-profile as some others, is one, I believe, to be of critical importance to our Nation and to the world. It funds many of the programs that keep our Nation and many parts of the world from going hungry. It deals with the most helpless people, the most vulnerable people, in our country and in the world. It protects the food supply so that our children and families don't have to worry about contaminated food, and it provides important funds for rural America, including critical funds for broadband Internet access and other rural development programs.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is important in many, many ways; but like the Ryan budget, the FY 2012 Agriculture appropriations bill, as written by the Republicans, is just plain wrong. This allocation is unworkable. So, quite frankly, I don't care if you have an open rule or a super-duper open rule or a quadruple bypass rule. It doesn't make any difference because this bill, as written, is unfixable. The only way to help programs that they cut that feed hungry people is to cut from other programs that feed hungry people, so there is no way to make this bill better. The bill, as written, in my opinion, is morally indefensible. Instead of making investments in our Nation's agriculture and anti-hunger programs, this bill slashes funds for WIC, CSFP, TEFAP, P.L. 480, and the Food Safety Programs.

And those aren't just meaningless acronyms.

WIC is the Women, Infants and Children Program. Funds for WIC provide food and nutrition education to pregnant women, newborn children and kids up to 5 years of age. CSFP is the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, and it helps put food on the tables of America's senior citizens. TEFAP is The Emergency Food Assistance Program, and it provides assistance to food banks that are struggling with decreased donations and increased demand during these difficult times. P.L. 480 is a program that helps provide American-grown food to hungry and impoverished people in developing nations around the world. It's known as Food for Peace. The Food Safety Programs protect our citizens from foodborne bacteria like E.coli and salmonella.

Taken together, cuts in domestic anti-hunger programs total more than $500 million. Add in the cuts to P.L. 480 and the McGovern-Dole School Feeding Program, and the cuts add up to well over $1 billion to programs, again, that provide food to hungry people here at home and around the world.

As written, this is a pro-hunger bill. There is no other way to say it. No matter what anyone says, this bill will increase hunger here at home and around the world. A vote for this bill is a vote to willfully allow people in America and around the world to go without food. A vote for this bill is to take food from children and seniors, to allow food banks to open with half full and empty shelves. These aren't just freezes in current spending. A freeze in current spending would be bad enough with the continued rising demand and rising food prices that people are facing here at home and around the world. That would be bad enough. No. These are real cuts that do real damage to real people. The only thing crueler than ignoring a hungry person is giving a hungry person food and then taking it away.

No one would condone that, Mr. Speaker. Yet that's what this bill does. We're not just talking about that tired, old stereotype of the welfare queen gaming the system. No, Mr. Speaker.

The bill we're talking about are people who play by the rules but who are struggling to make ends meet because of the difficult economy. We are seeing middle-income families who are now turning to food banks and food pantries. In times of need, we are supposed to help our brothers and sisters in need. That's what a community is about. That's what our country is supposed to be about. Yet this bill does not do that. Instead, it cruelly targets those who are hurting at no fault of their own.

Yes, we are facing tough, difficult economic times. Yes, we need to address the budget deficit. But what kind of Nation are we if we choose to balance our deficit on the backs of the poor and the hungry? What kind of Congress are we if we choose to cut the programs that protect our seniors and our children in favor of protecting gas, oil and farm subsidies? I want my colleagues to understand that those subsidies, those examples of corporate welfare, are all protected and have been protected by this new majority since they took office. What kind of people are we if we stand idly by and allow our children to go hungry? Nations go to war over food riots. We all watched with great interest what unfolded in Egypt with the protests and the demand of democracy and freedom, but they were also demanding food. They were also rioting over the lack of food that people had in Egypt.

This is especially tragic because it kind of demonstrates where the new majority's priorities are. One of the first things they insisted on was that we protect the Bush tax cuts for the wealthiest people in this country. Donald Trump got his tax cut protected, and we didn't have to offset that even though it's costing a great deal to our deficit and our debt. They didn't offset it. They just wanted to protect it and have all the corporate welfare protected. So now they bring a bill to the floor, and they say, Well, we have to make tough choices. We have to make tough decisions.

The tough decisions and tough choices they make are to cut the WIC Program. 300,000 people will be thrown off of WIC. That's not tough on anybody here in the United States House of Representatives—we're all fine—but it's tough on a lot of low-income pregnant mothers and their children all around this country. We can do better than that. Congress needs to do better than that, and this Nation should do better than that.

This bill follows in the grand tradition of the Ryan budget. Like the Ryan budget, it does great damage to the American people. Like the Ryan budget, it breaks our Nation's great promise to protect our Nation's citizens. Like the Ryan budget, in my opinion, this is morally indefensible.

I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing this bill. I urge my Republican colleagues: Don't do this. Don't do this. Don't try to balance the budget on the backs of the most helpless people in our country and around the world.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. FOXX. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am always having to help balance out the comments that my good colleague from Massachusetts is making. He criticizes Republicans for keeping tax cuts. Well, I have to explain to him his President, a Democrat, supported that. Most Democrats here supported that last year. We didn't keep tax cuts. We stopped tax increases. Even the President and his

people have a little sense about economics in that, if you raise taxes in the middle of a terrible economic situation, you create problems.

I would also like to point out to my friend from Massachusetts that they were in charge for 4 years. It was during those 4 years that we got into the mess that we got into. They controlled both Houses of Congress, and they controlled the Presidency for 2 years of that. Yet they didn't stop any of these things that they had talked about.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Will the gentlelady yield?

Ms. FOXX. I will when I have completed my comments. I appreciate that.

He refers to this legislation as the ''pro-hunger bill.'' This tired claim by our liberal friends that Republicans are intent on starving children really goes beyond clichés now.

Putting that aside, my friend from Massachusetts needs to understand, if he really cares about the funding for Federal food programs, he should vote for the underlying bill. Why? Because it provides $6 billion for the WIC Program. Let me point out again that, last year, my colleague from across the aisle voted to cut the WIC Program, for a totally unrelated program, of over $500 million, $68.2 billion for food stamps, $180 million for the McGovern-Dole food program, and $18.8 billion for the Child Nutrition Program.

□ 1250

Perhaps these aren't the funding levels he would like to see, but I think my colleague knows that legislating is the art of compromise, and there are plenty of Members who would like to see deeper cuts to further enhance efficiencies in this program.

The bottom line is that by voting against this bill, using his logic, Mr. MCGOVERN is actually voting to starve the children and to create more hunger by denying over $93 billion in overall Federal food assistance to the hungry people that he claims to support. In contrast, by voting for the underlying bill, he is voting to provide the funding he argues these programs so desperately need.

Let me do a recap of what is in this bill, Mr. Speaker. Seventy-seven percent of the bill is SNAP, that is food stamps, child nutrition and WIC. Child nutrition programs will receive $18.8 billion in mandatory funding this year. That is funding that is on autopilot. This covers 68 percent of all school lunches and 85.5 percent of all school breakfasts, either free or at a reduced rate.

The SNAP, or food stamp program, $68.2 billion, provides support to 45 million people. Mr. Speaker, it is unconscionable that we have 45 million people in this country getting food stamps. That is a result of the policies of our Democratic friends across the aisle. Again, WIC, $6 billion; CAP, $136 million; the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education, Child Nutrition grants, $180 million. There is a lot that the liberals can be grateful for in this program.

I would yield to a question from Mr. MCGOVERN, if he has a question to ask me.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I would just simply say to the gentlelady that, again, I would reiterate my view that this bill is morally indefensible the way it is written.

The gentlelady talks about WIC. Under the cuts in this bill, and I say conservatively, between 200,000 and 350,000 low income women and children will be thrown off of WIC. You mention the McGovern-Dole school feeding program. The monies you cut in that program would mean that we would serve 5 million less children.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, the gentleman will have plenty of time under his time to make the comments that he wants to make. I was more than willing to answer a question, but he will have time to make those comments when it is his turn.

I would now like to yield 3 minutes to my colleague from Indiana (Mr. STUTZMAN).

Mr. STUTZMAN. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I find it very interesting in listening to the discussion here today about whose responsibility it is to feed those who are hungry. I don't think anybody on this floor would say that we don't want to help someone who is in need of food or basic essential services. I think what this is is a discussion about the difference in philosophy in Washington about the role of government in Washington.

There is plenty of blame to go around for all of the spending that has come out of Washington over the last decade—the last 30 years, actually. What we are doing is we are sinking our Nation and our children, the children that we are talking about and whom we want to help and feed. We are actually giving them over $40,000 of debt. Each child that is born in this country is saddled with $40,000 of debt because of government spending that continues to grow more and more every year.

I can tell you as an American farmer in Indiana that myself and many other American farmers and individuals are much better suited to help those who are in most need, in helping in the community, donating food, being a part of a food pantry. We are a generous Nation, and what has become of our ability to help is that we have a Federal Government that continues to saddle us with more and more debt, more and more taxes and regulation, making it much more difficult to make the profits with which we can then turn around and help our communities with food, with the basic services that our churches, our charities and many other organizations in our local communities provide.

Instead of us always looking to the government for that assistance, let's back off of the American people and let them help themselves, when they are capable and when they are willing to do it, rather than continuing to put them further and further into debt.

The Democrat Party talks about, Where are the jobs? Well, government doesn't provide jobs. Indeed, the private sector, people in our communities, entrepreneurs, people that want to expand their businesses to provide a job for that family that needs to provide for their children, they need the job, and there is not going to be enough government jobs to give them that opportunity. Instead, every time we take dollars away from the private sector, that individual who is out working hard, working 50 to 60 hours a week just trying to make ends meet, we are putting them in a very difficult position where they are not able to pay the bills because we continue to make it much more difficult for businesses to be successful here.

Small businesses are the backbone of this country, and until Washington, DC, backs off, the American economy is going to continue to struggle and families are going to continue to struggle.

I believe that this is a responsible bill that will instead help the American economy to grow and help Americans.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me assure the gentleman from Indiana that churches and faith-based organizations all across this country are doing their share. They are doing more than their share. Many of them, representing every faith denomination in this country, are up on the Hill today saying, We need you, those of you in Congress, to do your part, because this is not just a problem for charities to deal with. We all have to be involved in dealing with this issue of poverty and dealing with the issue of hunger in America and around the world.

Let me say to my colleague from North Carolina, I will match my antihunger credentials against hers 7 days a week. But in this bill that has been brought before us, the cuts in WIC would end food assistance for 200,000 to 350,000 low-income women and children. That is a conservative estimate.

She mentioned Food for Peace, how grateful we should be that they are throwing some scraps at the problem of international hunger. In this bill, there is a 39 percent decrease in Food for Peace title II funding, and it will put millions of lives at risk and undermine the ability of USAID to prevent famine. Food aid provided by USAID is a lifesaving measure for millions of vulnerable people overseas. According to USAID, these brutal cuts will mean up to 16 million people, mainly women and children, will not receive the lifesaving food aid.

The gentlelady mentions the McGovern-Dole program, which is near and dear to my heart. The McGovern-Dole program serves about 5 million people,

5 million children, children, in 28 countries. The $20 million cut to McGovern-Dole will end school meals for over 400,000 children in the world's poorest countries. We are literally, literally, taking food out of the mouths of these children. Imagine how that would make you feel if it were your child.

So I say to the gentlelady and to the gentleman who just spoke, this is not a jobs bill that we are bringing to the floor here today. Unfortunately, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle don't want to bring a jobs bill to the floor. They are too busy trying to undermine or underfund funding for National Public Radio instead of dealing with more important issues.

But this bill deals with the reality, and I don't care who you want to blame for it, that there are tens of millions of our own citizens who are hungry in the United States of America, the richest country on the face of this Earth, and we have a choice to either try to help them out during this difficult time or to turn our backs. And the way this bill is funded, we turn our backs on millions of our fellow citizens.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I am always very reluctant to talk about personal experiences on the floor, but I want to tell my colleague across the aisle that I grew up probably poorer than anybody in this body.

□ 1300

And I know something about what it means to struggle to get food. I know what that's all about. And let me tell you, there's nobody here who feels more strongly that more Federal Government involvement in this is not the right way to go. What we need is to be able to develop policies that allow people to get a job so they can provide for themselves instead of being dependent on the Federal Government to provide for them.

Let me talk about my colleague says budgets are moral documents. Again, my colleague and I don't agree on a lot of issues when it comes to policies, but we certainly agree on that: budgets are moral documents. And what the Republicans have done with the budget that we passed here in this body this year is to say to the American people, We understand that budgets are moral documents. We passed a budget. The Democrats didn't even pass a budget last year. So they didn't want to face up to it.

I don't know what that says about their morality, but I know what it says about Republicans' morality. We have a strong sense of morality. We passed a budget. We're being honest with the American people. We're telling them, You cannot continue to spend above your means. The average person understands that. And we are going to continue to be honest with the American people. We're going to cut inefficient government programs wherever we can.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, that right now, if you are a 3-year-old child in this country, there are 12 Federal feeding programs to serve you. If you're a 10-year-old, there are nine Federal feeding programs. If you're 65 years old, there are five Federal feeding programs. We do not lack for programs to help take care of the hungry people in this country, Mr. Speaker.

What we lack is efficiency in our programs. And Republicans are going to do all that we can to make sure that we bring efficiency and effectiveness to whatever programs are funded here.

I now yield 3 minutes to my colleague from Georgia (Mr. GRAVES).

Mr. GRAVES of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I just want to take the opportunity to address this because there is one issue facing this Nation right now that is far greater than what we're even discussing at this point and that is jobs and the lack of jobs in this Nation as a result of 2 failed years of an experiment that just didn't work.

Now, we can talk about spending all we want. We're going to talk about that, I know, for the next day or two and over the next couple of weeks. The American people just expect us to deal with cutting spending here in the Federal Government. They just sent us here and they said, Just take care of your job. Get it done. Spend within your means. Don't spend more than you get. And take care of your job. At the same time, understand what's happening back home on Main Street.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, as I go home each and every week and I see the devastation that's occurring all across all the communities in my district, it is amazing to see the ''For Sale'' signs and ''For Rent'' signs that just pop up each and every week that are anew because of a failed experiment that has occurred here.

So we heard the gentleman a minute ago say the Republicans have no plan. Let's talk about their plan and how effective it has been with, what, we've had 2 years now of at or above 9 percent unemployment, 15 million Americans looking for a job, deficit spending now going on $1 trillion for 3 consecutive years. And yet we are on the eve of the week here in which we're going to celebrate President Barack Obama's claim of the ''summer of recovery,'' the 1-year anniversary of that claim.

I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, there has been no recovery as a result of the policies passed by this administration. We must take a different direction. It starts here by cutting spending. It starts by reducing the size of government. And the reason is very simple. Because the less the government has in its pocket, the less it's spending, there is more left for the American people. And when the American people have more money in their pockets, they have the ability to expand their businesses, they have the ability to dream an idea, have a great idea, go out and invest in that idea. They have the ability to hire new employees. They have the ability to invest in new capital.

But, instead, this Congress over the last couple of years has hoarded that wealth, kept it here in Washington, divvied it out to the winners that they choose just through their own pickings here. Who's going to get the money of the American people? They dole it out left and right. Yet today, when we're looking at giving it back to the American people, the other side stands against it once again.

Mr. Speaker, it's time to get Americans back to work. We don't do that through the expansion of the public sector. We do it through the expansion of the private sector. Let's empower the American people and take some power away from the Federal Government.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 10 seconds.

I just want to correct the record. The gentlelady suggests that people should go get a job, and that's the answer to the hunger crisis. A lot of the people, by the way, who qualify for these programs are working families. They're the working poor. So we all need to get serious about the economy. I would encourage you to work with us on a jobs bill rather than on your right-wing radical social agenda that keeps on coming to the floor.

At this point I would like to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Thank you very much, Mr. MCGOVERN, for your leadership on this very important issue. To my colleague, the distinguished Congresswoman who is managing for my friends on the other side of the aisle, there are probably many of us who have lived the American story and began life on the rocky side of the mountain.

I rise because I happen to come from a district where my predecessor died on the side of an Ethiopian mountain. It's a far, far place away from Houston. My predecessor was Congressman Mickey Leland. He was so driven by the vastness of hunger, he was so much a soldier of Robert Kennedy's message that he didn't allow danger to thwart him from trying to help people who were literally dying. And so he was carrying grain. And he had colleagues who were not on that flight, Tony Hall and Congressman Emerson. And I would say to you that it really gets me in my heart, what we're doing today, because my predecessor, a Member of Congress, and we're described by many terms, but he felt that hunger was so severe that he helped found the Select Committee on Hunger. We have the Mickey Leland Hunger Center because hunger was prevailing in America and around the world.

So you can understand why I stand here today and tell you that it's not good enough to feed 85 percent of the hungry children so that 15 percent of them don't get breakfasts and don't get lunches. That's not something to give you a halo for or to give you an accolade. Because so many of us understand

how stretching that peanut butter or stretching that soup or stretching minimal food, so many of us have either heard those stories or experienced it.

And in this bill, $2 billion is cut from food stamps. Do you realize that our soldiers and their families, young recruits, are on food stamps? Does anyone know the population that is on food stamps? Now, we've tried to make it better for them, but many of them are on food stamps. To cut the WIC program, you're impacting children who are innocent. And then, of course, Food for Peace is not a throwaway. It is to simply stop the folks who are simply dying in deserts around the world.

And $35 million has been cut from trying to increase the number of grocery stores in urban centers and rural areas, to a certain extent, where there are no grocery stores where people can actually get fresh food. Try coming to my district and shopping for groceries in the local, down-the-street 2 by 4 store, where food dates, which I have actually seen for myself, are years old and sitting on the counter where people who only have foot transportation have to go and buy beans that are dated a year before or tuna that is dated a year before.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I tried to buy tuna as a test case, and I had to put it back on the shelf of a little 2 by 4 in neighborhoods where people walk.

Be reminded that Calvin Coolidge, a Republican President, followed in the 1920s the same pattern, which is: give to the rich and let the poor die on the vine. He didn't run again because he knew there was a collapse coming. His fellow Republican elected said, Give to the rich. And we had the 1928 collapse. We're talking about where consumers and businesses are not buying or having business, we the government must invest. And I believe, in the name of Mickey Leland, we've got to do a better job of feeding the hungry.

□ 1310

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague from Massachusetts talking about right-wing radicals because I associate myself with George Washington, James Madison, and Thomas Jefferson, who were right-wing radicals, along with the other Founders.

I would now like to yield 3 minutes to my distinguished colleague from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS).

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to focus on what this bill does and what it does not do.

First of all, it increases spending because mandatory programs are growing. The mandatory programs, like SNAP and Child Nutrition, are growing so rapidly that they exceed the cuts in the discretionary programs in this bill. So while my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are talking about the dreadful calamity associated with the cuts in this bill, the fact of the matter is food programs get more money under this bill, and that's because they are mandatory programs. The committee has no control over them. The only thing we have control over are the discretionary programs.

SNAP is projected to grow almost $6 billion, and Child Nutrition is projected to cost an additional $1.45 billion. Now, those and other mandatory spending add up to an additional $282 million over the costs of fiscal year 2012. So to call this a cut is not acknowledging the additional spending that is mandatory and that is in the SNAP program and the Child Nutrition Program.

Now, we, as Members of Congress, who are facing 1.2, 1.3 trillion more dollars in spending every year than we take in and are racking up 14, soon to be more, trillion dollars in debt, this year we have now exceeded, in our national debt, the entire GDP of this country for 1 year.

We cannot go on like this. We're destroying the country with spending. That's the moral imperative that we're discussing today.

Consequently, let's keep our eye on the ball. We're not destroying spending for people in need. We're actually increasing it, $6 billion for SNAP and almost $1.5 billion for Child Nutrition. We've saved it in other areas. The Agriculture Committee's budget includes a variety of priorities, including traditional agriculture spending like research, animal and plant health and conservation, nutrition, food aid and safety, rural development, the Food and Drug Administration, and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

Spreading funding across this spectrum is a balancing act, and I would like to thank Chairman KINGSTON for his leadership on this bill.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Listening to the gentlelady from Wyoming, one would get the impression that there are no other choices but to cut programs that help the poorest of the poor.

There are lots of places we could find savings. We could begin by paying for the Bush tax cuts for the Donald Trumps of the world. We could maybe pay for these wars, or, better yet, how about ending these wars? We borrow billions and billions of dollars every week for the wars, and no one around here seems to want to pay for it. We could maybe take back some of the taxpayer subsidies to the Big Oil companies. I don't know why we're subsidizing oil companies. Or, better yet, maybe some of the generous agricultural subsidies that go to a lot of places in Wyoming, I haven't heard the gentlelady suggest that maybe we cut those subsidies.

Instead, all the focus is on the most helpless people in our country. And it is just wrong. It is wrong. Don't do this. We can do this better.

At this point, Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), a great leader on this issue.

Ms. DELAURO. I rise in opposition to this misguided rule.

It unravels the bipartisan work of our Appropriations Committee. It calls for even more drastic cuts to the Women, Infants, and Children food program than has already been suggested by the majority. In so doing, the rule puts the interests of Brazilian cotton farmers above the very real needs of American women and children.

Everyone knows the WIC program provides nutrition assistance grants to States for low-income pregnant, breast-feeding, and postpartum women, infants, and children up to the age of 5. It serves 9 million mothers and young children nationwide, including 58,000 in my State of Connecticut. Nearly half of the babies born in the United States every year participate in the program. It is a short-term intervention that can help provide a lifetime of good nutrition and health behaviors.

Even notwithstanding this rule, this appropriation bill already threatens to slash WIC funding by $650 million. WIC is being slashed by $650 million. That means as many as up to 300,000 women and children will be turned away and forced to go hungry. In fact, Secretary Vilsack, the Secretary of the Agriculture Department, has warned our subcommittee that this number could be as high as 750,000 people, and I have his letter and his quote to confirm that.

Now, understand that during the committee consideration of this, I had an amendment to restore $147 million to the WIC program. I paid for it by taking $147 million which we currently provide to Brazilian cotton farmers. That amendment passed with a bipartisan vote.

This majority has no problem spending money for Brazilian cotton farmers, but they are loathe to do something for women and children in the United States. What this rule by this Republican majority has done is they took away this $147 million, they gave it back to the cotton farmers in Brazil, and then they have said find $147 million, cut it from the WIC program or cut it from somewhere else in this bill.

What are we doing here? Whom are they trying to fool? We're going to give the money back to Brazilian cotton farmers. The majority decided that that was more important. That's a fact.

There are many egregious cuts in this appropriation bill, not just to WIC, to the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, which goes to low-income seniors.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. DELAURO. Thank you.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program, which goes to food banks, food pantries.

One out of five people in the United States today is going hungry, and we can't find it within our purview here to provide the funding to do that.

Again, Democrats and Republicans on the committee voted to take $147 million, provide it to the WIC funding, take it away from the Brazilian farmers. This Rules Committee, Republican directed, took the money and gave it back to the Brazilian cotton farmers.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, take charge of what we did on our committee. Stand up for American women and children. Reject this rule. This is not what we voted for. This is not what the American people want.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished and eloquent chairman of the Rules Committee, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER).

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

□ 1320

Mr. DREIER. It's a tall order that my friend from Grandfather Community has just imposed on me, Mr. Speaker, but I will say it's great to be standing here as we proceed with consideration of the appropriations process. Last year, we for all intents and purposes had no appropriations process. When it was done, we all know it was shut down. We are here today considering the third appropriations bill under an open amendment process.

Now, my friend from Connecticut has just characterized this as a misguided rule. Since 1837, Mr. Speaker, 1837—it's been a few years—we have had within the rules of the House a structure whereby the authorizers have a responsibility and the appropriators have a responsibility. She said that we somehow are unraveling this very, very great and delicate compromise that was put together in the Appropriations Committee.

Ms. DELAURO. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DREIER. I'm happy to yield to my friend from Connecticut.

Ms. DELAURO. There was a vote in the Appropriations Committee. It was an amendment and the fact of the matter is it was unprotected.

Mr. DREIER. If I could reclaim my time, my next line, Mr. Speaker, was going to be to my friend from Connecticut, there happen to be 435 Members of the United States House of Representatives, and we have a process known as appropriations. We also have an authorization process as well.

Since 1837, the rule that my friends say is misguided, it has been the rule of the House. Mr. Speaker, to call it misguided to comply with the rules of the House, something that our friends in the last two Congresses chose to ignore repeatedly, is outrageous.

Now, as we listen to these reports of hunger that exist in the United States of America, I was just talking to the distinguished chairman of the subcommittee, Mr. KINGSTON, who made it very clear that there may be a stupidity factor, but the fact of the matter is there are so many programs that exist today, as Mr. KINGSTON reported up in the Rules Committee, that people do have an opportunity to benefit from those programs.

We also are dealing with tremendous constraints that have been imposed upon us because of the fact that we saw an 82 percent increase in nondiscretionary spending over the past 4 years, and what it means is, with a $14 trillion national debt, we have to make some tough choices. We want to make sure—Mr. KINGSTON is working on this, as are the authorizers—we want to make sure that those programs that exist actually do provide an opportunity for three, not four or five, but three meals a day for people who are truly in need.

And my friend from Grandfather Community, Mr. Speaker, pointed to the fact that we need to put into place a program that will encourage job creation and economic growth. For literally years, we've had languishing agreements that would open up new markets around the world in Colombia, Panama, and South Korea. We have not taken action on that. I hope very much that before August we do. That will help create jobs and get people who may have to look to government programs today in a position where they can, in fact, feed themselves.

That's our goal. We want to make sure that everyone has an opportunity, and we want to continue this process allowing Democrats and Republicans alike to be heard.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, a vote for this rule is a vote to cut WIC even further and give it to Brazilian cotton farmers.

At this point, I would like to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT).

Mr. DOGGETT. Our Republican colleagues have chattered endlessly about making hard choices, but most of the hard choices they make today are hard only on the hungry, hard on hungry children, hard on hungry seniors. They've got tremendous cuts to the Women, Infant, and Children nutritional assistance. It means as many as 350,000 women and infants will be denied assistance, including tens of thousands in my home State of Texas.

They made a hard choice. Instead of putting food on the table for those women and infants, they chose to send $147 million to Brazilian cotton farmers. I think that's not just a hard choice; it's a very bad choice. Those young children will never achieve their full God-given potential if they arrive at kindergarten malnourished.

Our food banks, are doing a tremendous job. In Texas, they get the support of grocers, of retailers, of private contributors, but they need this emergency food assistance. I've been to those food banks. I've seen some of those rural food banks in times of economic distress that are bare. The cupboard is bare, and the lines are long to get that assistance. Republicans made a hard choice, hard on the hungry.

The Republicans have finally found that the only bank they don't want to bail out is the food bank. And the food bank needs that assistance. I say that we should reject this bill that takes the most from those who have the least.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 8¾ minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from North Carolina has 3 minutes remaining.

Ms. FOXX. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON).

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentlewoman for the time.

I want to say to my friends from Texas and Connecticut that, number one, the DeLauro amendment which you alluded to that increases WIC $147 million is intact, and that increase has gone on. We do have to offset it from another portion of the bill, and the reason is because that Brazilian cotton agreement was a WTO agreement that President Obama agreed to. The money is restored. So if that helps clarify things, and if not, let me know.

I want to just remind everyone, if you want to help hungry people you've got to have the money to do it. Now, both parties have overspent. For every dollar we spend, 40 cents is borrowed. Both parties. Under President Bush, in an 8-year period of time, the debt went up $3.5 trillion. Now, under President Obama, in a 3-year period of time it's gone up $5 trillion, a 56 percent increase. And President Obama now owns the wars in Iraq and Libya and Afghanistan in terms of this is his watch. He has had opportunity to change the direction. He has not done so. So let's quit hiding behind, We're at war, and therefore, it's the Republicans' fault.

I also want to remind my friends that the only budget that has passed either House is the Ryan budget, which is what we're operating under. The President of the United States' budget failed on the Senate floor 97–0. He did not even get HARRY REID's vote. So we're operating under the budget constraints that we have.

Let me say this—very important about the WIC program. From February 2010 to February 2011, the number of participants has dropped 300,000. The level now is 8.7 million. We will make sure no one falls through the cracks. There are three contingency funds which can be drawn on if that happens. And I want to point out for all the screaming and hollering and the self-righteousness, last year the Democrats cut WIC by $562 million and put the money into an unrelated account that had nothing to do with hunger. It was a political settlement. Where was the screaming and hollering then?

And I want to say this in terms of the World Food Program, if we want to

help these countries—and I am committed to it—we have to have our own financial house in order. Otherwise, all we're doing, Mr. Speaker, is borrowing from our children to feed children overseas. That does not make sense.

I appreciate it, and I urge everyone to support the rule.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California, the ranking member on the Appropriations Committee on this subcommittee, Mr. FARR.

Mr. FARR. Thank you, Mr. MCGOVERN, for yielding and I rise with concerns with this rule.

The rule in one part is good because it's an open rule, allows unlimited amendments, but the rule on the second part, which protects the work of the committee, fails to do so. This committee is about food. It's about food production, about food packaging, about food delivery, and about feeding people. It is the largest poverty program in the United States. We have a lot of poor people in this country of all ages, and instead of taking care of those people, this rule eliminates that protection. It protects those that have but not those that have not.

I stand in opposition to the rule.

□ 1330

Ms. FOXX. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, at this point, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS), a leader on these issues.

Mrs. CAPPS. I thank my colleague for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the rule and the Agriculture appropriations bill. Instead of helping Americans hit hardest by the recent recession today, we are debating a Republican spending bill that guts critical nutrition programs which literally put food on the table so that millions of low-income women, children, and seniors don't go hungry. This bill hurts low-income seniors through cuts to the Commodity Supplemental Food Program. It cuts The Emergency Food Assistance Program, which could cause our local food banks to close their doors. And it slashes the budget of the Women, Infants, and Children, WIC, program, the effects of which will leave hundreds of thousands of women and children without adequate nutrition.

WIC not only keeps our low-income families from hunger, but by emphasizing adequate nutrition, the program reduces the incidence of low birthweight babies, combats the childhood obesity epidemic, and promotes school readiness by giving children the nutritional building blocks their brains need to develop at a critical stage. Moreover, as it links these families to the local health infrastructure, it also increases child immunization rates. These benefits are not just to the child and the family. In fact, the program reduces overall health care costs. For every $1 invested in WIC, we save about $2 to $3 in health care costs just in the first 2 months of life. This is an incredible feat. It's one that should be expanded. Instead, the bill before us slashes these programs, plain and simple, with only one result: more Americans going hungry.

When I asked my local food safety net providers what the Republican cuts would do to our community, the answer was clear: Without this assistance, which choice will it be: rent or food? My constituents have been loud and clear on this issue, Stop trying to cut the budget on the backs of the poor, the elderly, and our children.

I urge my colleagues to start listening to their communities. Vote ''no'' on the rule, and vote ''no'' on this devastating bill.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN).

Mr. Speaker, I have some sympathy for my good friend from Georgia, Congressman KINGSTON. He got dealt a tough hand by a really unpleasant, mean-spirited, unnecessary Republican Budget bill. There are real consequences for moving forward with the Ryan budget. But in a sense, this is the first debate of the 2012 farm bill.

We have a farm policy that spends too much on the wrong people to do the wrong things. There are opportunities for us to rebalance the equities. Now you are hearing some debate about whether or not we should honor a WTO commitment to Brazilian farmers for $147 million a year. The only reason we're doing this is because Congress, in its wisdom, would not cut back on the cotton subsidies that go to American farmers, that are inappropriate and unnecessary. But instead of changing the system, we're paying Brazilian farmers for our cheating. That's goofy. And I think, at a minimum, we ought to remedy that. Put it into nutrition for poor women and children.

Now I will tell you that all you have to do is ask the hunger advocates in your community. Every Member of Congress has people who are dealing with the problem of hunger and food insecurity in their districts. I commend my friend Mr. MCGOVERN for his leadership in dealing with the issue of hunger at home and abroad. We ought to be dealing with it here and now. This bill that's coming forward ought to rebalance the equities with the cotton subsidies for Brazilian farmers. There are other remedies. But we ought to look at every single amendment that comes to the floor to change the farm bill allocation under appropriations as a first important step towards rebalancing and having a healthy agricultural policy——

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. To having an agricultural policy that serves our interests, those of our children, our families; that gives more to farmers and ranchers and less to international farmers and huge agribusiness interests; that doesn't slash environmental support for American farmers but helps us here at home.

There is a better way. There is actually bipartisan support, if we can ever see our way clear to getting it to the floor. This debate this week is an important first step, and I urge my colleagues to vote accordingly. This is a battle we can win on a bipartisan basis.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I would inform my colleague from North Carolina that I have no further requests for time, and I am ready to close.

Ms. FOXX. Then I will continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote ''no'' on this rule, first and foremost. And there are two reasons to vote ''no'' on this rule. One is, the allocation that has been given to the Agriculture appropriations bill is so low that it's not fixable. I mean, the concerns that you have heard raised on the floor today about underfunding WIC and underfunding these other programs that feed the hungry and provide nutrition to feed our people, the only way to kind of restore those cuts is by cutting another program that does good things. So this is not even fixable.

The second reason to vote against this rule—and I say this to my Republican colleagues in particular—is because if you vote for this rule, you will allow the Republicans to eliminate an additional $147 million from the WIC program because they have not protected the provision that was passed in the Appropriations Committee that took the money from Brazilian cotton farmers and gave it to WIC. Because it will not be protected, they will insist on a point of order, which means that that money will go from WIC back to the Brazilian cotton farmers at a time when Brazil's economy is booming. That does not make any sense. As it stands right now, the WIC cuts alone would force 200,000 to 350,000 low-income women and children off their rolls. If you vote for this rule, an additional 200,000 will be thrown off on top of the 200,000 to 350,000. That is just not right.

As I mentioned at the outset, Mr. Speaker, this bill cuts not only WIC but it cuts CSFP, TEFAP moneys, PL–480, and the food safety programs that are so important to the well-being of all of our citizens. Food safety is not just an issue with regard to low-income people. Those people who are earning lots of money are concerned about the safety of their food, and this bill cuts that program quite substantially.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is about helping the most vulnerable in our country and around the world. It doesn't usually receive a lot of attention. There are not a lot of lobbyists down here for

poor people. There are not a lot of PACs out there that support issues that benefit poor people. But in many respects, this is one of the most important appropriations bills that we consider. And I do think it reflects on our values and what kind of country that we want to be. I believe that, given the fact that we're the richest country on this planet, we ought to make sure that nobody in the United States of America goes hungry. I don't know why that's such a radical idea.

And yes, we need to rely, in large part, on the faith-based communities out there that are doing incredible work. They're working overtime, trying to deal with the people who have fallen into poverty as a result of this economic crisis that we're in. They're doing all that they can, so to brush it off onto their backs more is just wrong, and it doesn't represent the reality out there. We need to step up to the plate during these difficult times and help people get through this economic crisis. And if you don't respond, and if you want to ignore those who are struggling, they just don't go away. It results in other problems and other costs to our government and to our people. Hunger is not cheap. There is a price to pay for hunger.

Globally, Mr. Speaker, let me just say that no war in history has killed so many humans and spread so much disease and suffering in any year as world hunger does annually. We have an opportunity to do something about it. We ought to do it. Vote ''no'' on this rule. Please, I say to my Republican colleagues, don't do this. Don't go down this road. We could do so much better.

BASIC FACTS ON CUTS TO INTERNATIONAL FOOD AID PROGRAMS IN THE FY 2012 AGRICULTURE APPROPRIATIONS ACT

Emergency food aid, programs to address chronic hunger, and school feeding programs all receive their funding in this bill—not the foreign aid bill. They are central pillars of U.S. strategy to address global hunger and food security—and making sure they are fully funded is in our national security interest. As Defense Secretary Robert Gates said last year, ''Development is a lot cheaper than sending soldiers.''

Food for Peace Title II Funding Cut

A 39 percent decrease in Food for Peace Title II funding—and will put millions of lives at risk and undermine the ability of USAID to prevent famine.

Food aid provided by USAID is a life-saving measure for millions of vulnerable people overseas. According to USAID, these brutal cuts will mean up to 16 million people, mainly women and children, will not receive life-saving food aid.

The cuts to Food for Peace will mean drastic cuts to our largest emergency food aid programs, including Darfur and southern Sudan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Haiti and Ethiopia.

U.S. food aid not only helps people survive, it supports U.S. national security interests. It promotes stability and goodwill, especially in Libya, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Our emergency and humanitarian food aid sends the clear message to desperate people in need: The American people care. This bill sends the opposite message—the American people don't care at all. Go ahead and starve.

U.S. food aid also supports domestic priorities, helping American farmers and the jobs of American millers, truck and rail transportation freight systems, and shipping the commodities abroad on U.S.-flagged ships.

My friends on the other side of the aisle might not have noticed, but the costs of commodities—the cost of purchasing food—have sharply escalated over the past year. This has already reduced USAID's purchasing power and the amount of food aid USAID can ship overseas. And now you're adding draconian cuts on top of the global food crisis.

McGovern-Dole Funding Cut

McGovern-Dole was funded at $200 million in FY 2010, serving about 5 million children in 28 countries.

The $20 million cut to McGovern-Dole will end school meals for over 400,000 children in the world's poorest countries. We are literally taking food out of the mouths of these children. Imagine how that would make you feel if it were your child?

□ 1340

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I want to point out again what my colleague from Georgia said. It was President Obama's agreement with the WTO that is forcing the funding for the Brazilian farmers. This is not something that Republicans did.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot continue to ignore the facts. With skyrocketing debt and unacceptable unemployment rates, the Federal Government must learn to live within its means and be accountable for how it spends taxpayer money.

House Republicans are continuing to fulfill our pledge to America and keep the promises we made to the American people before the election last November. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this rule.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 301 of H. Con. Res. 34, the House-passed budget resolution for fiscal year 2012, I hereby submit revisions to the budget allocations set forth pursuant to the budget for fiscal year 2012. The revision is for new budget authority and outlays reported by the Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Defense, which are designated for the Global War on Terrorism. A corresponding table is attached.

This revision represents an adjustment pursuant to sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, as amended (Budget Act). For the purposes of the Budget Act, these revised allocations are to be considered as allocations included in the budget resolution, pursuant to section 301 of H. Con. Res. 34.

ALLOCATION OF SPENDING AUTHORITY TO HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

[In millions of dollars]

		2012
Discretionary Action	BA	1,019,660
	OT	1,224,325
Adjustment for Global War on Terrorism Reported by Subcommittee on Defense	BA	118,684
	OT	59,733
Total Discretionary Action	BA	1,138,344
	OT	1,284,058
Current Law Mandatory	BA	745,700
	OT	734,871

Ms. FOXX. I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, consideration of the bill (H.R. 2055) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes, will now resume.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. OWENS. I am opposed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Owens moves to recommit the bill H.R. 2055 to the Committee on Appropriations with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Page 30, line 17, insert before the period at the end the following: ''*Provided further*, That, in addition to the funds made available by Public Law 112–10 for 'Department of Veterans Affairs, Medical Services' for fiscal year 2012, an additional $20,000,000 is appropriated for such account for advertising of assistance and services for the prevention of suicide among veterans (as authorized by section 532 of title 38, United States Code) for such fiscal year''.

Page 35, line 4, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $25,000,000)''.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Speaker, I reserve a point of order against the gentleman's motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. A point of order is reserved.

The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer this final amendment for the benefit of those men and women returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as for veterans of all wars in need of care.

There's been much debate in the House today about hard choices. Our veterans made hard choices, made difficult decisions, and many of them suffer because of that.

This amendment is fiscally responsible as it is fully paid for and, most importantly, it takes care of veterans. We are asking that approximately $20 million be appropriated for such account to assist in the prevention of suicide among veterans.

I know as a young man—actually, as a young boy—I had uncles from World War I, friends of my father's from World War II who suffered from PTSD. It wasn't known by that term then, but clearly they did.

When you go to Walter Reed, when you go to Fort Drum and you look into the eyes of the young men and women returning from Afghanistan and Iraq, you can see the pain. This is what we are called to deal with today.

America's troops have served with honor and distinction, accomplishing tremendous progress in Iraq and Afghanistan. While we have gone to great lengths ensuring that they have what they need to accomplish the mission, it is the will and determination of the average servicemember that is winning the fight for our country.

The current wars have demanded much of soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines overseas who carry out their mission under constant threat from enemy fire, IEDs, and other dangers, all the while away from their family and friends back home. In short, the men and women of the Armed Forces are winning this fight through their incredible personal sacrifice.

As we all know, this sacrifice often includes great cost to the physical well-being of returning veterans, as well as mental health concerns from PTSD and traumatic brain injury. It is our duty, out of respect for their sacrifice, to ensure that every benefit they have earned is available to all returning servicemembers. We can and must do more to care for them. This includes increased services to address PTSD and TBI, as well as adequate mental health services to prevent the tragedy of suicide among returning combat veterans.

As the Representative for Fort Drum, the most deployed unit in the United States Army, I am especially committed to seeing that members of the Armed Forces are afforded everything they need when they return home to their families and our communities. This amendment provides an additional $20 million for veteran medical services to give the Veterans Administration the resources it needs to provide these essential services.

My amendment is fully offset and fulfills America's commitment to the heroes that have sacrificed so much to defend America. I urge a ''yes'' vote on this final amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CULBERSON. I rise in opposition to the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does the gentleman from Texas continue to reserve his point of order?

Mr. CULBERSON. Yes, I do.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes in opposition to the motion.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Speaker, I would point out that the Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs has worked in an arm-in-arm, bipartisan way in support of our troops, in support of our veterans. And we have provided funding for every need that was presented to the committee to help our men and women in uniform do the job that they do every day defending this Nation, to help our veterans as they move out of active duty into retired status, to help the Veterans Administration treat not only the veterans who have suffered or been injured in combat in defense of this Nation, but also those veterans who have suffered in some way psychological trauma that would put them at risk of suicide, a growing problem, and one that the committee is deeply concerned about, and, in fact, the committee has fully funded at the President's request of $69.9 million. The committee has provided essentially $70 million at the President's request, at the request of the Veterans Administration. We have fully funded in every way the request of the professionals in this area, what they believe is necessary to meet the need that they have determined is out there among the veterans of this Nation.

One of the great joys I know that all of us have as Members of Congress is to provide the support that is necessary for our men and women in uniform to do the extraordinarily difficult job that they confront every day and to ensure that their families have the peace of mind that their son, their daughter, their father, their husband, their loved one has been given every piece of equipment, every possible support logistically with the love and comfort and prayers that we all send them with their families.

□ 1350

We as Members of Congress also have a sacred obligation to ensure that those men and women who are out there defending us don't ever need to look over their shoulder, that they don't ever need to worry that they are lacking in any way the equipment, the support. Everything that they might possibly need in the course of their day defending this Nation we have made sure, on the Appropriations Committee, that the men and women in uniform have. We've made sure that the Veterans Administration hospitals across the Nation have everything they need to take care of our men and women in uniform who have retired and gone on to the private sector to work in some other capacity.

As a general rule, I've heard the number, the average time, that a man or woman serving the Nation may serve in uniform is—I think the numbers I've heard are about 36 months, but they will spend the rest of their life in the care of the Veterans Administration. And it's an extraordinarily important trust that our subcommittee takes very personally, as a truly sacred obligation on our part to make sure that these wonderful men and women, these extraordinarily courageous men and women who have sacrificed so much have everything they need when they move into the VA system, that the VA Hospital is providing them with the very best possible medical care, physically, mentally—and suicide prevention, in fact, is one of those areas that we on the subcommittee have fully funded and worked again in a bipartisan way.

In fact, our committee as a whole has always worked together in a very bipartisan way, and particularly the subcommittees that deal with the men and women in uniform. Whether it be the Military Construction, the Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee, or the Defense Subcommittee, the members of the Appropriations Committee don't pay attention to party labels. We're focused on what's best for the men and women of the United States military. We're focused on what's best for their families and for the Veterans Administration, the health care that our men and women in uniform are given physically—again, mentally. And without regard to party, without regard to any other distinction other than what's good for these men and women who serve our Nation, we have worked together without really any real serious disagreements.

We, of course, have a problem today in the Nation of unprecedented debt, unprecedented deficits, record unfunded liabilities. And the new conservative majority that controls the House today is determined to do everything we can to reduce the unconscionable burden that's being passed on to our children and grandchildren. So we have found savings in this bill in money that was unspent, in accounts where money has been set aside for years and unspent, where savings have been produced from reduced cost of concrete and steel, reduced bid savings, for example, that we then returned that money to the taxpayers. We found areas that we could save money, but not at the expense of our men and women in uniform.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman from Texas has expired.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Speaker, I wish to withdraw my reservation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The reservation of the point of order is withdrawn.

Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX,

this 15-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on the passage of H.R. 2055 and adoption of House Resolution 300.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 184, nays 234, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 417]

YEAS—184

Ackerman
Altmire
Baca
Baldwin
Barrow
Bass (CA)
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Castor (FL)
Chandler
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke (MI)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Critz
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Deutch
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Fudge
Garamendi
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heinrich
Higgins
Himes
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hochul
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson Lee (TX)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kildee
Kind
Kissell
Kucinich
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Luján
Lynch
Maloney
Markey
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (CT)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Olver
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree (ME)
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Reyes
Richardson
Richmond
Ross (AR)
Rothman (NJ)
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Smith (WA)
Stark
Sutton
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watt
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth

NAYS—234

Adams
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Amash
Austria
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bass (NH)
Benishek
Berg
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brooks
Buchanan
Bucshon
Buerkle
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canseco
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cole
Conaway
Cravaack
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Denham
Dent
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Dreier
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Emerson
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Flake
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guinta
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Heck
Hensarling
Herger
Herrera Beutler
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (IL)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Kelly
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
Lamborn
Lance
Landry
Lankford
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lewis (CA)
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
Marino
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McCotter
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meehan
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Myrick
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paul
Paulsen
Pearce
Pence
Petri
Pitts
Platts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Quayle
Reed
Rehberg
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rigell
Rivera
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross (FL)
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Scalise
Schilling
Schmidt
Schock
Schweikert
Scott (SC)
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stearns
Stutzman
Sullivan
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden
Walsh (IL)
Webster
West
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—14

Andrews
Broun (GA)
Eshoo
Giffords
Jackson (IL)
Lee (CA)
Rangel
Rokita
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Slaughter
Speier
Stivers
Weiner

□ 1419

Messrs. CASSIDY and SCOTT of South Carolina and Mrs. MYRICK changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Messrs. CARSON of Indiana, BUTTERFIELD, OLVER and ELLISON changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan). The question is on the passage of the bill.

Under clause 10 of rule XX, the yeas and nays are ordered.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 411, nays 5, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 418]

YEAS—411

Ackerman
Adams
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Altmire
Austria
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baldwin
Barletta
Barrow
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bass (CA)
Bass (NH)
Becerra
Benishek
Berg
Berkley
Berman
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boren
Boswell
Boustany
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brooks
Brown (FL)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Buerkle
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Calvert
Camp
Canseco
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cassidy
Castor (FL)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chandler
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke (MI)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cohen
Conaway
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cravaack
Crawford
Crenshaw
Critz
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis (KY)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Denham
Dent
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Dreier
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers
Emerson
Engel
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gallegly
Garamendi
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grijalva
Grimm
Guinta
Guthrie
Gutierrez
Hall
Hanabusa
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Heck
Heinrich
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Himes
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hochul
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee (TX)
Jenkins
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly
Kildee
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kissell
Kline
Kucinich
Labrador
Lamborn
Lance
Landry
Langevin
Lankford
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Long
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luján
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Maloney
Manzullo
Marchant
Marino
Markey
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McCotter
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
Meehan
Meeks
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Mulvaney
Murphy (CT)
Murphy (PA)
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Olver
Owens
Palazzo
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Pence
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Petri
Pingree (ME)
Pitts
Platts
Poe (TX)
Polis
Pompeo
Posey

Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Quayle
Quigley
Rahall
Reed
Rehberg
Reichert
Renacci
Reyes
Ribble
Richardson
Richmond
Rigell
Rivera
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross (AR)
Ross (FL)
Rothman (NJ)
Royce
Runyan
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schilling
Schmidt
Schock
Schrader
Schwartz
Schweikert
Scott (SC)
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Southerland
Stark
Stearns
Stutzman
Sullivan
Sutton
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tierney
Tipton
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden
Walsh (IL)
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watt
Waxman
Webster
Welch
West
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NAYS—5

Amash
Campbell
Duncan (TN)
Flake
Paul

NOT VOTING—16

Andrews
Broun (GA)
Cole
Davis (IL)
Eshoo
Giffords
Herger
Jackson (IL)
Lee (CA)
Rangel
Rokita
Roybal-Allard
Slaughter
Speier
Stivers
Weiner

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1426

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2112, AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on adoption of the resolution (H. Res. 300) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2112) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 235, nays 180, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 419]

YEAS—235

Adams
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Amash
Austria
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bass (NH)
Benishek
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brooks
Buchanan
Bucshon
Buerkle
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canseco
Capito
Carney
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cole
Conaway
Cravaack
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Denham
Dent
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Dreier
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Emerson
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Flake
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guinta
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Heck
Hensarling
Herger
Herrera Beutler
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Jenkins
Johnson (IL)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Kelly
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
Lamborn
Lance
Landry
Lankford
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lewis (CA)
LoBiondo
Long
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
Marino
Matheson
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McCotter
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meehan
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Myrick
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paul
Paulsen
Pearce
Pence
Petri
Pitts
Platts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Quayle
Reed
Rehberg
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rigell
Rivera
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross (FL)
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Scalise
Schilling
Schmidt
Schock
Scott (SC)
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stearns
Stutzman
Sullivan
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden
Walsh (IL)
Webster
West
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (FL)
Young (IN)

NAYS—180

Ackerman
Altmire
Baca
Baldwin
Barrow
Bass (CA)
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carson (IN)
Castor (FL)
Chandler
Chu
Cicilline
Clarke (MI)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Critz
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Deutch
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Fudge
Garamendi
Gonzalez
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heinrich
Higgins
Himes
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hochul
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson Lee (TX)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kildee
Kissell
Kucinich
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Luján
Lynch
Maloney
Markey
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (CT)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Olver
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree (ME)
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Reyes
Richardson
Richmond
Ross (AR)
Rothman (NJ)
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell
Sherman
Sires
Smith (WA)
Stark
Sutton
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watt
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—17

Andrews
Berg
Broun (GA)
Cantor
Eshoo
Giffords
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Lee (CA)
Lucas
Rangel
Rokita
Schweikert
Slaughter
Speier
Stivers
Weiner

□ 1433

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably detained on official business and missed rollcall vote Nos. 417, 418 and 419. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall vote No. 417, "aye" on rollcall vote No. 418 and "nay" on rollcall vote No. 419.

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I was unable to cast my votes earlier today. Had I been present to cast my votes, I would have voted "yes" on the Motion to Recommit with Instructions on H.R. 2055, I would have voted "yes" on final passage of H.R. 2055, and I would have voted "no" on House Resolution 300.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably detained for personal reasons, resulting in my absence from recorded votes for H.R. 2055, the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2012, and H. Res. 300.

If present, I would have recorded my votes as the following: on rollcall vote 417 "aye," on rollcall vote 418 "aye," and on rollcall vote 419 "nay."

ELECTING MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. WALDEN. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Republican Conference, I send to the desk a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 303

Resolved, That the following named Members be, and are hereby, elected to the following standing committees:

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE—Mrs. Noem.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE—Mr. Fleischmann.

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS—Mr. Reed.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1380

Mr. KLINE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1380.

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

There was no objection.

RESIGNATION AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON RULES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignation as a member of the Committee on Rules:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, June 14, 2011.

Speaker JOHN BOEHNER,
U.S. Capitol,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER: I write to inform you that effective immediately I am resigning from the House Rules Committee to join the House Ways and Means Committee. If you have any questions please contact me directly or your staff can contact Steve Pfrang, my Legislative Director, at 202–226–1919.

Sincerely,

TOM REED,
Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignation is accepted.

There was no objection.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1380

Mr. KELLY. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1380.

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

There was no objection.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2112 and that I may include tabular material on the same.

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

There was no objection.

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CHAFFETZ). Pursuant to House Resolution 300 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2112.

□ 1435

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 2112) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes, with Mrs. MILLER of Michigan in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I yield myself 5 minutes.

I recommend to the Committee H.R. 2112, the House Agriculture, FDA, and CFTC funding bill for fiscal year 2012, and I want to make a few remarks about it.

Number one and foremost, because a lot of people are very concerned about the allocation for this bill and the funding level, I want to remind everybody of a couple of things: Number one, our national debt is now 95 percent of the GDP. It's $14 trillion. For every dollar we spend, 40 cents is borrowed.

Now, both parties have fingerprints all over this. We have all overspent. For example, for 8 years under President Bush the national debt increased $3½ trillion. Way too much. And yet, in contrast, in just 3 years President Obama has added to the national debt $5 trillion, an increase of 56 percent. And so much of this is due and owed to foreign countries, and much of it to China. Can you imagine what kind of deal Communist China, a major competitor of ours, would impose upon us if they forced us to restructure our debt? We have to do it ourselves.

Now, the House has passed the Ryan budget, which many people oppose, and I understand that. But I want to point out the President of the United States' budget failed in the Senate 97–0. HARRY REID voted against the President's budget. And in the House, the Congressional Black Caucus offered a budget that failed. The Congressional Progressive Caucus offered a budget and it failed. The Republican Study Committee offered a budget and it failed. The Democrat Caucus offered a budget and it failed. In the Senate, budget plans were offered by Mr. TOOMEY of Pennsylvania and Mr. PAUL of Kentucky; both failed. The only budget that has passed either body is the Ryan budget, and that's what we are looking at today, those numbers.

Now, I understand there's a lot of reluctance to make some of these tough decisions. Today in America 61 million people receive monthly government checks. That's anything from welfare to Medicare to farm payments to veteran retirement to Social Security—lots of people receiving lots of money. These programs are enormously popular, and they're deeply integrated into our economic system and culture. Therefore, reforming these programs is very, very difficult. And to further complicate things, 47 percent of American households do not pay income taxes. For them the status quo is working just fine.

So addressing these things is very difficult. And if you look at the spending pattern in the last several years, it's frightening: March, 2008, $29 billion to bail out Bear Stearns; May of 2008, a $168 billion stimulus package from the Bush administration; in July of 2008, $200 billion to bail out Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac; then in November of 2008, $700 billion for TARP, or the Wall Street bailout; and then in January of 2009, $878 billion for the Obama stimulus program, which, by the way, Madam Chair, was to keep us from getting to 8 percent unemployment.

□ 1440

Now, we're hovering between 9 and 10 percent, and I don't need to remind you but this is the 1-year anniversary of the ''summer of recovery.'' There has not been any recovery. We're still looking for those jobs. Spending our way into prosperity does not work. If it did work, we would be having prosperous times right now.

So the Ryan budget for this bill is $17.25 billion, our reduction of $2.7 billion, approximately a 13½ percent decrease in spending, and yet, despite this, because of the mandatory spending portion of this bill, the bill actually has a net increase, mostly driven by food stamps and the school lunch program, which have gone up about $7 billion between the two of them. We still have a net increase in this bill.

Now, there's going to be a lot of discussion on lots of different accounts, and one of them is the WIC account, the Women, Infants, and Children account, something that I'm very concerned about, something that all of our committee has always supported on a bipartisan basis. But last year, there was some money taken out of it, $562

million, to settle a lawsuit which had nothing to do with school nutrition. A lot of the critics are going to be saying WIC has never been cut. Last year, the Obama administration cut WIC $562 million.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I yield myself 2 additional minutes.

USDA numbers show that WIC participation has dropped 300,000 from February 2010 to February 2011, yet we are still funding it at 8.7 million people. We do not intend for anybody to fall through the cracks. If there is a shortage, there are three discretionary accounts that we can draw upon: a contingency fund of $125 million; a carryover fund, which is in excess of $350 million; and the Secretary's interchange authority, which is $210 million.

There are a lot of things in WIC we can do to improve to make sure that children don't fall through the cracks. Right now, for example, 49 percent of the kids in America participate in WIC. Do we really believe 49 percent are impoverished? Perhaps it's oversubscribed. Maybe we can work with the WIC folks on that.

We had a very healthy debate about WIC overhead, and the USDA has given us conflicting numbers on that. We're planning to meet with the USDA and find out what the real story is. I understand there may be amendments to say let's all agree what an overhead limit should be for WIC and then not spend money on overhead for that.

We are concerned about these things, but I want to close with this. Today, in America, a child under 5 years old is eligible for 12 Federal programs. After that age, he or she is eligible for 9 Federal feeding programs. At 65, you're eligible for 5 different Federal feeding programs. We want to make sure no one falls through the cracks and no one goes hungry, yet at the same time, is it possible that some folks are eligible for not just three meals a day but maybe four and five?

And can we enter into that discussion without a lot of finger-pointing and a lot of emotion? Can we also talk about the fraud and the misuse and the administrative costs without a lot of screaming and hollering? I think we can. I look forward to that debate, and I recommend passage of this bill.

I. 14 percent down.

Reflects the House Rep/Ryan budget which reflects our attempt to deal with the national debt.

A. I don't need to lecture anyone on the national debt but I need to remind all of us on a few facts:

1. At $14T the national debt is 95 percent GDP.

2. For every dollar we spend $.40 is borrowed.

3. While both parties have been responsible for this the spending by this administration has been tremendous. For example, the national debt under President Bush increased $3.5 trillion in 8 years. Way too much! In contrast, however President Obama has increased it by $5T in 3 years. That's 56 percent.

4. Much of this almost half is due to foreign countries, China being a high leader.

If we don't address our debtor crisis eventually our creditors will. With a communist country as a major competitor can you imagine what China could impose on us? It's nothing I want my children and future generations to deal with. We have to do it ourselves.

B. Let me continue with the Ryan budget we hear non stop changes from its critics that it's too harsh but where is their alternative?

1. The Potus has been all but absent. In fact his own budget was rejected by the Harry Reid Democrat led Senate 97–0.

2. Other proposals have been furled as well:

a. In the House:

Congressional Black Caucus.

H. Amdt. 256 to H. Con. Res. 34.

Failed by recorded vote: 103–303.

Congressional Progressive Caucus.

H. Amdt. 257 to H. Con. Res. 34.

Failed by recorded vote: 77–347.

Republican Study Committee.

H. Amdt. 258 to H. Con. Res. 34.

Failed by recorded vote: 119–136.

Democratic Caucus:

H. Amdt. 259 to H. Con. Res. 34.

Failed by recorded vote: 166–259.

b. In the Senate:

Toomey's plan to balance the budget in 9 years:

Failed 42–55.

Rand Paul's plan:

Failed 7–90.

3. Having failed to pass a budget in either the House or Senate, it seems the POTUS and Harry Reid have given up. That's correct there no ongoing negotiations, conferences or hearings. They have totally abandoned their duty and obligations.

C. One can understand cowardice when we look at political realties.

1. Today in America 61 million people receive monthly government checks. That's anything from welfare to Medicare, to farm payments, veteran retirement and social security. Lots of people receive lots of money.

2. These programs are enormously popular and deeply integrated into our economic system and culture. Reforming these programs is at best politically difficult even if both parties dealt in good faith and earnestness.

3. To further complicate the situation 47 percent of American households did not pay income taxes. For them the status quo is just fine.

i. According to the tax policy center.

D. Continuing our spending path has not created prosperity. Think about the big ticket items in the last few years. March '08 $29 billion to bailour Bear Sterns, May '08 $168 billion for the Bush Stimulus Package, July '08 $200 billion for the Fannie May/Freddie Mac bailout, Nov '08 $700 Billion TARP/Wall Street Bailout. Jan. '09 $878 billion for the Obama Stimulus bill which by the way was to keep unemployment below 8 percent but it has bounced between 9–10 percent ever since.

Real growth comes from less government, less job killing regulations, a tax structure that is simpler, clean and fair.

E. One last word on the Ryan budget. Despite the spending reduction in discretionary accounts be of entitlements, food stamps and school lunch there is a net increase in spending! That's right at $17.25 billion, a reduction of $2.7 billion below FY2011 or 14 percent discretionary, the mandatory spending has still increased from $105 billion to $108.3 billion, resulting in an overall increase of 283 million! Food stamps have increased $5.6 and school lunch $1.5. Thus one more time underscoring the need for long term entitlement reform.

II. Our bill attempts to move us in this direction. Mr. FARR and I have had 11 hearings. These were long with several rounds of questions. We don't agree on all issues but we found much common ground and where we disagree no one was shut out of the process.

III. I will now go through some specific accounts.

A. Research is funded at $2.2 billion. Almost half goes to Agriculture Research Service at $993 million. This allows ARS to focus on high priority items such as food defense and food safety.

1. It also includes vital pest and disease research such problems with the:

Brown Marmorated Stink Bug.

Commerants.

Cotton Pests.

Sudden Oak Death.

Equine Disease.

2. Finally, I would like to point out that the bill assumes ARS will close 10 facilities, as proposed in the budget, and provides USDA with the authority to transfer those facilities to a land-grant or other agricultural college or university that agrees to continue agricultural related research at the facility for a minimum of 25 years.

One billion dollars on this account goes to the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and gives level funding for land-grant university research.

B. Farm Programs are funded at $1.7 billion discretionary and $18.3 in mandatory or traditional as Ag programs specified in the five year authorized farm bill.

1. These programs are the target of much of the criticism and at least one awkward int'l into agreement w/ the Brazilian government over cotton. Mr. Fluke offered an amendment to affect this and committee act was passed; however if it is out of order and will be struck. Nonetheless our AS committees are planning to address it.

2. Also in this section of the Bill is Farm Service Agency funding at a level of $1.46. Modernization of FSA technology systems remains a committee priority.

The MIDAS, Modernize and Innovate the Delivery of Agricultural Systems, request was $96 million on top of $49.5 million from last year but USDA had reprogrammed $23 million for salaries. The heart of the MIDAS initiative is to improve the delivery of FSA farm program benefits and services through the re-engineering of farm programs business processes and the adoption of enhanced and modernized information technology.

3. Many members requested funding for the FSA Grassroots Source Water Protection program and the bill includes $3.6 million for this program.

Agricultural Credit loan levels are at $4.7 billion which is $95.8 million below the fiscal year 2011 level and the same as the fiscal year 2012 request.

C. The majority of the $910 million in funds for the Marketing and Regulatory Programs is slated in the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service-Salaries and Expense account at $790 million, which is $73.3 million below the

fiscal year 2011 level. These funds will allow the agency to continue to control and eradicate plant and animal pests and diseases. The bill includes language that allows APHIS to access emergency funding to address pest and disease outbreaks.

In addition to other related programs at USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Serves, this Bill provides $147 million for Specialty Crop Pests to control or eradicate invasive pests and diseases, especially for those pests and disease in California, and the west. Although this funding level is below the President's Request, this Program is funded at $4.4 million above the level spent in the fiscal year 2010. Within the program, we have also supported language from members regarding Sudden Oak Death.

D. Conservation Programs are funded at $787 million of which $770 million is for NRCS's Conservation Operations, which is $99 million below the fiscal year 2011 level. This allows NRCS to maintain its core conservation mission and will drive efficiencies to create more farmer-friendly programs.

The Watershed Rehabilitation Program is funded at $15 million, which is $3 million below the fiscal year 2011 level.

In addition to discretionary appropriations, USDA will provide $5.8 billion to farmers and ranchers through its mandatory conservation programs in fiscal year 2012.

(In the farm bill, the Agriculture Committee will review these especially the Conservation Reserve Program which pays farmers not to plant.)

E. More than $2 billion is provided in the bill for Rural Development Programs including section 502 low income housing loan level of $24.845 billion. The President's budget proposed a loan level for direct loans for $211 million and the bill provides for $845 million for this program that serves very low-income rural Americans.

Rural Water and Waste—$730 million is provided for loans, which is $242 million below the fiscal year 2011 level. $430 million is provided for grants, which is $28 million below the fiscal year 2011 level. We received many requests from Members for funding for the Circuit Rider program, and the bill provides $14 million for this purpose.

Electric and Telecommunications Program level is at $7.3 billion in the bill, which is on par with historical levels. The bill denies the budget request to limit the use of electric loans to renewable energy and retrofitting, and requests a report on baseload generation needs.

F. Food Safety and Inspection—$973 million—a funding level that will allow FSIS to maintain meat, poultry, and egg products inspection, as well as to expand poultry inspection system that results in a safe and more efficient poultry inspection regime that will result in a safer food supply.

III. Our committee had 2 good debates on the funding of Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Nutrition programs.

Our mark attempts to address the aggressive marketing growth of WIC w/a funding level of $5.9 billion. Or 1.2 below FY 2011, which was 7,128,424,000.

A. We will hear from many that this hurts the nations most vulnerable but lets look at some fact.

1. Many critics act like WIC has never been cut but last year in order to pay for a completely unreduced program—a legal settlement on a farm loan dispute call Pigford the Democrats cut WIC by $562 m.

2. The latest data from the USDA shows a drop of 300,000 participants between fiscal year 2010 and fiscal year 2011. However; our level still funds at the higher number of 8.7 m people which is the projection for FY 2012.

Now if that changes and there is in unexpected jump in participation then we have 3 reserve accounts in which we can draw.

Contingency fund: $125 million.

Carryover Funds: $350 million+.

Secretary's Interchange Authority: $210 million.

3. So the issue is act one of kids at risk but one of politics.

a. A couple of notes: 49 percent of children in America participate in WIC. Clearly a number that suggests it goes well beyond the poorest of our society.

b. WIC is notorious for a high over head.

As noted at the Full Committee hearing, administrative—as defined by all overhead and program delivery costs—equals 45 cents per benefits dollar spent in FY 2010.

8.9 million participants for March. From the beginning of FY2009 to March 2011 (most up-to-date data), average monthly participation has dropped by 440,000.

c. WIC has had its share of fraud, yet WIC officials seem dedicated to only keeping their funding stream rather than addressing these issues.

4. Finally going beyond the politics let's put some force on it. Take a 3 year old child named Bob. Today Bob is eligible for 12 federal programs:

Bob's Food Assistant Programs:

At age 3, Bob is eligible for 12 programs:

1. Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).
2. Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP).
3. Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program (FFVP).
4. School Lunch Program (SBP).
5. National School Lunch Program (NSLP).
6. Special Milk Program (SMP) [Can receive if not on any other program].
7. Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).
8. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
9. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).
10. The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP).
11. Women, Infant & Children (WIC).
12. WIC's Farmers Market Nutritional Program (FMNP).

At age 10, Bob is eligible for 9 programs:

1. Child and Adult Care Food Program (CAFP).
2. Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program (FFVP).
3. School Lunch Program (SBP).
4. National School Lunch Program (NSLP).
5. Special Milk Program (SMP).
6. Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).
7. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
8. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).
9. The Emergency Food Assitance Program (TEFAP).

At age 35, Bob is eligible for 7 programs:

1. Child and Adult Care Food Programs.
2. Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP).
3. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
4. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).
5. The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP).
6. Women, Infant & Children (WIC).
7. WIC's Farmers Market Nutritional Program (FMNP).

At age 65, Bob is eligible for 6 programs:

1. Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).
2. Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP).
3. Sr. Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP).
4. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
5. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).
6. The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP).

At all ages, Bob can receive:

1. Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservation (FDPIR) if living on Indian Reservation & Not receiving SNAP.
2. Disaster Assistance Program (D–SNAP) if family experiences natural disaster.
3. Nutrition Assistance Block Grant (NABG) if family lives in U.S. Territory.

This doesn't sound like a nation that turning its back on the poor. Indeed the First Lady has made a campaign against over eating not hunger, and I will challenge our critics to take the discussion records from our learning. Google the world's hunger and obesity and see which one we talked about the most.

B. As I stated earlier overall this bill is a net increase and that increase comes from these safety net food programs. Child nutrition programs are funded at $18.8 billion which is $1.56 above last year. This provides 68.8 percent of all school lunches and 85.5 percent of all school breakfasts at a free or reduced price.

1. As respects to SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program, or food stamps there is a $5.66 increase approx 45 million people participate in this program.

2. Again, the administrators tend to ignore these problems. Overpayments of $141 receipt in Michigan for steak, lobster, and sodas were reported. The man was later arrested for selling goods.

3. Michigan man won 2 million in lottery and still uses food stamps WIC—ex-WIC worker in Atlanta stated that no ID, no address and no income information was needed to apply for WIC. There was also an undercover film about the WIC clinic.

C. We have hope to allow some flexibility between emergency and developmental accounts in order for groups like the World Food Program to meet unexpected challenges around the globe. I have met with Josette Sheeran and our food ambassador to the UN Ertharin Cousins, and commend their position and their commitment. Food air combines our humanitarian values and national security so our committee supports it. However; keep in mind we are borrowing from our own future generations to finance this, so we must be good stewards.

Worldwide the U.S. provides 57% of food aid followed by EU 27 percent, and Japan 6 percent.

Food Aid and National Security/'International Harmony'

We have heard several comments today about why we absolutely cannot reduce our

food aid programs this year. In spite of the fact that we are out of money, we have driven ourselves to a crippling level of debt and—from a more immediate perspective—we don't have the allocation for this bill to provide more to any program, we are told it is impossible to cut international food aid, even as we cut almost every other single line item in this budget out of necessity.

Among other arguments, we hear it is a national security imperative. There are legitimate national security aspects to this issue. Food aid does provide a market to drive our domestic food production, which in turn helps ensure a perpetual safe and abundant domestic food supply as we provide surplus overseas.

It also supports our merchant marine fleet, which provides an important cargo capacity for the armed forces in the event of a major deployment. This surge capacity might not be available, at least at a similar cost, without the support of the food aid programs.

However, I don't think the argument that this assistance builds international goodwill to the U.S.—an enduring friendship that is reciprocated when we need it—pans out. For example, I have here the voting practices in the United Nations for 2010 as compiled by the U.S. Department of State. This list includes the nations by region who have received assistance through any of our international food aid programs along with the percentage they supported the U.S. position on votes the State Department deemed most important. Unfortunately, we see numbers like 16 percent, 0 percent, 30 percent, 36 percent, 27.3 percent, right down the line.

It would be nice to see some of the oil rich countries to step forward and help out.

IV. FDA.

The Food and Drug Administration is funded at $2.2 billion which is $284 million below the fiscal year 2011 level of $2.457 billion. While the overall discretionary allocation to the subcommittee was a reduction of 13.4 percent, the overall FDA reduction is 11.5 percent.

Total funding for FDA, including user fees, is $3.684 billion versus $3.681 that was provided in fiscal year 1022. We passed in fall committee an amendment that urged FDA to use sound science in making decisions.

V. CFTC. The Commodity Futures Trading Commission is funded at $171 million, which is $32 million below the fiscal year 2011 funding level. A number of concerns have been raised by the Inspector General at the Commission that proposed rules are not undergoing a thorough cost-benefit analysis.

VI. This bill takes spending to below pre-stimulus, pre-bailout levels while ensuring USDA, FDA, CFTC, and other agencies are provided the necessary resources to fulfill their duties. Our members have worked to root out waste and duplication and, where they have strayed from their core mission, we rein in agencies so they may better focus on responsibilities for which they are intended. In doing so, we balance the urgent need for fiscal restraint with the necessity to provide and abundant food supply, robust trade, prudent conservation measures, and strong rural communities.

VII. Madam Chair, this legislation would not be passable without the great working relation I enjoy with our ranking member Mr. FARR. Again, we don't always agree but we do try to communicate and put together a sound product. I also thank all the staffers who have averaged about 50–60 hours a week since Dec. to make this happen. Matt Smith and Martha Foley with the Minority, and Rochelle Dornatt and Troy Phillips with Ranking Member FARR's office, our majority staff clerk of many years Martin Delgado and his team Tom O'Brien, Betsy Bina, and Andrew Cooper. From my personal office, Allie Thigpen, Michael Donnal, Adam Sullivan, Chris Crawford, Caroline Black, and Mary Carpenter. You might not see them on the House floor, but their fingerprints are all over the bill.

AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
TITLE I - AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS					
Production, Processing, and Marketing					
Office of the Secretary	5,051	5,883	4,293	-758	-1,590
Office of Tribal Relations	498	1,015	423	-75	-592
Healthy Food Financing Initiative	---	35,000	---	---	-35,000
Executive Operations:					
Office of Chief Economist	12,008	15,196	10,707	-1,301	-4,489
National Appeals Division	14,225	15,254	12,091	-2,134	-3,163
Office of Budget and Program Analysis	9,417	9,436	8,004	-1,413	-1,432
Office of Homeland Security	1,496	4,272	1,272	-224	-3,000
Office of Advocacy and Outreach	1,422	7,000	1,209	-213	-5,791
Office of the Chief Information Officer	39,920	63,579	35,000	-4,920	-28,579
Office of the Chief Financial Officer	6,247	6,566	5,310	-937	-1,256
Subtotal, Executive Operations	84,735	121,303	73,593	-11,142	-47,710
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights	893	895	760	-133	-135
Office of Civil Rights	22,692	24,922	19,288	-3,404	-5,634
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration	804	820	683	-121	-137
Agriculture buildings and facilities and rental payments	(246,476)	(255,191)	(209,505)	(-36,971)	(-45,686)
Payments to GSA	178,113	164,470	151,396	-26,717	-13,074
Department of Homeland Security	13,473	13,800	11,452	-2,021	-2,348
Building operations and maintenance	54,890	76,921	46,657	-8,233	-30,264
Hazardous materials management	3,992	5,125	3,393	-599	-1,732
Departmental Administration	29,647	35,787	23,900	-5,747	-11,887
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations	3,869	4,041	3,289	-580	-752
Office of Communications	9,480	9,722	8,058	-1,422	-1,664
Office of Inspector General	88,548	90,755	80,000	-8,548	-10,755
Office of the General Counsel	41,416	46,058	35,204	-6,212	-10,854
Total, Departmental Administration	538,101	636,517	462,389	-75,712	-174,128
Office of the Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics	893	911	760	-133	-151
Economic Research Service	81,814	85,971	70,000	-11,814	-15,971
National Agricultural Statistics Service	156,447	165,421	149,500	-6,947	-15,921
Census of Agriculture	(33,139)	(41,639)	(40,000)	(+6,861)	(-1,639)
Agricultural Research Service:					
Salaries and expenses	1,133,230	1,137,690	993,345	-139,885	-144,345
National Institute of Food and Agriculture:					
Research and education activities	698,740	708,107	600,800	-97,940	-107,307
Native American Institutions Endowment Fund	(11,880)	(11,880)	(11,880)	---	---
Extension activities	479,132	466,788	411,200	-67,932	-55,588
Integrated activities	36,926	29,874	8,000	-28,926	-21,874
Hispanic-Serving Agricultural Colleges and Universities Endowment Fund	---	(10,000)	---	---	(-10,000)
Total, National Institute of Food and Agriculture	1,214,798	1,204,769	1,020,000	-194,798	-184,769
Office of the Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs	893	911	760	-133	-151
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service:					
Salaries and expenses	863,270	832,706	790,000	-73,270	-42,706
Assistance, goods, or services (user fees) NA	---	(141,000)	---	---	(-141,000)
Buildings and facilities	3,529	4,712	3,200	-329	-1,512
Total, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service	866,799	837,418	793,200	-73,599	-44,218

AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Agricultural Marketing Service:					
Marketing Services	86,538	94,755	77,500	-9,038	-17,255
Standardization activities (user fees) NA	(65,000)	(66,000)	(66,000)	(+1,000)	---
(Limitation on administrative expenses, from fees collected)	(60,947)	(62,101)	(61,000)	(+53)	(-1,101)
Funds for strengthening markets, income, and supply (Section 32):					
Permanent, Section 32	1,065,000	1,080,000	1,080,000	+15,000	---
Marketing agreements and orders (transfer from section 32)	(20,056)	(20,056)	(20,056)	---	---
Payments to States and Possessions	1,331	2,634	1,331	---	-1,303
Total, Agricultural Marketing Service program	1,213,816	1,239,490	1,219,831	+6,015	-19,659
Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration:					
Salaries and expenses	40,261	44,192	37,000	-3,261	-7,192
Limitation on inspection and weighing services	(47,500)	(50,000)	(47,500)	---	(-2,500)
Office of the Under Secretary for Food Safety	811	828	689	-122	-139
Food Safety and Inspection Service	1,006,503	1,011,393	972,028	-34,475	-39,365
Lab accreditation fees	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	---	---
Total, Production, Processing, and Marketing	6,193,419	6,303,410	5,658,502	-534,917	-644,908
Farm Assistance Programs					
Office of the Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services	893	911	760	-133	-151
Farm Service Agency:					
Salaries and expenses	1,208,290	1,357,065	1,176,500	-31,790	-180,565
Equal Credit Opportunity claims (leg. proposal)	---	40,000	---	---	-40,000
(Transfer from Food for Peace (P.L. 480))	(2,806)	(2,812)	(2,385)	(-421)	(-427)
(Transfer from export loans)	(354)	(355)	(355)	(+1)	---
(Transfer from ACIF)	(304,977)	(313,173)	(260,730)	(-44,247)	(-52,443)
Subtotal, transfers from program accounts	(308,137)	(316,340)	(263,470)	(-44,667)	(-52,870)
Total, Salaries and expenses	(1,516,427)	(1,713,405)	(1,439,970)	(-76,457)	(-273,435)
State mediation grants	4,177	4,369	3,550	-627	-819
Grassroot source water protection program	4,241	---	3,605	-636	+3,605
Dairy indemnity program	876	100	100	-776	---
Subtotal, Farm Service Agency	1,217,584	1,401,534	1,183,755	-33,829	-217,779
Agricultural Credit Insurance Fund (ACIF) Program Account:					
Loan authorizations:					
Farm ownership loans:					
Direct	(475,000)	(475,000)	(475,000)	---	---
Guaranteed	(1,500,000)	(1,500,000)	(1,500,000)	---	---
Subtotal	(1,975,000)	(1,975,000)	(1,975,000)	---	---
Farm operating loans:					
Direct	(950,000)	(1,050,090)	(1,050,090)	(+100,090)	---
Unsubsidized guaranteed	(1,500,000)	(1,500,000)	(1,500,000)	---	---
Subsidized guaranteed	(122,343)	---	---	(-122,343)	---
Subtotal	(2,572,343)	(2,550,090)	(2,550,090)	(-22,253)	---
Indian tribe land acquisition loans	(3,940)	(2,000)	(2,000)	(-1,940)	---
Conservation loans:					
Guaranteed	---	(150,000)	(150,000)	(+150,000)	---

AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Indian Highly Fractionated Land Loans	---	(10,000)	(10,000)	(+10,000)	---
Boll weevil eradication loans	(100,000)	(60,000)	(100,000)	---	(+40,000)
Total, Loan authorizations	(4,651,283)	(4,747,090)	(4,787,090)	(+135,807)	(+40,000)
Loan subsidies:					
Farm ownership loans:					
Direct	32,804	22,800	22,800	-10,004	---
Guaranteed	5,689	---	---	-5,689	---
Subtotal	38,493	22,800	22,800	-15,693	---
Farm operating loans:					
Direct	57,425	59,120	59,120	+1,695	---
Unsubsidized guaranteed	34,880	26,100	26,100	-8,780	---
Subsidized guaranteed	16,886	---	---	-16,886	---
Subtotal	109,191	85,220	85,220	-23,971	---
Indian Highly Fractionated Land Loans	---	193	193	+193	---
Individual Development Accounts	---	2,500	---	---	-2,500
Total, Loan subsidies	147,684	110,713	108,213	-39,471	-2,500
ACIF administrative expenses:					
Salaries and expense (transfer to FSA)	304,977	313,173	260,730	-44,247	-52,443
Administrative expenses	7,904	7,920	7,904	---	-16
Total, ACIF expenses	312,881	321,093	268,634	-44,247	-52,459
Total, Agricultural Credit Insurance Fund	460,565	431,806	376,847	-83,718	-54,959
(Loan authorization)	(4,651,283)	(4,747,090)	(4,787,090)	(+135,807)	(+40,000)
Total, Farm Service Agency	1,678,149	1,833,340	1,560,602	-117,547	-272,738
Risk Management Agency,					
Administrative and operating expenses	78,842	82,325	68,016	-10,826	-14,309
Total, Farm Assistance Programs	1,757,884	1,916,576	1,629,378	-128,506	-287,198
Corporations					
Federal Crop Insurance Corporation:					
Federal crop insurance corporation fund	7,613,232	3,142,375	3,142,375	-4,470,857	---
Commodity Credit Corporation Fund:					
Reimbursement for net realized losses	13,925,575	14,071,000	14,071,000	+145,425	---
Hazardous waste management (limitation on expenses)	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	---	---
Total, Corporations	21,538,807	17,213,375	17,213,375	-4,325,432	---
Total, Title I, Agricultural Programs	29,490,110	25,433,361	24,501,255	-4,988,855	-932,106
(By transfer)	(328,193)	(336,396)	(283,526)	(-44,667)	(-52,870)
(Loan authorization)	(4,651,283)	(4,747,090)	(4,787,090)	(+135,807)	(+40,000)
(Limitation on administrative expenses)	(113,447)	(117,101)	(113,500)	(+53)	(-3,601)

AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
TITLE II - CONSERVATION PROGRAMS					
Office of the Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment	893	911	760	-133	-151
Natural Resources Conservation Service:					
Conservation operations	870,503	898,647	770,956	-99,547	-127,691
Watershed rehabilitation program	17,964	---	15,000	-2,964	+15,000
Total, Natural Resources Conservation Service	888,467	898,647	785,956	-102,511	-112,691
Total, Title II, Conservation Programs	889,360	899,558	786,716	-102,644	-112,842
TITLE III - RURAL DEVELOPMENT					
Office of the Under Secretary for Rural Development	893	911	760	-133	-151
Rural Development:					
Rural development expenses:					
Salaries and expenses	191,603	234,301	161,011	-30,592	-73,290
(Transfer from RHIF)	(453,474)	(411,779)	(400,000)	(-53,474)	(-11,779)
(Transfer from RDLFP)	(4,931)	(4,941)	(3,500)	(-1,431)	(-1,441)
(Transfer from RETLP)	(38,297)	(39,959)	(30,000)	(-8,297)	(-9,959)
Subtotal, Transfers from program accounts	(496,702)	(456,679)	(433,500)	(-63,202)	(-23,179)
Total, Rural development expenses	(688,305)	(690,980)	(594,511)	(-93,794)	(-96,469)
Rural Housing Service:					
Rural Housing Insurance Fund Program Account:					
Loan authorizations:					
Single family direct (Sec. 502)	(1,121,406)	(211,416)	(845,666)	(-275,740)	(+634,250)
Unsubsidized guaranteed	(24,000,000)	(24,000,000)	(24,000,000)	---	---
Subtotal, Single family	(25,121,406)	(24,211,416)	(24,845,666)	(-275,740)	(+634,250)
Housing repair (Sec. 504)	(23,360)	---	---	(-23,360)	---
Rental housing (Sec. 515)	(69,512)	(95,236)	(58,617)	(-10,895)	(-36,619)
Site loans (Sec. 524)	(5,052)	---	---	(-5,052)	---
Multi-family housing guarantees (Sec. 538)	(30,960)	---	---	(-30,960)	---
Multi-family housing credit sales	(1,448)	---	---	(-1,448)	---
Single family housing credit sales	(10,000)	---	---	(-10,000)	---
Self-help housing land develop. (Sec. 523)	(4,966)	---	---	(-4,966)	---
Farm Labor Housing (Sec.514)	(25,724)	(27,288)	(18,302)	(-7,422)	(-8,986)
Total, Loan authorizations	(25,292,428)	(24,333,940)	(24,922,585)	(-369,843)	(+588,645)
Loan subsidies:					
Single family direct (Sec. 502)	70,060	10,000	40,000	-30,060	+30,000
Housing repair (Sec. 504)	4,413	---	---	-4,413	---
Rental housing (Sec. 515)	23,399	32,495	20,000	-3,399	-12,495
Multi-family housing guarantees (Sec. 538)	2,994	---	---	-2,994	---
Site development loans (Sec. 524)	293	---	---	-293	---
Multi-family housing credit sales	555	---	---	-555	---
Farm labor housing (Sec.514)	9,853	9,319	6,250	-3,603	-3,069
Self-help land dev. housing loans (Sec523)	288	---	---	-288	---
Total, Loan subsidies	111,855	51,814	66,250	-45,605	+14,436
Farm labor housing grants	9,854	9,873	6,250	-3,604	-3,623
RHIF administrative expenses (transfer to RD)	453,474	411,779	400,000	-53,474	-11,779
Total, Rural Housing Insurance Fund program	575,183	473,466	472,500	-102,683	-966
(Loan authorization)	(25,292,428)	(24,333,940)	(24,922,585)	(-369,843)	(+588,645)

AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Rental assistance program:					
Rental assistance (Sec. 521)	948,704	900,653	886,000	-62,704	-14,653
New construction (Sec. 515)	2,026	3,000	1,500	-526	-1,500
New construction (Farm Labor Housing)	2,994	3,000	2,500	-494	-500
Total, Rental assistance program	953,724	906,653	890,000	-63,724	-16,653
Rural housing voucher program	13,972	16,000	11,000	-2,972	-5,000
Multi-family housing revitalization program	14,970	---	---	-14,970	---
Multifamily housing preservation revolving loans	998	---	---	-998	---
Total, Multi-family housing revitalization	29,940	16,000	11,000	-18,940	-5,000
Mutual and self-help housing grants	36,926	---	22,000	-14,926	+22,000
Rural housing assistance grants	40,319	11,520	32,000	-8,319	+20,480
Rural community facilities program account:					
Loan authorizations:					
Community facility:					
Direct	(290,526)	(1,000,000)	(1,000,000)	(+709,474)	---
Guaranteed	(167,747)	---	(105,708)	(-62,039)	(+105,708)
Total, Loan authorizations	(458,273)	(1,000,000)	(1,105,708)	(+647,435)	(+105,708)
Loan subsidies and grants:					
Commmunity facility:					
Direct	3,856	---	---	-3,856	---
Guaranteed	6,613	---	5,000	-1,613	+5,000
Grants	14,970	30,000	10,000	-4,970	-20,000
Rural community development initiative	4,990	8,400	3,000	-1,990	-5,400
Economic impact initiative grants	6,986	---	---	-6,986	---
Tribal college grants	3,964	---	---	-3,964	---
Total, RCFP Loan subsidies and grants	41,379	38,400	18,000	-23,379	-20,400
Subtotal, grants and payments	118,624	49,920	72,000	-46,624	+22,080
Total, Rural Housing Service	1,677,471	1,446,039	1,445,500	-231,971	-539
(Loan authorization)	(25,750,701)	(25,333,940)	(26,028,293)	(+277,592)	(+694,353)
Rural Business-Cooperative Service:					
Rural Business Program Account:					
(Guaranteed business and industry loans)	(889,111)	(822,900)	(626,959)	(-262,152)	(-195,941)
Loan subsidies and grants:					
Guaranteed business and industry subsidy	44,899	52,500	40,000	-4,899	-12,500
Grants:					
Rural business enterprise	34,930	29,874	20,000	-14,930	-9,874
Rural business opportunity	2,478	7,483	2,250	-228	-5,233
Delta regional authority	2,973	---	2,250	-723	+2,250
Total, RBP loan subsidies and grants	85,280	89,857	64,500	-20,780	-25,357
Rural Development Loan Fund Program Account:					
(Loan authorization)	(19,181)	(36,376)	(14,758)	(-4,423)	(-21,618)
Loan subsidy	7,385	12,324	5,000	-2,385	-7,324
Administrative expenses (transfer to RD)	4,931	4,941	3,500	-1,431	-1,441
Total, Rural Development Loan Fund	12,316	17,265	8,500	-3,816	-8,765
Rural Economic Development Loans Program Account:					
(Loan authorization)	(33,077)	(33,077)	(33,077)	---	---
Limit cushion of credit interest spending	(207,000)	(241,794)	(155,000)	(-52,000)	(-86,794)
(Rescission)	-207,000	-241,794	-155,000	+52,000	+86,794

AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Rural cooperative development grants:					
Cooperative development	7,908	8,924	5,000	-2,908	-3,924
Appropriate technology transfer for rural areas	---	2,800	2,000	+2,000	-800
Cooperative research agreement	---	300	---	---	-300
Value-added agricultural product market development	18,829	20,367	12,500	-6,329	-7,867
Grants to assist minority producers	3,456	3,463	3,000	-456	-463
Total, Rural Cooperative development grants	30,193	35,854	22,500	-7,693	-13,354
Rural Microenterprise Investment Program Account:					
(Loan authorization)	---	(8,700)	---	---	(-8,700)
Loan subsidy	---	2,850	---	---	-2,850
Grants	---	2,850	---	---	-2,850
Total, Rural Microenterprise Investment	---	5,700	---	---	-5,700
Rural Energy for America Program					
(Loan authorization)	(10,785)	(10,645)	(2,482)	(-8,303)	(-8,163)
Loan subsidy	2,495	2,788	650	-1,845	-2,138
Grants	2,495	34,000	650	-1,845	-33,350
Total, Renewable energy program	4,990	36,788	1,300	-3,690	-35,488
Total, Rural Business-Cooperative Service	-74,221	-56,330	-58,200	+16,021	-1,870
(Loan authorization)	(952,154)	(911,698)	(677,276)	(-274,878)	(-234,422)
Rural Utilities Service:					
Rural water and waste disposal program account:					
Loan authorizations:					
Direct	(898,263)	(770,000)	(730,689)	(-167,574)	(-39,311)
Guaranteed	(75,000)	(12,000)	---	(-75,000)	(-12,000)
Total, Loan authorization	973,263	782,000	730,689	-242,574	-51,311
Loan subsidies and grants:					
Direct subsidy	76,917	73,788	70,000	-6,917	-3,788
Guaranteed subsidy	---	190	---	---	-190
Water and waste revolving fund	497	497	497	---	---
Water well system grants	993	993	993	---	---
Colonias and AK/HI grants	68,600	65,000	65,000	-3,600	---
Water and waste technical assistance	19,110	19,000	19,000	-110	---
Circuit rider program	14,700	14,000	14,000	-700	---
Solid waste management grants	3,434	4,000	3,400	-34	-600
High energy cost grants	11,976	---	---	-11,976	---
Water and waste disposal grants	331,717	311,510	327,110	-4,607	+15,600
Total, Loan subsidies and grants	527,944	488,978	500,000	-27,944	+11,022
Rural Electrification and Telecommunications Loans Program Account:					
Loan authorizations:					
Electric:					
Direct, 5%	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)	---	---
Direct, FFB	(6,500,000)	(6,000,000)	(6,500,000)	---	(+500,000)
Guaranteed underwriting	(500,000)	---	---	(-500,000)	---
Subtotal, Electric	(7,100,000)	(6,100,000)	(6,600,000)	(-500,000)	(+500,000)
Telecommunications:					
Direct, 5%	(145,000)	(145,000)	(145,000)	---	---
Direct, Treasury rate	(250,000)	(250,000)	(250,000)	---	---
Direct, FFB	(295,000)	(295,000)	(295,000)	---	---
Subtotal, Telecommunications	(690,000)	(690,000)	(690,000)	---	---
Total, Loan authorizations	(7,790,000)	(6,790,000)	(7,290,000)	(-500,000)	(+500,000)

AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Loan subsidies:					
Electric:					
Guaranteed underwriting	699	---	---	-699	---
RETLP administrative expenses (transfer to RD)	38,297	39,959	30,000	-8,297	-9,959
Total, Rural Electrification and Telecommunications Loans Program Account	38,996	39,959	30,000	-8,996	-9,959
(Loan authorization)	(7,790,000)	(6,790,000)	(7,290,000)	(-500,000)	(+500,000)
Distance learning, telemedicine, and broadband program:					
Loan authorizations:					
Broadband telecommunications	(400,000)	---	---	(-400,000)	---
Total, Loan authorizations	(400,000)	---	---	(-400,000)	---
Loan subsidies and grants:					
Distance learning and telemedicine:					
Grants	32,435	30,000	15,000	-17,435	-15,000
Broadband telecommunications:					
Direct	22,276	---	---	-22,276	---
Grants	13,379	17,976	---	-13,379	-17,976
Total, Loan subsidies and grants	68,090	47,976	15,000	-53,090	-32,976
Total, Rural Utilities Service	635,030	576,913	545,000	-90,030	-31,913
(Loan authorization)	(9,163,263)	(7,572,000)	(8,020,689)	(-1,142,574)	(+448,689)
Total, Title III, Rural Development Programs	2,430,776	2,201,834	2,094,071	-336,705	-107,763
(By transfer)	(496,702)	(456,679)	(433,500)	(-63,202)	(-23,179)
(Loan authorization)	(35,866,118)	(33,817,638)	(34,726,258)	(-1,139,860)	(+908,620)
TITLE IV - DOMESTIC FOOD PROGRAMS					
Office of the Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services	811	828	689	-122	-139
Food and Nutrition Service:					
Child nutrition programs	12,042,407	18,770,571	18,770,571	+6,728,164	---
Competitive grants	---	5,000	---	---	-5,000
School breakfast program grants	---	10,000	---	---	-10,000
Childhood Hunger challenge grants	---	25,000	---	---	-25,000
Transfer from section 32	5,277,574	---	---	-5,277,574	---
.2 Percent (rescission) (discretionary)	-48	---	---	+48	---
Total, Child nutrition programs	17,319,933	18,810,571	18,770,571	+1,450,638	-40,000
Special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children (WIC)	6,734,027	7,390,100	6,048,250	-685,777	-1,341,850
Supplemental nutrition assistance program:					
(Food stamp program)	65,206,790	68,173,308	68,173,308	+2,966,518	---
Reserve	---	5,000,000	3,000,000	+3,000,000	-2,000,000
Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion	---	1,500	---	---	-1,500
Grants to States and technical assistance	---	9,000	---	---	-9,000
.2 Percent (rescission) (discretionary)	-97	---	---	+97	---
Total, Food stamp program	65,206,693	73,183,808	71,173,308	+5,966,615	-2,010,500

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(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Commodity assistance program:					
Commodity supplemental food program	175,697	176,788	138,500	-37,197	-38,288
Farmers market nutrition program	19,960	20,000	15,000	-4,960	-5,000
Emergency food assistance program	49,401	50,000	38,000	-11,401	-12,000
Pacific island and disaster assistance	1,068	1,081	1,000	-68	-81
IT modernization and support	---	1,750	---	---	-1,750
Total, Commodity assistance program	246,126	249,619	192,500	-53,626	-57,119
Nutrition programs administration	147,505	170,471	125,000	-22,505	-45,471
Total, Food and Nutrition Service	89,654,284	99,804,569	96,309,629	+6,655,345	-3,494,940
Total, Title IV, Domestic Food Programs	89,655,095	99,805,397	96,310,318	+6,655,223	-3,495,079
TITLE V - FOREIGN ASSISTANCE AND RELATED PROGRAMS					
Foreign Agricultural Service					
Salaries and expenses	185,628	229,730	175,000	-10,628	-54,730
(Transfer from export loans)	(6,452)	(6,465)	(6,465)	(+13)	---
Total, Salaries and expenses	192,080	236,195	181,465	-10,615	-54,730
Food for Peace Title I Direct Credit and Food for Progress Program Account, Administrative Expenses					
Farm Service Agency, Salaries and expenses (transfer to FSA)	2,806	2,812	2,385	-421	-427
Food for Peace Title II Grants:					
Expenses	1,497,000	1,690,000	1,040,198	-456,802	-649,802
Commodity Credit Corporation Export Loans Program Account (administrative expenses):					
Salaries and expenses (Export Loans):					
General Sales Manager (transfer to FAS)	6,452	6,465	6,465	+13	---
Farm Service Agency S&E (transfer to FSA)	354	355	355	+1	---
Total, CCC Export Loans Program Account	6,806	6,820	6,820	+14	---
McGovern-Dole international food for education and child nutrition program grants	199,101	200,500	180,000	-19,101	-20,500
Total, Title V, Foreign Assistance and Related Programs	1,891,341	2,129,862	1,404,403	-486,938	-725,459
(By transfer)	(6,452)	(6,465)	(6,465)	(+13)	---
TITLE VI - RELATED AGENCIES AND FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION					
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES					
Food and Drug Administration					
Salaries and expenses, direct appropriation	2,447,021	2,730,910	2,163,451	-283,570	-567,459
Prescription drug user fees	(667,057)	(856,041)	(856,041)	(+188,984)	---
Medical device user fees	(61,860)	(67,118)	(67,118)	(+5,258)	---
Animal drug user fees	(19,448)	(21,768)	(21,768)	(+2,320)	---
Generic animal drug user fees	(5,397)	(5,706)	(5,706)	(+309)	---
Tobacco product user fees	(450,000)	(477,000)	(477,000)	(+27,000)	---
Food and Feed Export Certification user fees	---	(12,364)	(12,364)	(+12,364)	---
Food Reinspection fees	---	(14,700)	(14,700)	(+14,700)	---
Voluntary qualified importer program fees	---	(36,000)	(36,000)	(+36,000)	---
Subtotal (including user fees)	(3,650,783)	(4,221,607)	(3,654,148)	(+3,365)	(-567,459)
Mammography user fees	(19,318)	(19,318)	(19,318)	---	---
Export certification user fees	(10,400)	(10,400)	(10,400)	---	---
Subtotal, FDA (with user fees)	(3,680,501)	(4,251,325)	(3,683,866)	(+3,365)	(-567,459)

AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
FDA New User Fees (Leg. proposals):					
Generic drug review user fees	---	(40,122)	---	---	(-40,122)
Reinspection fees	---	(14,108)	---	---	(-14,108)
International express courier import fees	---	(5,338)	---	---	(-5,338)
Subtotal, FDA new user fees (Leg Proposals)	---	(59,568)	---	---	(-59,568)
Buildings and facilities	9,980	13,055	8,788	-1,192	-4,267
Total, FDA (w/user fees, including proposals)	(3,690,481)	(4,323,948)	(3,692,654)	(+2,173)	(-631,294)
Total, FDA (w/enacted user fees only)	(3,690,481)	(4,264,380)	(3,692,654)	(+2,173)	(-571,726)
Total, FDA (excluding user fees)	2,457,001	2,743,965	2,172,239	-284,762	-571,726
INDEPENDENT AGENCIES					
Commodity Futures Trading Commission 1/	202,270	308,000	171,930	-30,340	-136,070
Financial regulation user fees (leg proposal)	---	(117,000)	---	---	(-117,000)
Farm Credit Administration (limitation on administrative expenses)	(59,400)	(62,000)	(62,000)	(+2,600)	---
Total, Title VI, Related Agencies and Food and Drug Administration	2,659,271	3,051,965	2,344,169	-315,102	-707,796
TITLE VII - GENERAL PROVISIONS					
Limit fruit and vegetable program (Sec.718)	-117,000	-114,478	-133,000	-16,000	-18,522
Section 32 (rescission) (Sec.718)	---	---	-150,000	-150,000	-150,000
Forestry Incentives program (Sec.722) (rescission)	---	---	-5,500	-5,500	-5,500
Great Plains Conservation (Sec.722) (rescission)	---	---	-500	-500	-500
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (rescission) (Sec.723)	-15,000	---	-11,000	+4,000	-11,000
Limit Conservation stewardship (Sec.728(1))	-39,000	-2,000	-210,000	-171,000	-208,000
Limit Dam Rehab (Sec.728(2))	-165,000	-165,000	-165,000	---	---
Limit Environmental Quality Incentives program (Sec.728(3))	-350,000	-342,000	-350,000	---	-8,000
Limit Farmland Protection program (Sec.728(4))	---	---	-50,000	-50,000	-50,000
Limit Grasslands reserve (Sec.728(5))	---	-50,000	-30,000	-30,000	+20,000
Limit Wetlands reserve (Sec.728(6))	-119,000	-9,000	-200,000	-81,000	-191,000
Limit Wildlife habitat incentives (Sec.728(7))	---	-12,000	-35,000	-35,000	-23,000
Limit Voluntary Public Access program (Sec.728(8))	---	---	-17,000	-17,000	-17,000
Limit Biomass Crop Assistance program (Sec.728(9))	-134,000	---	-45,000	+89,000	-45,000
Limit Bioenergy Program for Advanced Biofuels (Sec.728(10))	---	---	-50,000	-50,000	-50,000
Limit Renewable Energy for America (Sec.728(11))	---	---	-70,000	-70,000	-70,000
Limit Microenterprise investment program (Sec.728(12))	---	---	-3,000	-3,000	-3,000
Limit Crop Insurance Good Performance (Sec.728(13))	-25,000	---	-25,000	---	-25,000
Limit Agriculture management assistance (section 1524) (Sec.728(14))	---	-5,000	-5,000	-5,000	---
Hardwood Trees (Reforestation Pilot Program)	639	---	---	-639	---
Geographic Disadvantaged farmers	1,996	---	---	-1,996	---
Agricultural Research Service, Buildings and and facilities (rescission)	-229,582	-223,749	---	+229,582	+223,749
Broadband loan balances (rescission)	-39,000	---	---	+39,000	---
NIFA, Buildings and Facilities (rescission)	-1,037	-1,037	---	+1,037	+1,037
Wildlife Habitat Incentives unobligated (rescission)	---	-10,188	---	---	+10,188
Water Bank Act unobligated (rescission)	---	-745	---	---	+745
NRCS expired accounts (rescission)	-13,937	---	---	+13,937	---
Outreach for socially disadvantaged farmers (rescission)	-2,137	---	---	+2,137	---
Rural community advancement program (rescission)	-993	---	---	+993	---
Agriculture Marketing Services (rescission)	-717	---	---	+717	---
Common Computing Environment (rescission)	-3,111	---	---	+3,111	---
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Buildings and Facilities (rescission)	-629	---	---	+629	---

AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Agriculture Buildings and Facilities (rescission)	-45,000	---	---	+45,000	---
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) (rescission)	-10,887	---	---	+10,887	---
Broadband grants (rescission)	-25,000	---	---	+25,000	---
Export credit (rescission)	-331,000	---	---	+331,000	---
Trade Adjustment Assistance for for Farmers (Sec.729) (rescission)	---	---	-90,000	-90,000	-90,000
Limit Emergency Food Assistance program (Sec.730)	---	---	-51,000	-51,000	-51,000
US Department of Agriculture Unobligated balances (Sec.733) (rescission)	---	---	-63,000	-63,000	-63,000
Limit payments to Brazil Cotton Institute	---	---	-147,000	-147,000	-147,000
Total, Title VII, General provisions	-1,664,395	-935,197	-1,906,000	-241,605	-970,803
Grand total 1/	125,351,558	132,586,780	125,534,932	+183,374	-7,051,848
Appropriations	(126,276,588)	(133,064,293)	(126,009,932)	(-266,656)	(-7,054,361)
Rescissions	(-925,030)	(-477,513)	(-475,000)	(+450,030)	(+2,513)
(By transfer)	(831,347)	(799,540)	(723,491)	(-107,856)	(-76,049)
(Loan authorization)	(40,517,401)	(38,564,728)	(39,513,348)	(-1,004,053)	(+948,620)
(Limitation on administrative expenses)	(172,847)	(179,101)	(175,500)	(+2,653)	(-3,601)

1/ Includes CFTC FY11 funding ($202.675M) ($202.270M after ATB) provided in Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act

RECAPITULATION

Title I - Agricultural programs	29,490,110	25,433,361	24,501,255	-4,988,855	-932,106
Mandatory	(22,604,683)	(18,293,475)	(18,293,475)	(-4,311,208)	---
Discretionary	(6,885,427)	(7,139,886)	(6,207,780)	(-677,647)	(-932,106)
Title II - Conservation programs (discretionary)	889,360	899,558	786,716	-102,644	-112,842
Title III - Rural development (discretionary)	2,430,776	2,201,834	2,094,071	-336,705	-107,763
Title IV - Domestic food programs	89,655,095	99,805,397	96,310,318	+6,655,223	-3,495,079
Mandatory	(82,526,771)	(91,943,879)	(89,943,879)	(+7,417,108)	(-2,000,000)
Discretionary	(7,128,324)	(7,861,518)	(6,366,439)	(-761,885)	(-1,495,079)
Title V - Foreign assistance and related programs (discretionary)	1,891,341	2,129,862	1,404,403	-486,938	-725,459
Title VI - Related agencies and Food and Drug Administration (discretionary)	2,659,271	3,051,965	2,344,169	-315,102	-707,796
Title VII - General provisions (discretionary)	-1,664,395	-935,197	-1,906,000	-241,605	-970,803
Total 1/	125,351,558	132,586,780	125,534,932	+183,374	-7,051,848

1/ Includes CFTC FY11 funding ($202.675M) ($202.270M after ATB) provided in Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I rise today as the ranking member on the Agriculture appropriations subcommittee to draw concern to this bill. I know that we're in tough budget times, but even in tough budget times, people have to eat. It's my opinion that this bill makes it very hard for people to eat, particularly people who don't have any money.

The allocation for the FY 2012 Agriculture appropriations bill, as approved in the full committee, is $17.250 billion. This is $5 billion, or 23 percent, below what President Obama asked for. It's 14 percent below what Congress enacted last year. It's 26 percent below what the Congress enacted the year before. It's even below what we enacted in 2008. So it has taken the wind out of the hopes and food lockers of people who are most poor.

With the allocation that Chairman KINGSTON was given, I don't envy his position. He was forced to make these drastic cuts that will affect every heart of farm country, and I do appreciate the effort that he has made to invest our very limited resources wisely and cost effectively. In tough budget times, everyone has to tighten their belts; we all know that. I want to point out, though, that it doesn't matter if you're a specialty crop producer in California or a cotton or peanut producer in Georgia; if the resources are not available to deliver the program, then the effects felt by both producers and consumers in urban and rural areas are the same.

I know my friend Mr. KINGSTON did the best he could but agriculture is about feeding people. This isn't just about looking at the cost of everything. It's also examining the value. It's about making sure that America has the production capabilities and enough food to go around domestically and internationally. The bill almost makes that difficult, if not impossible, especially where nursing mothers and infant babies are concerned, because the WIC program gets whacked.

The bill also calls into question the United States' commitment to our international neighbors who have hungry and malnourished people that depend on our assistance to stave off mass starvation because the Food for Peace program is chopped.

I think there comes a point in budget exercise when you starve the program so much that it just can't function. I fear that this is where this bill is going, with several of the funding levels in this bill, such as implementing the Food Safety Modernization Act and the Dodd-Frank and Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

The United States is the greatest agriculture producer in the world. We produce more and we produce it more efficiently than any other country, but this bill will undermine the very resources that support our agricultural supremacy. I feel it is important to use this bill to strengthen our rural economy by investing our precious Federal resources, investing in expanding markets for agricultural products and supporting international economic development; by investing in developing alternative markets for agriculture products; by providing financing needed to help expand job opportunities and improve housing, utilities, and infrastructure in rural America, which the U.S. Department of Agriculture is responsible for; and most specifically, enhancing food safety and improving nutrition and health by providing food assistance and nutrition education and promotion. These are the things that America does best.

Madam Chairman, as we move through this bill, through the process again, I want to make sure that you understand that there are dire consequences to adopting this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished chairman of the committee, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS).

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. I thank the chairman for yielding the time and congratulate him and Mr. FARR on producing, I think, a good bill.

The bill answers the call from Americans to reduce government spending while still providing for critical programs that keep American agriculture competitive in a global economy. The $125.5 billion in both discretionary and mandatory funding in this bill will help our rural communities to thrive, provide daily nutrition to children and families, and keep our food and drug supply safe.

However, we can't spend at the rate we used to. We've hit the debt ceiling. We're borrowing more than 42 cents on every dollar we spend. We're mortgaging our children's futures. We have to rein in spending, even if it may not be the most popular thing to do.

Accordingly, Chairman KINGSTON and his subcommittee did not provide the agencies and programs funded by this bill with carte blanche. This bill trims lower priority services, eliminates duplicative and wasteful programs, and limits funding and increases oversight for agencies that have been less than transparent with taxpayer money. All in all, this bill cuts nearly $5 billion in discretionary spending from the President's request.

□ 1450

With this legislation, we are helping to put the Department of Agriculture, the FDA, and the other agencies funded by this bill back on a sustainable budget path that is accountable to the taxpayers of this country. In addition, more than taking the first steps to help balance our budgets, we're taking the necessary steps to increase transparency.

Not only does this legislation encourage, but it requires, each and every agency to submit spending plans for every program funded by this bill. This commonsense oversight will go a long way in demonstrating to the American public our commitment to fiscal responsibility.

I am confident not only that Chairman KINGSTON and his subcommittee have made the smart, but necessary, cuts in this bill to help balance our budgets but also that this bill adequately funds important government programs, including ag research, rural health and economic development, and safety net food and nutrition services.

I want to commend the chairman, the ranking member, the subcommittee members, and the staff all for their dedicated and thoughtful work on this bill, and I urge support in its final passage.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS), the distinguished ranking member of the full committee and an outstanding player in the Rose Bowl from the University of Washington.

Mr. DICKS. I appreciate the gentleman from California yielding.

With an allocation that cuts $2.9 billion below the current level and $5 billion below the amount requested by the Obama administration for the next fiscal year, the subcommittee has drafted an Agriculture appropriations bill that drastically reduces funding for food programs that serve women, children, and the elderly, and for the Food and Drug Administration, among other drastic cuts.

The economy is still struggling, Madam Chairman. Unemployment is still far too high, and people around the country are still hurting. American families need help just to make ends meet. The bill slashes funding for WIC, the Women, Infants, and Children Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, leaving more people to fend for themselves during the worst recession since the Great Depression.

While I am pleased that we were able to provide a slight increase for the WIC program in full committee markup with the acceptance of the DeLauro amendment, this bill still drastically underfunds this critical program. This bill reduces funding from $6.73 billion this year, 2011, to $6.5 billion, a cut of more than $650 million below current levels. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities estimates that the drastic reduction would require us to turn away anywhere from 200,000 to 350,000 eligible low-income women and young children next year. That's a tragedy. Unemployment is still hovering around 9 percent, and the economic recovery has faltered since the new Republican majority took the reins with their illogical ''cut and grow'' strategy. Again, this is no time to be pulling the rug out from underneath the people who can least afford it, Madam Chairman.

The cut to the budget of the Food and Drug Administration represents

another perfect example of the Republican majority's commitment to shortsighted budgeting. In the aftermath of several nationwide recalls, Democrats in Congress passed a food safety bill that added new and important capability to the FDA, but this bill actually moves us backward in protecting our food supply and medical products. It is 12 percent below the current level and 21 percent below the amount requested by the administration. These cuts will increase the risk of recurring outbreaks of food-borne illness. The FDA would inspect fewer firms that manufacture food and conduct fewer inspections of imported food.

This bill also takes a shortsighted approach with respect to our international food aid programs, cutting Food for Peace by $457 million below current levels and the McGovern-Dole Food for Education Program by $19 million, 10 percent below 2011. By slashing funding for these critical overseas programs, we risk exacerbating food insecurity and strife in some of the most vulnerable parts of the world and are essentially undermining our own national security interests.

Beyond food programs, there are numerous other programs that take egregious cuts. Notably among those is the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. The CFTC takes a cut of $30 million below current levels and is funded at $136 million below the President's request.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. FARR. I yield the gentleman 30 seconds.

Mr. DICKS. The requested increase for FY 2012 is needed in order to implement the measures put forward in the Dodd-Frank Wall Street reform bill and provide oversight and regulation of the options and futures markets that wrought such havoc on our economy just a few years ago.

One can't help but notice the efforts in this bill to drastically cut food assistance to the poor while actively undermining any efforts of oversight and regulation of the wealthy on Wall Street. So I urge all Democrats to vote ''no'' on this bill.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY).

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I thank the gentleman from Georgia for the time.

Madam Chair, farmers are good Americans. They understand our tight budgetary times and the need to tighten the belt, and they are willing to do their part. But before we vote on this bill, which does some very heavy lifting in this regard, let's consider the profound benefits American agriculture brings to people across the country. It's about food security. Today Americans pay only 10 to 12 percent of their income on food, compared to those in other nations who pay up to 50 percent or more. Ag policy now is also about economic security, energy security, and even national security and global stability.

Agriculture, Madam Chair, is one of the few bright spots in the American economy. Agriculture is consistently one of the few trade areas where the U.S. still holds a positive trade balance. And exports are growing as the world demands more and more American-grown food. Last year, ag exports neared $108 billion, and projections indicate an even stronger total this year.

Agriculture is also helping strengthen our energy independence. From rural wind and solar farms to biofuels and biogas production from livestock waste, we are beginning to see the vast potential of renewable sources found on America's farms and ranches.

Not only does food security bolster our own national security, but it also aids in global stability. Our farmers help feed the world and keep the peace in understated but very important ways. In my home State of Nebraska, for instance, our farmers are rebuilding war-torn fields in Afghanistan, countering the illicit poppy trade and helping to create a new sustainable and lawful agricultural production. I just came from a ceremony where we sent off 57 members of the agricultural unit of the Nebraska Air and Army National Guard, who will be using their farming skills to help the Afghan people with new irrigation techniques and new models for wheat and grassland production.

Our farmers participating in global agricultural training projects achieve key humanitarian goals as well. We have made significant gains in empowering women producers, which gives rise to greater equality and social mobilization and engagement in their local communities. For instance, they are helping to rebuild Haiti's decimated agricultural sector in the aftermath of the terrible earthquake. And through various U.S. agricultural food aid programs, they are combating global hunger.

Again, Madam Chairman, American farmers are ready to do their part and help fix our Nation's fiscal mess. But in cleaning up this mess, it's very important not to forget about the hard work our farm families put in day in and day out to help feed and fuel and protect all of America.

Mr. FARR. How much time do we have remaining?

The CHAIR. The gentleman from California has 22½ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Georgia has 19 minutes remaining.

Mr. FARR. I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished Member from Ohio, MARCY KAPTUR, the former ranking member of this committee.

Ms. KAPTUR. I want to thank the ranking member from California (Mr. FARR) for his hard work and Mr. KINGSTON, the chairman from Georgia, for bringing this bill before us today. And I am really sorry I can't support it. At a time of such instability in the American economy, this committee bill simply further destabilizes one of the most productive sectors of the American economy, agriculture, further, it hurts all Americans who depend on the Department of Agriculture for nutritional support during these hard times that we are experiencing.

This legislation has some of the most destructive sections in it that eliminate, for all practical purposes, the Rural Energy for America Program, that was supposed to take America into a new energy future. It takes the cops off the beat at the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to hold Wall Street accountable and clamp down on speculation. We all know that hasn't been happening.

□ 1500

The drastic decrease in the nutrition and commodity supplemental food programs hurt people across this country and with decreases in the WIC program, children will be harmed. They can't speak for themselves here. As well, there is a dangerous directive included in the bill that would further erode the minimal competition in the meat industry in which real competition hardly exists at all. We must defend our farmers and ranchers to be treated on an equal par with the big packers and processors through the grain inspection, packer, and stockyards agency. Later in the consideration of the bill, I'll be dealing with that in a different way.

But let me just say a word about the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. The level of funding provided in this bill is inadequate. We all know it's inadequate because of the mess we face in the derivatives market today. The small agency called the Commodity Futures Trading Commission provides a critical bulwark against the gouging of the American people in the type of manipulation, speculation, and outright fraud that led our country into the worst economic recession since the Great Depression.

With gas prices now rising above $4 a gallon and food prices just skyrocketing, who's really the watchdog in charge of implementing market reforms to protect the consumer by regulating the market to prevent excessive speculation in all fields? I'd hate to think that this bill is being purposefully underfunded to prevent robust regulation of speculation and allow these massive interests on Wall Street—and in the Chicago futures market—to continue doing what they have been doing, and that is gouging the pocketbooks of the American people, whether it's gas prices or food prices or mortgage speculation.

Just to give you an idea, this proposal would not fund the agency to implement reforms contained in the Dodd-Frank bill in a futures market that's grown from $13 trillion back in the mid 1990s to over $600 trillion notional value today. The bill's funding level basically takes the cops off the beat. It takes the watchdogs away. And one might say, the bill gives a green light for Wall Street to harm America again.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. FARR. I yield the gentlewoman another 30 seconds.

Ms. KAPTUR. In sum, this bill falls far short of what America needs. I mentioned the nutrition programs, and their serious underfunding affecting seniors, children and women across our Nation. I want to thank the chairman for accepting an amendment to restore just $1.3 million to the Rural Energy for America Program, as America struggles to regain our energy independence. But we are a very long way from restoring our liberty. Rural America simply has to be a full partner in this effort. This bill does not do that. GIPSA needs to be strengthened not weakened and the CFTC must be allowed to severely regulate the future markets and clamp down on speculation to prevent another meltdown.

And though we disagree on this bill and its funding levels, I congratulate both the new chair and ranking members on their hard work over the last several months to prepare this bill, though imperfect, and bring it to the floor.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished vice chair of the Republican Conference, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS of Washington.

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. I appreciate the gentleman yielding, and I appreciate his commitment to the future of America's agriculture.

I rise in support of this legislation because I believe that it sets the important priorities that must be made in order to rein in the runaway spending of previous Congresses while still providing funding, important funding, for agriculture's safety net, vital research, oversight, and increased opportunity.

I grew up in eastern Washington, working on my family's orchard, where the number one industry is agriculture, and I know what it's like to pick and eat what you pick and have your family's livelihood depend on the success of your annual crop.

For the last 16 years, I have actively engaged the agriculture community in eastern Washington to identify solutions to ensure farmers remain productive and competitive. The success of the farmers in eastern Washington and all across our Nation hinge on two important issues: The ability to adapt and apply cutting edge research, and the ability to access markets.

H.R. 2112, for the first time, directs ARS to prioritize its research and make the vital investments to see those top priorities implemented. We must all remember that it's the American farmer who has fed the world for the last hundred years, kept our Nation's food prices low as a percentage of our income, and has done more to combat poverty around the world than any other antipoverty program; and it's, in large part, due to scientific breakthroughs in agriculture research.

We need to be focusing on research that has the potential to affect the global population. Two such initiatives have national and international importance, and those are crop protection and production research housed within the ARS. These initiatives are on the front line of the fight against stem rust, Ug99, stripe rust, which all have the potential to eliminate our Nation's and, in turn, the world's wheat supply.

I applaud the gentleman from Georgia and his subcommittee for recognizing and including this specific language in the report to study and prevent the spread of these harmful diseases.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the Member from Memphis, Tennessee (Mr. COHEN).

Mr. COHEN. I appreciate the Member from Carmel yielding time to the gentleman from Memphis.

This is unfortunate. Mr. KINGSTON, in presenting his side of the budget, was almost apologetic about WIC, and I can understand that, why he would be apologetic.

This is a sacred portion of the budget to people on my side of the aisle, and it should be sacred to all people in America—newborn mothers, babies, and children under 5 who are identified as nutritionally at risk, and yet we are cutting that budget 13 percent. There's good reason you'd be almost ashamed to introduce it. And the way he introduced it showed concern. He thought it was difficult, and it is.

The fact is some people talk about, in difficult economic times, everybody has to tighten their belt and everybody ought to tighten their belts equally. Well, what about the obesely wealthy? They're not being asked to tighten their belt at all. In fact, there's not a belt big enough to go around their obesely successful selves. They are doing great.

And it seems like in this budget there are only about two things that seem to be sacred. One is tax cuts for the rich. The Bush tax cuts that were created when there was a surplus created by a Democratic Congress and a Democratic President, Bill Clinton. Those tax cuts were passed because we had a surplus. Now we've got a great deficit and they are being extended, and even to people making over $1 million a year. There is rejection of having them pay more so that mothers, babies, and children under 5 identified as nutritionally at risk can get the WIC payments. There's something wrong here.

Economists estimate that for every $1 invested in WIC, there are savings between $1.50 and $3 in health care costs just in the first 60 days after an infant's birth. Talk about a return on investment.

However, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle obviously think this return isn't good enough and so we should gut the program, just like what they want to do with Medicare, until it can no longer function adequately to serve so many of the Americans who need it the most.

This measure funds the WIC program at $686 million less than the current level, which is the equivalent of kicking off 475,000 eligible mothers, infants, and children.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. FARR. I yield the gentleman an additional minute.

Mr. COHEN. It's equivalent to kicking 475,000 eligible mothers, infants, and children off one of the most cost-effective programs in our country. It will cost Tennessee over $1 million. If we get rid of tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires for 1 week, we could pay for the entire WIC program for a year.

I cannot see this. It seems to me it's distorted values, and I would ask that they reconsider and put the WIC program back to its basic level.

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD).

Mr. CRAWFORD. Madam Chair, along with my Republican colleagues, I share a commitment to fiscal discipline in the fiscal year 2012 budget. And while it's important to find savings and carefully consider every item in the budget, it's also important to maintain commitments that have already been authorized.

The 2008 farm bill authorized the Biomass Crop Assistance Program, or BCAP for short. So I stand here today to support at least partial funding for the BCAP program. In my district, hundreds of farmers have worked hard in preparation for planting a variety of switchgrass called Miscanthus giganteus, which has proven to be a viable cellulosic biofuel feedstock. In fact, 1 acre is capable of producing 20 tons of biomass, as opposed to corn, which produces less than 8, on average.

This program will help our country produce renewable energy and accelerate economic growth. I hope my colleagues in the House will keep an open mind about the program and will find a way to give it the priority it deserves as this bill moves through the legislative process.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished Member from California (Mr. GARAMENDI), former Lieutenant Governor of the State of California.

□ 1510

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you, Mr. FARR.

Each piece of legislation that passes the House is really a reflection of our values. It speaks to our heart; it speaks to what we care about and what's important to us. This particular bill does that in a way that more than ever highlights values. Is it about children, about infants? Or is it about tax breaks for the very, very wealthy? Is it about safe food? Or tax breaks for oil companies and subsidies for oil companies? Is it about those people around the world that are hungry and the Food for Peace program that provides them with

enough food to be able to survive and to live? Or is it about a continuation of very fat, unnecessary farm crop subsidies?

It's about our values. It's about what we care about and what we think is important. And if there's anything that's important in life, it's food. It's the ability for our youngest children—I was on this floor not more than 2 hours ago with my granddaughter, 11 months old. Out there in America there are hundreds of thousands of young children that will not have the food that they need to be able to be healthy, will not be able to have the care they need. This is about our values.

What does this bill say of our values? It says that those children are of little value. Is that what this is about? Is it about those people around the world that are starving that will not have the Food for Peace program? Is that the value of this Congress, that we cannot find the money, in this wealthiest of all nations, to provide the health care for our young children and the food for those around the world?

What is it that we care about then? The very wealthy? About Wall Street? About the Commodity Futures Trading Commission not having the money that they need to regulate the programs that brought this country to its knees? What is it that we value? Big question.

In this bill, obviously there's a great difference in what we value on our side and what this bill, brought to us by the Republican majority, values.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, may I inquire as to the time remaining.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia has 16 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from California has 14 minutes remaining.

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Mrs. NOEM).

Mrs. NOEM. Madam Chairwoman, we have important things to discuss, and it truly does deal with our values.

As the previous speaker was talking about his grandchild that was on the House floor previously, I wondered if he had told the grandchild that from the moment they were born they owed $47,000 in Federal debt. That is their responsibility because of the spending that's gone on and because of the fact that when we are going to start with feeding programs and distribute food to other countries, we're going to borrow money from other countries and have our grandchildren and great-grandchildren pay for that so we can do that.

So this discussion truly is about values and getting back to our priorities and getting back to what's important in this country, and it's fiscal responsibility. There are tough decisions to make, but we talk about what we need to do. And the fact that we're increasing food and nutrition programs and spending shows that we dedicate ourselves to those values and taking care of our children into the future while remembering that we're not going to saddle them with a debt that they certainly cannot pay.

Madam Chairwoman, I rise in support and to speak a little bit about the Biomass Crop Assistance Program, the BCAP, which is addressed in this bill as well. I just want to talk about some of the projects that have offered some alternatives in South Dakota.

This program, authorized in the 2008 farm bill, is part of our all-of-the-above energy program. BCAP promotes second-generation biofuels refined from renewable biomass and can reduce our dependence on foreign sources of energy.

I have been a firm supporter of an all-of-the-above American energy plan, and this can certainly continue to play a role in that. It reduces barriers that farmers face to diversify their farms. BCAP, if funded and used as the program was intended as cellulosic biofuels, can spur economic growth in rural areas such as those in South Dakota.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chair, I rise to point out that once again we find ourselves in a familiar situation. Once again, under the guise of fiscal responsibility, austerity, and a blind allegiance to supply-side voodoo economics gimmicks, Republicans have brought forth another effort to cut away the social safety net, this time kicking low-income mothers and their young children into the depths of hunger and food insecurity.

It's like deja vu. Just months ago, Democrats defended the American people from the Ryan Republican plan to turn Medicare into a voucher program. Unfortunately, the plan to get rid of Medicare was passed with the unanimous support of every single Republican in the House. Now, here we stand once again trying to prevent Republicans from delivering a swift kick to the stomachs of low-income mothers, many of whom are already struggling to get by during this economic downturn.

Reducing WIC funding by more than half a billion dollars in the name of deficit reduction while unanimously refusing to eliminate or even decrease tax cuts for big businesses, oil companies and wealthy individuals, Republicans have forgotten one of mankind's most basic human values: upholding our moral responsibilities to our fellow man.

Recently, I received a gift from the House Members Bible study group, and I do appreciate it. My heart compelled me to open it today. When I turned the pages separated by the book divider, I was at Mark 6:33, and nothing could have been more appropriate for the day. It was the passage on Jesus feeding his followers.

Just as Jesus walked with his disciples, preaching the Gospel and healing the sick, he also fed 5,000 of his followers who would have gone hungry without those five loaves of bread and two fish.

If Jesus can feed 5,000 people with five loaves of bread and two fish, then surely America, the wealthiest Nation in the world, and surely this Congress, the greatest deliberative body in the world, should continue to provide for Americans in their time of need.

Just as Jesus provided for his followers, He also broke with tradition and compassionately watched as His followers ate bread with impure hands—as they were called—unclean hands. This upset some of those righteous observers, and they asked Jesus, ''Why do your disciples not wash according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with impure hands?'' Jesus called them hypocrites and then He said, ''Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men.'' Is that what we're doing here today? Does the man-made rule of reducing our country's debt trump our moral responsibility to provide for Americans in their time of need?

We as Members of Congress must also feed the hungry among us. Isn't this our moral and civic duty? According to the USDA, 750,000 of our fellow citizens, women and children, could be turned away from WIC. This is unconscionable. And the result is crystal clear—more Americans will be left to fend for themselves in their time of need.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Meanwhile, the $800 million that we give away on one week of tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires, we could ensure, with that $800 million, that over 9 million WIC participants receive nutrition, education, food and services for an entire year.

America is better than this. Don't hurt the women and the children who need help. I stand opposed to this bill.

□ 1520

Mr. KINGSTON. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Boston, Massachusetts, Mr. STEVE LYNCH.

Mr. LYNCH. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Chair, I speak in favor of a measure that will be coming up shortly, offered by my friend Ms. DELAURO, which goes to a major weakness in the underlying bill.

The core mission of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission is to ensure the integrity and transparency of derivatives markets. Yet, despite the recent spike in gasoline prices and despite the great difficulty we had in this recent financial crisis with respect to commodities-based swaps, we have to come to the floor today to fight for funding for the one agency that would police that activity. It is, indeed, unbelievable that this House would consider

a proposal that would eviscerate the agency with the central responsibility for regulating the commodities markets.

But here we are.

The price of everyday items, from milk to gasoline, depends on the fair and open operation of commodities markets policed by the CFTC, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. The recent spike in gasoline prices is not due to a shortage of supply, as we have seen, or increased demand. Clearly, this is a problem of unchecked speculative interests making money off the commodities markets as there are some who believe that as much as $27 of a barrel of oil today is the result of sheer speculation.

It is our hope that through the Dodd-Frank regulatory reform bill the CFTC's responsibilities will be expanded to include oversight of the nearly $300 trillion in previously unregulated domestic swaps on the market today. This is a key step to bringing the shadow markets, which helped crash the economy, under sensible regulation. This is where the CDOs, CDSs and other complex derivatives deals were made. This is how AIG helped bring down the economy. We have to regulate this financial market and these financial products. However, the notional size of the market that the CFTC now must supervise has increased seven-fold, and the CFTC needs more resources. But in this bill, we will see its budget slashed. Instead of giving the agency the tools it needs to prevent another financial collapse, we are planting the seeds for the next financial crisis.

The result of this Republican legislation to delay reform and the underlying bill to starve this agency would allow large, interconnected financial companies to engage unsupervised in activities and transactions similar to the activities that got us into this crisis in the first place. This would perpetuate an era of no oversight, no regulation and no transparency—in a similar fashion that nearly destroyed our economy. CFTC Chairman Gary Gensler has warned that denying funding to this agency and delaying the implementation of Dodd-Frank will greatly ''increase risk to the American people and leave significant uncertainty in the marketplace.''

The CFTC is vital to the proper functioning of our financial markets and the American economy. Underfunding the commission is deeply irresponsible, so I urge my colleagues to support the DeLauro amendment to properly fund the CFTC.

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, I wanted to respond to the discussion of the CFTC. It's very interesting to me that there are those Members of Congress who believe that bureaucrats control the price of oil. While bureaucrats certainly do have influence on the price of oil, if you're really concerned about the price of oil, you need to drill for it. It's pretty simple—increase the supply.

Folks forget that Alaska is twice the size of Texas. The Arctic Wildlife Reserve area is the size of South Carolina. The proposed exploration area is 2,000 acres. It's about the size of National Airport here. We're talking about a business card on a basketball court. Yet you hear over and over again from people—who, incidentally, do drive fossil fueled cars—that we in America are inept and unable to drill for oil responsibly. If you want to decrease the price, you've got to increase the supply, and there is no better way than to drill your own oil.

Think about the absurdity of President Obama going down to Brazil and telling them, We want you to drill offshore. Apparently, the Brazilians are technologically more advanced than we are, and the President has much more of a comfort level with the people of Brazil than he apparently has with the people from Louisiana or from Texas or from Florida. He goes down to Brazil and says, Go ahead and drill offshore. We're going to lend you money, and by the way, we want to be your best customer.

Now, he never mentioned anything about the CFTC.

Let me tell you what Democrat Commissioner Michael Dunn said. This was, by the way, on January 1, 2011: ''To date, CFTC staff has been unable to find any reliable economic analysis to support the contention that excessive speculation is affecting the markets we regulate or that position limits will prevent excessive speculation.''

What I suggest to you, Madam Chair, is that the discussion of the CFTC and oil speculators is a red herring. The real issue that the Democrats have failed to address is that of drilling for oil in order to increase supply.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, how much time do both sides have remaining?

The CHAIR. The gentleman from California has 6 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Georgia has 12 minutes remaining.

Mr. FARR. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to go back over this food situation. I and the gentleman from California, the ranking member, have had 11 hearings on this. We've had 11 hearings on the Agriculture bill, not on feeding programs specifically.

I want to again remind the Chair that this bill represents a net increase in funding, which is largely driven by the increase of $5.6 billion in food stamps and in the School Lunch Program of $1.5 billion. I also want to remind Members of the many Federal feeding programs that we have. For a 3-year-old child, there are 12 different feeding programs. For a 10-year-old child, there are nine different programs. For a 35-year-old, there are seven programs, and for a 65-year-old, there are five programs that people can apply for.

It is not the intention of this committee to let anyone fall through the cracks. The numbers that we have funded, for example, in WIC, contemplate what we believe is going to be the participation. Should that participation fluctuate, there are three contingency accounts that the USDA can access. It would certainly be our intention to have those accounts accessed before anyone fell through the cracks.

Now, I share in the frustration of the stimulus program that was supposed to create last year's summer of recovery. I'm sorry it did not work, because I would like to be out celebrating with the President. Yet the stimulus program, which was supposed to keep unemployment below 8 percent, actually increased unemployment to the level of 10 percent. Now it's hovering a little bit above 9 percent.

The best thing in the world would be to have prosperity, and I believe that we can get there. One way we should get there is by drilling our own oil because, if you want to keep food prices down, you've got to keep the cost of distribution down, which would be something, I'd hope, that we could work together on.

I also think we need fundamental tax reform because I know one of the things that some on the committee have talked about are some of the tax loopholes taken advantage of by certain companies. I agree with them. That's why I support the Fair Tax, which is a consumption tax. It would actually give a tax credit to the poor so that it does not disproportionately hurt them, but it would close all the loopholes. That would be something else that we could do that would create jobs in America.

Finally, the excessive bureaucratic regulations that our farmers and small businesses have to put up with is killing job creation. If we want to do something to help people get off dependency and get to independency, we need to decrease the size of government. This bill moves us in that direction.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1530

Mr. FARR. I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), the former ranking member of this committee.

Ms. DELAURO. I thank the gentleman.

I want to comment on my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, who continue to make reference to wanting to reduce the deficit and that they are the only ones interested in reducing the deficit and that is what this debate is all about. The fact of the matter is that Democrats and Republicans are very interested in reducing the deficit. The biggest difference occurs in where one starts to effectuate a change in debt reduction, and I will tell you that that is what the basic divide is here.

Now, there are a number of ways in which we can reduce the deficit. One is

that we can look at the $41 billion in the oil subsidies that we grant every year. The oil industry is flush with money, when one CEO can make $21.5 million a year, make profits that are overwhelming, and gasoline in the State of Connecticut is $4.39 a gallon for regular gas. So let's start with the $41 billion and we can reduce the deficit.

How about the $8 billion that we provide to multinational corporations to take their jobs overseas? Now, that is another place where we could shut down the loopholes, gain some money and reduce the deficit.

There is also a third area. What about agriculture subsidies; not to small farmers, not to dairy farmers, but to big agribusiness. It might be of interest, in a political article that appeared this week, to indicate that there are some Members on the other side of the aisle whose States and whose families are rich in the subsidies they are getting from the Federal Government. We could start there.

Why are we starting with women, infants, and children and nutrition programs? That is an absolute dividing line of where one's values are. Democrats want to reduce the deficit. The place is: Where do you start? That is where your values are. We don't start with women, infants, and children and nutrition programs. Let's start with tax subsidies for the richest people in this country and with the special interests of this Nation.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS), a great member of the committee.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank the gentleman.

Madam Chair, this is my third year in this Congress. During my first 2 years, the Democrats controlled the House, the Senate, and the Presidency, and during that time the subsidies or tax loopholes for the rich, for the oil companies, for these bailouts of Wall Street were going on just like they allege they are now. And did they do anything about it when they controlled the entire government? No. Nope. They didn't do anything.

Instead, they created massive new entitlement programs. Instead, they did TARP part two without accounting for part one. They did massive bailouts of the auto industry. They created huge new health programs. They gave massive blank checks to bureaucrats. They increased spending at the EPA, one agency, by 39 percent in 1 year. It is incredible. They taxed, they spent, yet they didn't go after the very people that today they allege are the source of the problem.

Now, when the Republicans were elected in the House to do what the American people felt needed to be done, which is to grapple with spending first, spending being the problem in our country, amassing a huge amount of debt, deficits, borrowing money from foreign countries, risking our own credit rating, risking our own ability to borrow money, risking the value of our currency, now they are alleging we are addressing the wrong targets.

Madam Chair, this very budget we are debating today increases spending for food programs. It increases funding for both food stamps and school lunch. It increases it more than we are cutting spending for WIC and other programs. It increases spending for the human needs that are legitimate for the people in this country by over one-quarter of a billion dollars.

Madam Chair, I allege that this is a responsible budget, that we are beginning to get off that unsustainable path of spending that even the President acknowledges and get back on a path where we can live more reasonably, where we can protect our currency, where we can protect our job market, where we can protect our tax structure and improve it in a way that makes America strong for our grandchildren.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, how much time does each side have remaining?

The CHAIR. The gentleman from California has 4 minutes, and the gentleman from Georgia has 6 minutes.

Mr. FARR. I yield such myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to, first of all, compliment Mr. KINGSTON, who is chair of this committee. He has come on as the chair, and I have come on as ranking member. We have both been on the committee for a long time and served under very distinguished chairs, two of whom are ranking members you heard here today.

It is really tough, because he has been given the allocation to fit all the programs within the Department of Agriculture and Food and Drug Administration within the allocation given him, and one can argue that that is it. I mean, we have to hide behind the allocation that was given. You have to do it.

Mr. KINGSTON. Will my friend yield a minute?

Mr. FARR. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. I just wanted to say that we actually have had one more speaker show up. It sounds like you are closing. You might want to reserve some time.

Mr. FARR. Let me say in this moment, in this allocation of time, that it is about values, and I think the big debate here is not just about how you cut, squeeze, and trim spending.

We have Members of Congress who have spoken today whose families receive millions of dollars in taxpayer money in commodity payments, in crop payments. We ought to be discussing that. What is the value of funding very wealthy people at the expense of taking food away from poor and starving children?

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON).

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Chair, more than 2 years ago, Democrats claimed that their trillion dollar stimulus package would keep unemployment below 8 percent, and we know now it is above 9 percent.

Recently, the CBO released their annual budget and economic outlook report which projects the 2011 deficit will reach $1.48 trillion and our national debt, as everybody knows, is over $14 trillion. We are borrowing nearly 42 cents of every dollar we spend, much of it from the Chinese, and sending the bill to our children and grandchildren. Every child born today owes $45,500 to the debt.

For the past few years, the American people have been told that government spending is the answer. They had their chance to prove this economic model, but it failed. It is time we changed our approach, because our country has a spending problem and not a revenue problem. Debt by the public is estimated to increase to 94 percent over the next 10 years. Over 10 years, the annual government spending will consume an average of 23.5 percent of GDP, which is significantly higher than the post-World War II average of 20 percent.

In a 2010 article for the Cato Policy Report, economists Jason Taylor and Richard Vedder outlined the lessons of the largest public sector drawdown in our country's history—the cuts to government spending after World War II. Taylor and Vedder point out that the Federal spending fell from $84 billion in 1945 to $30 billion in 1946, a reduction of more than 60 percent.

□ 1540

The point is that despite these warnings from economists that this withdrawal of Keynesian stimulus would sure lead to a second Great Depression, civilian employment grew by over 4 million between 1945 and 1947, with unemployment remaining under 4½ percent in the first three postwar years. The postwar era provides a classic illustration of how government spending ''crowds out'' private sector spending and how the economy can thrive when government's shadow is dramatically reduced. The lesson from the 1945–1947 era is that a sharp reduction in government spending frees up assets for productive use and leads to renewed growth.

When spending is slated to reach an all-time high of $3.7 trillion this year and we're living through the weakest jobs recovery since the Great Depression, it's time to get our fiscal house in order. Vigorous and sustained economic growth, fueled by investment and entrepreneurship, is needed for the private sector to create more jobs and increase incomes of the poor. In turn, this will generate the revenues that governments need to expand access to health, education, and infrastructure services and help improve productivity. Spending cuts work; tax increases

don't. Despite the evidence, many liberals continue to call for more spending, more taxing, and red tape.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. These ideas won't solve the problem; they are the problem. Washington needs to stop creating uncertainty and get out of the way.

I commend the Appropriations Committee, Chairman ROGERS, and Chairman KINGSTON for crafting a bill that's $5.041 billion, or 22.6 percent less than the President's fiscal year 2012 budget request, and $2.672 billion, or 13.4 percent less than the fiscal year 2011 enacted level. However, I believe the financial catastrophe facing our Nation requires us to do even more, and so I hope my colleagues will realize this and do what is necessary to get our fiscal house in order.

Mr. FARR. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Chair, we've heard a lot today. We've heard a lot about spending, because that's what this bill is. It is an appropriations bill. But the talk about spending is wrong because it's not putting into the priorities what is really important in our service to the people of this country. We don't need to be here to protect the rich and to protect multinational corporations. We need to be here to protect the rights of people who don't have the wherewithal to have enough food on their table to take care of their kids.

What you've seen in the debate today is tax spending for the rich is okay; tax spending for the poor is not. Tax breaks for oil companies are okay; food for the poor is not. Cutting our Commodity Futures Trading Commission is okay, but paying for police to police for speculation and misuse of public moneys is not a worthwhile expenditure. Our priorities are not straight, and that's why there's so much criticism for this bill.

I applaud the chairman for working hard to try to get the committee to bring together a bill that could meet the allocation. But I think the allocation was all wrong and our priorities are wrong, and I ask my colleagues to oppose the bill.

Mr. REYES. Madam Chair, I rise in strong opposition to the underlying bill for its drastic and extreme cuts to various critical food programs funded through the Department of Agriculture. While we face a great challenge in reducing the deficit and creating jobs, the greater challenge is to do this in a way that is consistent with our values. Slashing funds for programs that help put food on the table for the neediest of Americans, young children, pregnant mothers, the elderly, and those struggling to make ends meet, is not good policy.

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) which serves predominantly low-income seniors, and The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) which works with states to assist food banks are just some of the programs that were targeted for extreme cuts.

The cuts to WIC concern me the most. WIC provides food to new mothers, babies, and children under five who have been identified as nutritionally at risk. Nearly 50% of the babies born in our country each year rely on WIC. On top of that, it is incredibly cost-effective, serving nearly 10 million people each year, and costing less than $100 per person.

In my district, nearly 54,000 children and women suffer from food hardship, and depend on WIC to make ends meet.

This is yet another chapter in the Republican attack on working families to give handouts to special interests.

First they came after seniors who rely on Medicare, and now they're coming after children and mothers who rely on food assistance.

We cannot let Republicans destroy programs on which our most vulnerable population depend to pay for $45 billion in tax breaks for millionaires.

According to the Center for American Progress, if we got rid of tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires for one week, we would pay for the entire WIC program for a year.

I urge my colleagues to protect working Americans, not millionaires and billionaires.

Thank you.

Mr. STARK. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the FY 2012 Agriculture Appropriations Act. This bill makes devastating cuts to nutrition programs. It also undermines the ability of the Food and Drug Administration to protect our food supply and the Commodities Futures Trading Commission to rein in the reckless speculation that is driving up gas prices.

The cuts to nutrition programs in this bill would put hundreds of thousands of our most vulnerable citizens at risk. Working families, the millions who remain out of work, and senior citizens trying to survive on fixed incomes are the Americans who continue to feel the effects of the recession most painfully. This bill adds insult to injury by literally taking food off of their tables.

In my district, there are more than 90,000 people facing hunger each day. That is unacceptable. Fortunately, they have some support, including through the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program, which offers nutrition education to pregnant women and mothers and provides food to meet the nutritional needs of young children. The $686 million dollars that this bill cuts from WIC means 200,000 to 350,000 people will lose access to this program.

This bill would also slash the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), which primarily serves senior citizens living on less than $14,000 a year. The proposed $38 million in cuts to this program would force 150,000 seniors to lose the regularly delivered box of food that they depend on to survive.

Perhaps those turned away from WIC or CSFP could go to a local food bank for assistance? No longer. This bill cuts $50 million from the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) that supplies food banks, so the shelves will be empty when people come for help.

Doing away with just one week's worth of the Bush tax cuts is more than enough to prevent the cuts to WIC, CSFP, and TEFAP proposed in this bill. Yet that's not what we're debating today.

While Republican leaders defend their tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires, people are going hungry. Something is seriously wrong in this country if we are willing to pay for a week of tax cuts for the wealthy but cannot afford to feed all of our people.

We cannot balance the budget or erase the deficit by taking more away from those who already have the least. I urge my colleagues to stand with me and oppose the FY 2012 Agriculture Appropriations Act.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Chair, I rise in strong objection to the Fiscal Year 2012 Agriculture Appropriations bill. The bill before us is simply inadequate. While there is little disagreement that we must reach agreement on a balanced framework to reduce our deficit, we cannot do so by quite literally taking food from the mouths of children. This hinders our long term prosperity, and it is simply wrong.

In expressing serious concerns about this bill, the Administration's statement on this bill says: "The Administration strongly objects to the level of funding provided for nutrition programs that are critical to the health of nutritionally at-risk women, infants, children, and elderly adults. The proposed funding levels would led to hundreds of thousands of participants being cut from the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), and reduce Federal support for food banks. These cuts would undermine efforts to prevent hunger and support sound nutrition for some of the most vulnerable members of our society."

The human impact of the bill would be devastating. Hundreds of thousands of low-income children, mothers and seniors would lose WIC assistance. The National Commodity Supplemental Food program estimates that more than one hundred thousand low-income seniors would lose access to nutritious food assistance. Feeding America estimates that approximately 32 million pounds of nutritious food would not be available at food banks and food pantries for working Americans struggling to feed their families.

I want to say a word in particular about CSFP. This program is a vital component of our nutrition efforts because it reaches many seniors who qualify for no other program while providing delivery for those that are homebound. CSFP provides 600,000 food packages each month in 39 states and the District of Columbia, including seven new states as a direct result of increased funding in Fiscal Year 2010. This year 97 percent of the participants are elderly individuals with an income at or below $14,157. Food packages are designed to supplement needed sources of nutrients typically lacking in participants' diets, and are delivered through local providers in a very cost efficient manner: the typical food package has a retail value up to $50 but costs the Federal governments less than $20 per participant package.

Earlier this year, a number of us wrote to the Appropriations Committee requesting that funding for CSFP simply be held at the 2011 level of $176.8 million. Not an increase, though there is certainly greater need, just level funding. Instead, the Committee cut CSFP by more than 20 percent. As a result, if these cuts become law, more than 100,000 low-income seniors will be at greater risk of hunger.

Madam Chair, this bill represents the wrong priorities. Under the guise of deficit reduction, of which it does very little, it imposes harmful cuts on the most vulnerable among us. I urge all of my colleagues to reject it.

Mr. BACA. Madam Chair, I rise today in strong opposition ot the unerlying bill—H.R. 2112—the FY 2012 Agriculture Appropriations Act.

With continued unemployment and high home foreclosure rates—these are tough economic times for Americans everywhere.

We all understand that our debt and deficit are significant issues—that we must begin to address with intelligent spending cuts.

But it is essential that we reduce the deficit in a way that is consistent with our American values—and not on the backs of impoverished women, children, and seniors.

The Agriculture Appropriations bill we are considering today undermines the food security of the American people.

In my district—in California's Inland Empire—my constitutents face a 16 percent unemployment rate; and a food insecurity rate of almost 22 percent.

Food banks throughout California are reporting a 30 to 40 percent increase in the number of people needing food assistance.

This is the wrong time to cut nutrition benefits for struggling American families.

Unfortunately—the bill the House is set to consider—takes food off the table for low-income women, children, and seniors.

This bill:

Cuts $650 million from WIC—causing hundreds of thousands of women and children to lose benefits;

Cuts $50 million from TEFAP—forcing struggling familes to face empty shelves at the food bank;

Cuts $38 million from the Commodity Supplemental Foods Program—leaving thousands of seniors without help; and

Cuts $2 billion from the SNAP reserve fund—at a time when a record 44 million plus Americans need this assistance.

Sadly, this bill is just the next chapter in the Repubilcan Congress's assault on middle class families.

Already this year—Republicans have voted to end Medicare as we know it.

And they've voted to cut thousands of jobs in order to give tax breaks to the ultra-rich, the big oil industries, and companies that ship jobs overseas.

But with this bill—we may have sunk to a new low.

It is wrong to dismantle the programs that our most vulnerable Americans rely on—in order to pay for $45 billion in tax breaks for millionaires.

If we got rid of tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires for one week—we would save enough to pay for the entire WIC program for a year.

During the last Farm Bill—in 2008—I served as Chair of the Agriculture Subcommittee on Nutrition.

I am proud of the work we did to improve SNAP and other federal nutrition programs.

These improvements helped feed 38 million hungry Americans.

We must not turn back the clock.

Let's focus on the real priorities of the American people—and stop these misguided funding cuts.

I urge my colleagues to protect the health of working families—and vote ''no'' on the underlying bill.

Mr. HANNA. Madam Chair, as Co-Chair of the Congressional Organic Caucus, I rise today in support of adequate resourcing for the Organic Data Initiative, ODI, in Fiscal Year 2012.

Organic agriculture in my district in upstate New York and across this country is a thriving industry that is creating jobs and exporting American products across the world. Last week I visited an organic farm in Herkimer County that produces mike, beef, chicken, eggs, garlic and other vegetables, and field crops.

The Organic Data Initiative collects and distributes organic agriculture price data. This data helps maintain stable markets for organic products, is crucial for the development of risk management tools, and is necessary to negotiate organic standards equivalency agreements with foreign governments. It is important that the organic agriculture has the same access to data that other agriculture sectors currently enjoy. The Organic Data Initiative is cost-effective and is vital to ensure a continued upward trajectory for the organic industry in the United States.

Ms. WATERS. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the underlying bill, H.R. 2112, the Republican Appropriations bill for Agriculture, Food Safety and Nutrition Programs for the coming fiscal year. This bill drastically underfunds critical nutrition programs for hungry people throughout the United States.

This bill is yet another chapter in the Republican attack on working families.

First, the Republicans tried to cut benefits for seniors who rely on Medicare.

Then, they went after low-income families who rely on Medicaid.

They tried to dismantle health care reform and leave people with pre-existing conditions at the mercy of profit-hungry insurance companies.

Now, they're coming after hungry people who rely on food assistance.

The bill cuts funding for the Women, Infants, and Children, WIC, nutrition program by more than $650 million below the fiscal year 2011 level. The WIC program provides nutritious foods, counseling on healthy eating habits, and health care referrals to about 9 million low-income pregnant and postpartum women, infants, and children under five. WIC is an effective program with a long history of bipartisan support. For the past 15 years, Congresses and Administrations of both parties have always provided enough funds for WIC to serve all women, infants and children who qualify—until now. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities estimates that the funding cut in this bill would force WIC to turn away between 200,000 and 350,000 eligible low-income women and young children next year, including 32,000 to 56,000 women and children in my home state of California.

This bill also cuts funding for the Commodity Supplemental Food program, CSFP, by 22 percent below this year's funding level. CSFP is an agricultural commodity program that provides nutritious food packages to about 604,000 low-income people each month, 96 percent of whom are senior citizens who earn less than 130 percent of the federal poverty level. The Republicans' proposed funding cuts would result in loss of food for at least 130,000 low-income seniors.

The bill cuts funding to The Emergency Food Assistance Program, TEFAP, by $51 million and cuts TEFAP administrative funding for food storage and distribution by 23 percent. TEFAP provides nutritious food commodities to low-income Americans in need of short-term hunger relief. TEFAP commodities are distributed by organizations like soup kitchens, food banks, homeless shelters, and faith-based food pantries at churches, mosques and synagogues. These cuts would force many local organizations to turn away hungry people.

Finally, the bill underfunds the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP. SNAP provides monthly benefits to 44 million low-income Americans using a grocery debit card. The Administration requested a $5 billion reserve fund for SNAP to assure that there would be adequate resources to help needy people in the event of continuing high unemployment or unexpected increases in demand from events like natural disasters. The Republicans cut the reserve fund by $2 billion.

Meanwhile, the Republican budget extends the Bush-era tax cuts beyond their expiration in 2012 and cuts the top individual tax rate down to 25 percent from 35 percent. According to the Center for Tax Justice, the Republican budget cuts taxes for the richest 1 percent of Americans by 15 percent while raising taxes for the lowest income 20 percent of Americans by 12 percent.

Madam Chair, if we got rid of the tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires for one week, we could pay for the entire WIC program for a year.

I urge my colleagues to stand up for working families—not millionaires and billionaires! Vote ''no'' on this bill.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Chair, I rise today in opposition to this legislation. Let's take a step back and talk about what this bill does; Instead of ending wasteful subsidies that go to multi-million dollar agri-business, the Republicans have decided to pay for a Brazil Cotton trade problem by cutting nutrition assistance to poor women and children, cutting conservation funding, and by raising gas prices for Americans by cutting those policing wall street oil speculators.

These subsides aren't supporting family farms; they are supporting multi-billion dollar companies, changing the food we eat and the health of our country's citizens. I commend the progress that Congressman FLAKE has made in the Committee to lessen these wasteful subsidies, and ask my colleagues to support other floor amendments, like the Blumenauer amendment, which will ensure that subsidies are capped ensuring that any needed help is distributed to those who need it, not simply concentrated amongst a few mega-corporations.

Madam Chair, I also strongly support the Woolsey Amendment, which would allow the U.S. Department of Agriculture to continue developing scientific-based nutritional standards for school meals. This amendment supports the USDA rule that carries out the intent of the Child Nutrition Act passed last year. The standards in this rule are central to students' nutrition, resulting in better child health, better student behavior, and better academic outcomes.

It's been 17 years since the last update of the national school meal standards. The USDA recently proposed much-needed updates to those standards based on consensus recommendations from the Dietary Guidelines

for Americans. The proposed updates will ensure that school lunch and breakfasts provide recommended amounts of fruits, vegetables and whole grains; fat-free and low-fat milk; less salt; fewer unhealthy saturated and trans fats; and moderate calories. Instead, too may schools are currently serving too much sodium, sugar, unhealthy saturated and trans fats, and starchy vegetables, such as French fries. To make this change, USDA received over 130,000 comments from advocates, parents and concerned citizens in support of the rule.

Yet, while school meal quality has been modestly improving in some schools, much more needs to be done. The proposed standards maximize the national investment in the school meal programs, helping to reduce both child hunger and obesity, and providing balanced meals to 31 million children each day. Our current national investment in school lunch and breakfast is about $12 billion per year—we need to make sure that these meals are healthy.

Delaying the rule—as this legislation would do—goes against what Congress passed and the president signed last year. It would damage the opportunities of our current and future generations by denying them healthy school meals, which limits their ability to live healthy lives. That's why this amendment is so important.

We have heard specious arguments that the law saddles school districts with unfunded costs and mandates. Besides a 6 cent increase in school lunch reimbursements, the law's nutritional improvements in both school meals and school snacks will help increase student participation in school meals by 900,000 students according to USDA, raising school district revenues by an estimated $7.5 billion over the next five years on top of the $3.2 billion from the 6 cent increase. So there is funding for better nutritional food for children. Too many school districts are behind the times on ensuring that students have healthy foods.

That is why we changed the law and why we need to move forward with timely implementation of the proposed rule. We need to get the most out of the national investment in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. Our children's health and educational outcomes depend on it.

Madam Chair, this bill is simply bad policy. I urge a "no" vote.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Chair, I rise today in strong opposition to the FY12 Agriculture Appropriations Bill. This measure includes a $650 million cut to the WIC Program, which would cut up to 1,000 eligible recipients in Rhode Island.

This program provides nutritious food, counseling on healthy eating, and health care referrals for low-income women and children under age five. In Rhode Island, the WIC program collaborates with local culinary programs and farmers markets on cooking demonstrations, healthy eating habits and children's activities.

While all our constituents are feeling the effects of the economic downturn, our most vulnerable citizens are disproportionately affected by job cuts, higher food prices, turmoil in the housing market and other burdens, and the impact can be devastating. Programs like WIC support these families and help put food on the table.

It is our responsibility to ensure that children born into poverty have the same opportunity to achieve the American Dream as any other child in our country and that cannot happen if children grow up malnourished and hungry. I urge my colleagues to vote against this bill and to reject these harmful cuts.

Mr. FARR. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. I have no further requests for time, I move passage of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered read for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

During consideration of the bill for amendment, the Chair may accord priority in recognition to a Member offering an amendment who has caused it to be printed in the designated place in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Those amendments will be considered read.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2112

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I

AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS

PRODUCTION, PROCESSING AND MARKETING

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Secretary of Agriculture, $4,293,000: *Provided*, That not to exceed $11,000 of this amount shall be available for official reception and representation expenses, not otherwise provided for, as determined by the Secretary.

Ms. DELAURO. I move to strike the last word.

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Connecticut is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the underlying bill and to the drastic and ill-conceived cuts to the nutrition programs that are proposed in this appropriation.

Under the majority's bill, our government cannot meet even its most basic responsibilities to the American people. For example, the Women, Infants, and Children program provides nutrition assistance grants to States for low-income pregnant, breast-feeding, and postpartum women, and infants and children up to the age of 5. It serves 9 million mothers and young children nationwide, and that includes 58,000 in Connecticut, my State. In fact, nearly half of the babies born in the United States every year participate in this program. It is a short-term intervention that can help provide a lifetime of good nutrition and health behavior. Over the first 60 days of a child's life alone, every $1 invested in WIC saves between $1.77 and $3.13 in health care costs.

But the budget before us today would leave WIC with a $650 million shortfall. According to the Center for Budget Policy and Priorities, that means as many as 350,000 eligible women and children will be cut from the rolls. In fact, Secretary of Agriculture Vilsack has warned our subcommittee that this number could be as high as 750,000. And if you read his letter carefully, there is no carryover, there is no contingency fund, and there will be substantial reductions in the number of people who will participate in the WIC program. It is unacceptable at a time of such great economic difficulty. With the unemployment rate over 9 percent, more and more families are having to rely on these dollars.

In the past, support for WIC has never been a partisan issue. For 15 years, Republicans and Democrats have always worked together in Congress to see that every woman and child eligible for WIC can participate in this life-saving program. In fact, Republicans and Democrats on our committee voted together to pass an amendment that I offered to provide $147 million more in funding for WIC before the Rules Committee today arbitrarily overturned that vote.

We cannot be taking food out of hungry people's mouths here at home in order to subsidize cotton production and to subsidize Brazilian cotton farmers. It makes no sense. As my colleague, Mr. FLAKE, on the other side of the aisle noted at the committee markup, it is quite ironic that we would subsidize Brazilian agriculture so that we can continue to excessively subsidize agriculture here. This bill flies in the face of our longstanding bipartisan commitment. It will leave women and children hungry.

WIC is not alone on the chopping block. The Commodity Supplemental Food Program provides nutritious food to low-income seniors and those making less than $14,000 a year. According to a study by Feeding America, 30 percent of these households in need have had to choose between food and medical care, and 35 percent between food and paying for heat or utilities. But even in the middle of a very tough economy, this proposal slashes funding for the CSFP. That means an estimated 150,000 seniors all across the country will lose access to this aid. They, once again, will have to go hungry.

Take the Emergency Food Assistance Program, which works with States to supplement food banks, emergency shelters, pantries, soup kitchens. Right now, the hard work these organizations do in helping ensure access to food is more important than ever. In fact, the demand for emergency food assistance has shot up 46 percent over the past 5 years. This budget cuts funding for the Emergency Food Assistance Program by $38 million—nearly a quarter below last year's funding.

Yet, while placing this tremendous burden on our most vulnerable citizens, the majority budget finds money to give subsidies to oil companies and tax

breaks to the wealthy. In fact, the cost of the Bush tax breaks for millionaires for 1 week is more than the cost of the proposed cut to the WIC program for the entire year. One day's tax breaks for the millionaires would pay for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program and for the Emergency Food Assistance Program.

This is what the majority has done. It's tax cuts for millionaires versus nutrition assistance. These are not the right choices for America. The American people know it. Gutting nutrition programs to pay for tax breaks for the rich is more than just a terrible investment in the future; it's a failure of our responsibility to the American people.

Oppose these reckless cuts.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Massachusetts is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I want to again rise in strong opposition to the underlying bill and express my deep outrage over the deep cuts in food and nutrition programs that benefit some of the most needy and vulnerable people in our country.

□ 1550

I am particularly outraged at the cuts in WIC. As we heard from our colleague from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), WIC is one of the most effective programs that exist. There has been a strong bipartisan tradition of fully funding the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children—WIC—to ensure that every eligible family that applies receives benefits. WIC is not an entitlement, but we have made a bipartisan, concerted effort in the past to make sure that everybody who qualifies and who needs it can actually get it. This is the first time since that commitment was established that the appropriations bill is providing less funding than what is needed to serve all eligible young children and pregnant or postpartum women.

Now, Republicans argue that somehow they're not cutting anything, that everything will be okay. That's not at all the case. That's, in fact, a complete distortion. We are told by organizations that monitor this that as many as 350,000 women and children would be thrown off the program as a result of these cuts. That's a conservative estimate. And since we've passed the rule, which does not protect the amendment that Ms. DELAURO got into the appropriations bill, which basically said that we're going to increase WIC funding by cutting subsidies to Brazilian cotton farmers—that is not protected, so somebody on the other side of the aisle, I'm sure, will raise a point of order against that language, and just like that, $147 million will immediately be cut from the WIC program, throwing, again, 100,000 to 200,000 additional women and children off the program. This doesn't make any sense, Madam Chair.

We're told by my friends on the other side of the aisle, well, don't worry, all the faith-based groups will take care of everything; that's what they're all there for. Well, talk to any leader in any faith-based community in this country, and they will tell you that they are working overtime right now to try to provide for the struggling families in their communities. In every part of this country, from urban to suburban to rural, faith-based communities are stepping up, but they cannot do it alone. They need us to be a partner. I don't know a single faith-based leader who would say to anybody in this Congress don't adequately fund WIC or don't adequately fund the TEFAP program or these other programs that provide food and nutrition to needy people.

The fact of the matter is that is not an answer. To put the burden on the faith-based community is basically an excuse for us to do nothing, and that is just unacceptable.

We've heard on the other side of the aisle, well, there are just so many programs out there, we're just eliminating all the duplication and triplication. Again, this is just another justification to try to rationalize the cuts that are being made here, but there's no basis of fact. That distortion ignores the fact that programs don't overlap; they complement each other. There is a difference between programs like SNAP and WIC and school lunch programs and summer feeding programs. They're not all the same. They're designed to complement each other. And in reality they do not provide enough benefits to eliminate hunger and food insecurity in this country.

The problem is not that we're giving too much to low-income families. The problem is not that we're giving them too much food. That is not the problem. We have a hunger problem in the United States of America. Tens of millions of our fellow citizens don't have enough to eat. And we're the richest, most powerful country on the planet. We should be ashamed of that fact. We should be working overtime in this body to try to remedy that fact, to make sure that the neediest among us get what they need.

By ignoring the plight of the poor, by ignoring the plight of those who are hungry in this country, they don't just all of a sudden go away. What we do is we end up creating other problems which turn out to be more costly. Hungry children can't learn in school. Hungry workers are less productive in the workplace. People who don't have enough to eat tend to have their immune systems compromised so that a common cold results in their staying in a hospital for a prolonged period of time. It costs this country a great deal that there is food insecurity in America. Hunger is not cheap. It costs a great deal, and we are paying billions and billions of dollars for that.

I urge my colleagues to defeat this bill.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Chair, I don't know how old my colleague is who just spoke, but Lyndon Johnson worked very hard to pass what was called the Great Society. And when he passed the Great Society, he said we're going to do away with hunger, we're going to do away with poor people, we're going to do away with all the problems facing mankind in the United States. And what happened? Things are worse now than they've ever been with all these social programs.

I just spoke a couple of minutes ago about what happened after World War II. In 1945 the spending was $84 billion. In 1946 it dropped 60 percent to $30 billion. So a 60 percent reduction in spending, but it freed up money for the private sector, and as a result, in the next 2 years there were 4½ million new jobs.

All these giveaway programs and all these programs that you guys talk about indicating that we don't care about seniors, we don't care about kids, we don't care about anybody, we're heartless, the fact of the matter is the thing that's heartless is 9.1 percent unemployment. The President, when he took office, said he was going to keep it under 8 percent. It's 9.1 and it's going up, not down. The economic figures we see today are terrible. Yet you want to continue to just keep spending money and spending money and spending money.

What we need to do is we need to cut spending. We need to cut taxes so people will have more disposable income. We need to cut business taxes so that business has more money to invest so they'll create jobs and create plants and equipment. But, no, you want to just keep spending on these programs and don't want to make any cuts.

Spending is out of control. The shortfall this year is going to be over $1.46 trillion. We don't have the money. The national debt is over $14 trillion right now, and it's going to get worse over the next 10 years by about a trillion dollars a year.

And yet every time we come down here and want to cut spending, you start saying we don't care about the poor, we don't care about the kids, we don't care about seniors. And then you see ads on TV with the little old lady's foot dragging as we throw her over the cliff.

What kind of nonsense is that? If we don't get our fiscal house in order, we're all going over a cliff. This country is in terrible fiscal shape right now, and we have to get control of spending. And it really bothers me every time I come down here and I hear you guys talking about we don't care about the children, we don't care about the seniors, we don't care about anybody.

What we care about is jobs and creating an economy that's growing so

that we can once again become the great economic power of the world. But everything that's going on with this administration and everything that you guys keep advocating is putting us more and more in the tank.

And let me tell you something: The American people get it. And if you don't think they get it, look at what happened in the last election. People are tired of the spending, tired of the runaway, giveaway programs. They want jobs that will create a growing economy. And we're not going to get it with more and more spending.

Keynesian economics, socialistic approaches to government do not work. Free enterprise does. And once again I want you to listen to these statistics:

After 1945 we increased jobs by 4½ million. At the same time we cut spending by 60 percent because we freed up the free enterprise system. That's what we ought to be doing right now if we're going to lower unemployment and get this economy back on track.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. MOORE. Madam Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Wisconsin is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MOORE. Madam Chair, I rise in strident opposition to the underlying bill.

We've all heard Michael Masser and Linda Creed's lyrics, ''I believe the children are our future. Teach them well and let them lead the way.'' The song is sung by every megastar and quoted at every whistlestop by every politician.

□ 1600

Well, if we believe this, then our most basic and most fundamental obligation of a civilized society is not only to teach them well but to feed them.

The WIC program is the USDA's largest discretionary program that provides assistance to children up to 5 years of age, to pregnant women, postpartum women, breast-feeding women who are nutritionally at risk because of inadequate nutrition and income.

We've heard a great deal from the other side—just recently the previous speaker—talk about the importance of letting the free market system work, that we need jobs. Infants cannot work. They are helpless. And according to the most recent census, almost 20 percent of the Nation's children are living in poverty. A recent report estimates that the annual estimated cost of domestic hunger is $90.4 billion, the cost of hunger, the consequences of hunger.

According to the American Community Survey, almost half of the children living in single, female-headed households in my district live in poverty and about 39 percent in Wisconsin are poor.

This program represents in any decent society the basic obligation we have to our fellow citizens. Half of the babies born in our country each year rely on WIC. This bill cuts a devastating $650 million from the WIC program; and in my State, this represents about 4,800 people who would lose the WIC program.

The Ryan budget cuts an astounding $833 million from the WIC program; and if you compare this to the Bush cuts, which gave the average millionaire a $139,199 tax break in 2011, or $2,700 a week, that comes up to a total of $866 million to the wealthiest people in 1 week. One week of the Bush-era tax cuts would pay that WIC for a year for the 20 percent of our kids in this country who are hungry. So that really, in my mind, demonstrates what the priorities of this body are. One week of the Bush-era tax cuts could feed and fund this program.

Now, if you truly believe that children are our future, note that numerous studies have shown that pregnant women who participate in the WIC program have longer pregnancies, lead to fewer premature births, fewer low and very low birth weight babies, experience fewer fetal and infant deaths, seek prenatal care earlier in pregnancy, and consume more of such key nutrients as iron, protein, calcium, vitamins A and C.

Now, if you're not moved by the whole children are our future bit, at least be persuaded that not investing in WIC is a costly proposition, and I know the other side is very concerned about costs because several Members have pointed out that we have all these multiple feeding programs. They're concerned with fraud, and God forbid some of these kids might be getting three, four, five meals a day based on funding of all these programs.

But pre-term births cost the U.S. over $26 billion a year, with the average first-year medical costs of the premature, low birth weight baby roughly costing $49,000 compared to $4,500 for a baby born without complications. WIC prenatal care benefits reduce the rate of low birth weight babies by 25 percent.

Now, for those of you who support these gargantuan ag subsidies, moneys for the various wealthy, I commend to you the words of Theodore Parker, a minister and abolitionist in the early 19th century who's been quoted by both Abraham Lincoln, our 16th President, and by Dr. Martin Luther King, in their epic speeches. Theodore Parker said, ''The miser, starving his brother's body, starves also his own soul, and at death shall creep out of his great estate of injustice, poor and naked and miserable.''

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. I move to strike the last word.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. First of all, I think it would be real interesting, my friend from Massachusetts, and I mentioned this to you yesterday. I think we would both enjoy to see what the results would be if we googled our hearing and put in the word ''hunger'' and put in the word ''obesity,'' which one showed up the most; and I believe you are going to find we talked far more about obesity than we did about hunger.

The question that I have is, on the hunger, there are so many food programs out there and this bill does have a $5.6 billion increase in food stamps and $1.5 billion increase in school lunch, that maybe you and I together could focus on where this hunger is because it could be that there's maybe an ignorance issue more than a hunger issue, ignorance in that people do not know how to get these programs that are out there.

Let me yield to my friend from Massachusetts.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Let me just say that I don't think poor people are ignorant.

Mr. KINGSTON. Then let me reclaim the time, because I'm trying to have an adult conversation, and I clarified what ''ignorant'' means, and if you don't know about a program, then you're ignorant about its existence.

Mr. MCGOVERN. If the gentleman will yield, I would also say, the gentleman raised the issue of obesity. There is a relationship between food insecurity and obesity and poverty and obesity. And so what we're talking about here is the importance of good nutrition, and the fact of the matter is that a lot of the people that we are trying to target some of these programs to don't have access to good nutrition. They live in food deserts where they can't buy good food, where they can't afford fresh fruits and vegetables.

Mr. KINGSTON. Let me reclaim the time, because I wanted to continue the discussion. One of the things that perhaps we could do a better job at is not only explaining to people where these programs are but also coordinating the actual program.

Now, the previous speaker said that some children—and I can't quote her exactly—might be getting four or five meals a day. I think it would be good in a time of fiscal restraint that we talk about, well, can we coordinate better.

Let me yield to my friend.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I think we're all for efficiency and good coordination, but I just want to read one line from a letter that Secretary Vilsack sent up here, where he says that he is confident the proposed funding level in your bill would lead to a substantial reduction in the program, meaning the WIC program, likely by hundreds of thousands of participants per month. That is substantial. That is something we can't afford.

Mr. KINGSTON. And that is substantial. But let me say this, the numbers that we're operating on, 2010, there were 9.2 million participants. This year, it's 8.9. Next year, the projection is less than that because 450,000 people less are on it. The base number on the bill would be about 8.3 million; but with the contingency funds, it could go over 9 million people. And as I have said to my friend from Massachusetts

before, we want to make sure no one falls through the cracks.

But I'm looking at these numbers, too, and I know that the group that has been cited many times, the numbers that they're using are a different base than what we're using. So I think some of this is actually about, well, what is that level, and I'm thinking it is the 8 to 9 million.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I would also just point out to the gentleman that there's another phenomenon going on here, and that is the rising cost of food. So the numbers that group that you're referring to has mentioned are pretty conservative. Food costs have been going up and up and up, and I think every American family can feel that. As a result, we're going to need to step up and not undermine these programs that, quite frankly, provide people basic nutrition of food.

Mr. KINGSTON. I agree that there is an unknown factor on the rising cost of food that we're not sure about.

Will the gentleman also agree with me, though—and we've had a very spirited debate, which I know my friend——

Mr. MCGOVERN. But it's not an unknown factor. Food prices are rising.

Mr. KINGSTON. We don't know the percentage food prices are rising, but we do know that this budget would allow with contingencies 9 million to participate, which is above the current level.

Now, I'm hoping that the economy does turn around, but I think it's very important, though, for us to be talking about some of these things that are in the mix like solid numbers, coordination of benefits, and also sources that people can go to, because the gentleman said, Folks don't know about this program, and we want to help them out.

□ 1610

Ms. DELAURO. I want to offer some solid numbers.

Mr. KINGSTON. Let me yield to my friend from Connecticut with the hopes that when my time runs out, my friend will yield to me as well.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. BISHOP of Utah). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. CHU. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. CHU. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition to the underlying bill where the House GOP guts critical food assistance programs that help America's low-income and less fortunate families at a time when they need it the most. This is yet another chapter in the Republican attack on working families to give handouts to special interests. First they came after seniors who rely on Medicare, and now they're coming after our young children and their mothers.

Millions of Americans are now struggling to get through the worst economy since the Great Depression, and America's food assistance programs are proving to be an essential safety net for the jobless and low-income families of America. At a time when the need is greater than it's been in generations, Congress should be reaffirming our commitment to helping these needy families, not pulling the rug out from under them. But alarmingly, that's just what the Republican Agriculture appropriations bill does.

This bill slashes funding for the nutrition program for Women, Infants, and Children by $686 million. WIC is a program that provides low-income pregnant women, new mothers, infants, and children with nutritious foods and improved access to health care. This funding is critical to ensuring America's new mothers, babies, and young children are fed right and grow up to be healthy, happy kids. But these slash-and-burn cuts completely end food assistance for up to 350,000 low-income women and children nationwide. Republicans, take the target off these kids.

Now let's distinguish between wasteful spending and investments that help the less fortunate get back on their feet. How can anyone say that WIC is wasteful when it serves nearly 10 million people each year for less than $100 per person? To some, these dollars may not sound like much, but they mean all the difference for mothers like Amanda.

Amanda was blessed with three children after she was told she couldn't even have one. But working in the food industry simply wasn't enough to support a family and certainly not one with as many needs as Amanda's. She has one son with disabilities, another that was born prematurely, and a third that requires special formula. All these demands quickly stretched her finances and her time. She couldn't afford the basics for her baby, like cereal, peanut butter, milk, and juice, much less the special formula that kept her son healthy. She was struggling to get by. But with WIC's help, she was able to make ends meet and even found time to get her bachelor's and master's through online classes while raising her kids. Now she is a registered nurse working on her Ph.D. And it was taking that first step to join WIC that helped keep her children healthy and helped her make a better life for her family. We should be investing in Amanda and her children, the future of our country, not leaving them to fend for themselves.

But instead of helping build a stronger American workforce for our future, the Republicans are providing more breaks so Big Oil can line their pockets. This same bill blocks efforts to rein in oil speculators that are manipulating the energy markets at the expense of American families at the pump. And, in fact, in April, Goldman Sachs found that this type of unregulated speculation adds over 20 percent to the price of oil, and that's why our gasoline prices are going sky high.

So what was the Republican reaction to this? They slashed $30 million in funding from the Commodity Futures Trading Commission which would stop this illegal speculation in the oil markets. So, as they gut funding from struggling mothers and tiny babies like this, Republicans are keeping gas prices high and pouring more profit into Big Oil's coffers.

We cannot balance the Nation's budget on the backs of everyday Americans just so that Big Oil can make big profits. Stop these cruel cuts to women, children, and infants.

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Ohio is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the underlying bill.

A mother's greatest fear is not being able to provide food and security for her children, not being able to provide nourishment for her kids to grow up and to learn. She worries about where she will find their next meal. Each morning, she is greeted by growling stomachs and an all-too familiar sense of anxiety. This mother is desperate to provide food for her hungry children and depends on our local food banks. But when she arrives at the food bank, she finds that the shelves are empty. That is the time at which her anxiety turns to fear and desperation.

Some of you might think that I am exaggerating, but if you come to my district and visit the city of Cleveland and other parts of my district, you can meet people who, for them, this is their reality, just as it is the reality for people throughout this Nation who rely on essential nutrition programs like TEFAP, WIC, and SNAP.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program, better known as TEFAP, provides food to low-income Americans in need of short-term hunger relief through food banks. This bill caps TEFAP funding at $200 million, which is a $51 million cut; and, in addition to that, another $12 million in grants for TEFAP for storage and distribution equipment is also being cut. These cuts affect the storage of food that requires refrigeration, forcing many food banks to only provide unhealthy, nonperishable foods.

And to my friend Mr. KINGSTON, there is, indeed, a correlation between hunger and obesity. Twenty-five percent of the food distributed at Cleveland food banks is from TEFAP, and it is some of the most nutritious food they have available. Even without the cuts that are proposed in this bill, food banks are facing a shortage of food, impairing their ability to provide for their communities. Parents turn to food banks especially in the summer when school is out, when their children no longer have a guaranteed breakfast and/or lunch 5 days a week.

And it didn't stop at TEFAP. Also on the chopping block is funding for WIC

and SNAP. Nearly 50 percent of the babies born in this country each year rely on WIC. The proposed cuts to SNAP and WIC would result in hundreds of thousands of low-income women, infants, and children losing needed nutrition assistance. These massive cuts to WIC would force vulnerable families to go hungry, to be completely dependent on food banks which, unfortunately, are losing vital funding through this legislation.

WIC provides food to almost 9 million low-income pregnant and nursing women and young children. This bill cuts WIC by over $800 million; and it's estimated that, because of these cuts, between 350,000 and 475,000 mothers and young children will be eliminated from the program. If we can just get rid of the tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires for 1 week, as my colleague has said, we can pay for the entire WIC program for an entire year. These cuts will cripple families and could have a detrimental effect on the futures of these children.

A quarter of the people in my district have difficulty accessing affordable food. But the chairman, Mr. ROGERS, indicated, ''this legislation reflects hard decisions to cut lower priority programs so that our Nation continues on the path to fiscal recovery.''

To a hungry child, SNAP and WIC are not low-priority programs. These cuts will not set our Nation on a path to recovery but, rather, make it significantly more difficult for mothers to ensure the safety and health of their children.

So what we are doing is punishing children for being poor. That is what we are doing. We're not talking about, necessarily, adults. Children have done nothing to us. I don't know how we sleep at night. The Bible tells us—and I know my friends like to talk about faith, and I am a person of strong faith. The Bible tells us that the poor will always be among us. So we need to make a provision to take care of the poor.

First, Republicans came after seniors who rely on Medicare, and now they're coming after children and mothers who rely on food assistance. Who's next, Mr. Chair?

I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation and protect our children and pregnant women.

□ 1620

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Illinois is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to the underlying bill, H.R. 2112, because of the deep cuts to the Women, Infants and Children's program.

I've always been told that you can measure the greatness of a society by how well it treats its young, how well it treats its old, and how well it treats those who have difficulty caring for themselves. All of us know that there is no way that children, infants, can adequately care for themselves.

The WIC program serves pregnant women through pregnancy up to 6 weeks after birth, or after pregnancy ends; breast-feeding women up to the infant's first birthday; and non-breast-feeding women up to 6 months after the birth of an infant or after the pregnancy ends, as well as infants up to their first birthday and children up to age 5.

Poverty and an identified medical or nutritional risk are two eligibility requirements. Nutritious foods, nutrition education, and referrals to maternal and child health services are among the program's benefits. WIC serves 45 percent of all infants born in the United States.

Now, there is no way that anyone can suggest that any of these individuals, especially the children, had anything at all to do with their level of poverty or the fact that there is not nutritious food available to them. And even if there were not food desserts, they wouldn't have the money to purchase what was available.

How one can reconcile taking milk out of the mouth of babes, or how one can suggest that some way or another we are spending money when, as the gentlelady from Wisconsin pointed out, the additional health care cost resulting as a result of the individual's not having basic food and care far outweighs any money that you could possibly spend.

And so it's not a matter of spending. It's a matter of investing. How do you invest in America? You invest by providing for those who have the greatest amount of need.

I know that we debate whether or not we are spending more than we're taking in. Well, there's a way to rectify that. We just take in more. We just charge people more who can afford to pay.

I don't believe in overspending. I don't believe in having huge deficits. But I don't believe in seeing people suffer and die because the society in which they live will not provide for them the basic necessities of life.

I urge we vote against this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NUGENT. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I do want to continue the discussion which we've had with our friends on the other side by pointing out something I think is very important. I have the vote from the CLAIMS Act, November 30, 2010, on which I voted ''no.'' This vote cut WIC $562 million. So far every speaker who's been on the floor voted ''yes'' to this bill. So in terms of following the rhetoric, it's very difficult.

I also want to point out we had a vote earlier this year, no, late last year, on extending the Bush tax cuts. I voted ''no.'' Did others on that side vote ''no''?

I'm glad my friend from Connecticut did.

I also want to point out we had a vote last week on the Kucinich amendment to get us out of Libya. I voted ''no'' on that. I'm not sure how you guys voted. I know my friend, Mr. MCGOVERN, has been an absolute, very consistent critic of the money that we are spending and engagement we are having in the Middle East. And I respect his philosophy on that.

But the reason I want to point this out is because it appears that when one side tries to cut the budget, they're pushing children out the door. But when another side cuts the budget, it's okay.

Ms. DELAURO. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KINGSTON. The gentleman from Florida controls the time, and I recommend that he does yield to you.

Mr. NUGENT. I yield to the gentlelady from Connecticut.

Ms. DELAURO. I thank the gentleman from Florida and the gentleman from Georgia. Let me first comment on the $562 million. There have been several references to this in the course of the afternoon. This is the truth of this effort: $562 million in unspent WIC funds were cut last year. But the cut did not affect any participants. The reason it didn't affect participants is that WIC foods cost less. There were fewer participants in fiscal year 2010, so the funds were not needed. That shows you that because there was extra money in WIC last year, the funds——

Mr. NUGENT. Reclaiming my time, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. I want to comment on that. But that's exactly what we're doing.

Ms. DELAURO. But the——

Mr. KINGSTON. My friend from Connecticut, you know that's what we're doing.

Ms. DELAURO. Can I finish?

The Acting CHAIR. Members will suspend. The gentleman from Florida controls the time. To whom does he yield?

Mr. NUGENT. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia has the time.

Mr. KINGSTON. The participation in WIC in 2010 was $9.2 million. Today it's about $8.8 million. This bill, because the level has dropped and is dropping, is at a level of $8.3 million, but can go over $9 million with the contingency. So I believe that when you cut WIC last year, you did it in good faith. I would only ask that you give us that good faith too.

Ms. DELAURO. If the gentleman from Florida would continue to yield, the cut in this bill is different because it does result in the loss of benefits to

participants. That's not my word, but the Secretary of Agriculture has said hundreds of thousands.

And from our last conversation, which we didn't finish, you asked about rising food prices. And this is from the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities. I'm not making up the numbers. If the cost of WIC foods increases by 2 percent between fiscal years 2000 and 2012, the smallest increase likely, the proposed funding cut would force WIC to serve roughly 200,000 fewer people in 2012 and 2011. If it goes to 5 percent, the food cost, you'd have to cut roughly 350,000 people. These are actual numbers.

Mr. NUGENT. Reclaiming my time, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. Let me say my friend from Connecticut will agree, though, that if you, on your side, had not cut WIC $562 million, that money would still be there right now.

Ms. DELAURO. The fact of the matter is what we are not asking about is not utilizing funds if we don't need them.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is yielding to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. The point that I'm making, Mr. Chair, is that WIC is $562 million, not because of any Republican action, but because of the Democrat action. And you know what? I don't question anyone's motives on this side, and I admire their passion. And my friend from Connecticut is one of the most passionate persons in this body when it comes to WIC. And I respect that.

But we also have to look at some of these numbers because if they're just air-dropped into this bill, then I can certainly understand their outrage. But if we look at the long term, where WIC was 2 or 3 years ago, where it's going, and the fact that there are three contingency funds to pick up the slack on this, not to mention a number of other good programs.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

□ 1630

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Tennessee is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COHEN. The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) brought up a quote about how you look at government. And it was Hubert Humphrey who said that governments are judged on how they treat those in the dawn of life—the young; in the twilight of life—the old; and the shadows of life—the disabled, people with handicaps. And that is the way you should judge it. I sometimes think with this budget and what we're seeing here from the other side is they think the way you judge a government is by the way it treats the millionaires, the billionaires, the way it treats the oil and gas industry, or the way it treats the Wall Street folks who do the hedge funds. And I think if that's the way you're being judged, it's going to be a harsh, harsh condemnation.

My friend from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) came down and he spoke and he said something about, look at what happened in the last election. Well, I'll tell you what happened in the last election—it was in New York State and the people spoke loudly. In a district that in 2010 was strongly Republican, they said we don't want Medicare destroyed, we want to keep Medicare, and they elected a Democrat. And the people are seeing what these budget cuts are doing.

One of the reasons we've got all these problems and the reasons why we have more and more people falling into needs for the SNAP program and the WIC program and others is because the middle class is disappearing in this country because jobs are being shipped overseas. We're giving millionaires and billionaires tax breaks, and we're saying everybody should share, but the sharing isn't going to the rich; it's only going to the poor people, and they're getting cut and cut and cut.

This WIC program, Women, Infants and Children, should be the last place anybody would consider cutting, it should be the absolute totally last place; and yet the cuts are there, 13 percent. The fact is those people are in the place in life where if we don't give moneys to the food for pregnant mothers we're going to have more infant mortality. In my district, we've got an infant mortality rate similar to Third World countries. We've tried to have programs passed up here to deal with infant mortality and to study it and to try to save the lives of babies, and we're not going to be doing that.

I've heard a lot from the other side about being pro-life. We have a difference on that. I'm pro-choice, but I'm pro-life after birth. And pro-life shouldn't just be during a period of gestation; it should include a time after birth. And we're not hearing pro-life-type statements and pro-life-type budget provisions; it is all about saving money on the backs of the poor. This is something that is not appropriate, and it's something that I think should shame the other side.

Mr. KINGSTON is a fine man. I heard him say he voted against the Bush tax cuts, which I did. I got confused on what you did on Libya, but I don't know what that had to do with it. You voted with KUCINICH? Well, I didn't. I don't know what it has to do with women, infants, and children. There's a whole lot going on in Africa. That's another issue.

The bottom line is he's a good man, but he has a bad provision here, and he could see to it that we change that. The women and the infants and the children are dependent on the man from Georgia to try to come up with a provision to help them.

The lady from Connecticut wanted some more time a few minutes ago, and I would like to yield to her on this issue.

Ms. DELAURO. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

The point was is that we are looking at the potential and the fact of increased food prices. And again, the numbers are not mine, they belong to an organization that has very good credentials on both sides of the aisle in this town, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. They are very clear that if that 2 percent increase in food price—and that's viewed as the smallest increase likely—happens, we will see roughly 200,000 fewer people. If it's a 5 percent increase in food prices, that there would be a cut of 350,000.

The Secretary of Agriculture said that the proposed amount of money would lead to hundreds of thousands of people being eliminated from the program. He also is very clear, as others have been, that there is no carryover money, there is no contingency fund. And the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities reiterates the same effort.

With regard to the $562 million, my only point on that was, I am willing, others are willing to say if the funds are not needed at that juncture and they are extra, yes, they can be used for something else. No one is saying that the numbers have to be static all of the time. But the fact of the matter is we are in a different period in 2011 going into 2012, where there is much more serious economic difficulty—rising food prices, rising rates of people who need these programs—and we're just saying let's have the money that we need in order to move forward.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MATSUI. I rise today in opposition to the underlying bill. This legislation makes dangerous cuts to essential antihunger and nutrition programs.

In addition to their plan to privatize Medicare, House Republicans are now proposing to cut the Women, Infants and Children program, otherwise known as WIC. This is a much-needed, Federally funded health and nutrition program which provides support, resources, and education to low-income women.

This preventative public health nutrition program connects mothers with prenatal care, increases healthy birth outcomes, and educates new mothers about caring for their children and providing healthy food options for their families.

In my home State of California, there are 82 WIC agencies serving over 1.4 million women, infants, and children, but the bill before us today cuts $650 million from the program, and these cuts we cannot afford to make.

There are two WIC programs at work in my district, and I recently saw firsthand the critical demand and needs for

their services. I witnessed a long line of women trying to provide for their families and trying to receive the support they need to have a healthy pregnancy. This WIC office alone has a case load of over 32,000 individuals a month but can only serve 30,000 because of a lack of resources.

In this economic downturn, people who never before knew about WIC now find themselves relying on its services to feed their families. These include State workers who were furloughed, nurses and teachers who have lost their jobs. Unfortunately, demand for these programs is increasing, not decreasing. With Sacramento's unemployment rate at 12 percent, these resources are not only needed and appreciated but are vital.

One recipient is a mother who once thought WIC was only about giving free food or formula to low-income families, but her perspective about the program changed dramatically when she enrolled in the program herself. As she was expecting her first and only child, she entered the program to help her family make ends meet. Throughout her pregnancy, she received nutrition information and referrals. Unfortunately, she was diagnosed with gestational diabetes, but because she was on WIC at the time she was seen by a dietitian every month. With WIC's support, her baby was born healthy and she had the support she needed to provide for her family.

But the cuts in this legislation do not end at WIC. The Commodity Supplemental Food Program, which helps supplement meals for low-income individuals, and The Emergency Food Assistance Program, otherwise known as TEFAP, which provides food banks with food they distribute, are both on the chopping block.

A month ago, I visited the Stanford Settlement Senior Center, which participates in the California Emergency Foodlink Senior Brown Bag Lunch run by volunteers, many of whom are recipients themselves. The California Emergency Foodlink distributes over 80,000 pounds of food per month to approximately 8,000 low-income seniors in need in Sacramento County. For many of these seniors this is the only nutritious food they will have for a week. TEFAP also provides funding for approximately 18 percent of food that comes into the Sacramento food bank. This food bank provides a 5-day supply of emergency groceries to those who are struggling to get by, and over 18,000 individuals receive fresh groceries from this site every month.

In addition to all of the cuts I've mentioned, the legislation also includes report language to stop the process of updating the school nutrition standards. It is essential for our students to have the nutrition they need to be productive and successful at school. In the Sacramento City Unified School District, approximately 67 percent of students are eligible for free and reduced lunches. Without an investment in proper nutrition, these students will not only fall behind in their studies, they can also face serious health issues.

□ 1640

Unfortunately, the legislation before us proposes some of the hardest cuts to endure. I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Wyoming is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Chairman, the speakers have chosen to cut $562 million out of WIC, which would have carried forward into this year, and this year would have carried forward into next year. That's because the WIC Program has a 2-year carryover. So, when the previous speakers voted to cut WIC by $562 million, they truly were cutting money that could have been available now.

The reason they chose to cut that is they found a higher priority expenditure than WIC, and when they made that choice, they took that money out of the program, money which could have been available now. They did that based on real numbers of WIC participation, not on estimates. They did it on real numbers, and the real numbers showed that WIC participation was in decline.

We are now looking at about 8.3 million per month in WIC participation with about 9 million per month fundable via contingency. We are looking at funding WIC at 87 percent of what it has been. We're not looking at decimating it. We're not looking, like some people have said on the other side, at levels that will cause children to go hungry or to starve, as one of the people said on the other side of the aisle. We're funding it at 87 percent of the level it has been. In addition, there are State food programs. There are county food programs. There are city food programs. There are religious organization food programs. There is the Salvation Army—501(c)(3)-type programs—neighborhood programs, Meals on Wheels programs, food banks; and there are goodhearted, wonderful Americans who help their neighbors in need.

This is an adequate budget in tough economic times. In addition, as I said earlier, we are funding a net increase in food programs because we are increasing the amount of money that will go to food stamps and school lunches.

Mr. McGOVERN. Will the gentlelady yield?

Mrs. LUMMIS. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. McGOVERN. I thank the gentlelady for yielding.

I guess my question to the gentlelady is: Does she believe we do not have a hunger or a food and security problem in this country and that everything is being taken care of?

My other question is: Why are Brazilian cotton farmers more important than poor pregnant women and their children?—because that's another choice we're making here.

Mrs. LUMMIS. In reclaiming my time, I do not believe that cotton farmers in either the United States or Brazil are more important than WIC Program participants.

Mr. McGOVERN. Do you believe we have a hunger problem?

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Chairman, our committee is only able to look at discretionary spending. We cannot look at mandatory spending, and we cannot look at programs that are subject to the 5-year farm bill, such as subsidies for farmers. I think subsidies for farmers can go by the wayside, and I hope that when the Ag Committee meets to restructure the 5-year farm bill that they will do away with farmer subsidies.

I think it is ridiculous that we are paying cotton growers subsidies in this country that violate the World Trade Organization to an extent that we then have to subsidize Brazilian cotton growers in order to rectify our violation of the WTO. That's one of the most ridiculous things I've ever heard. I wish we could have addressed that in this bill.

I wish we could have addressed the categorical eligibility that is available. Once you qualify for one type of Federal program, you're eligible for all of them whether you need them or not. I wish we could address how much money people get on earned income tax credits. I wish we could make sure that 100 percent of the people in this country paid a little bit of tax and that the rich people paid a lot more.

None of that is true, and none of that is within the purview of the Appropriations Committee with regard to discretionary spending.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. WOOLSEY. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. I rise in opposition to the underlying bill. Mr. Chairman, it is often said that a society can be judged by how it treats its young, its elderly and the less fortunate. Today is a perfect example of that.

Instead of feeding the women, infants and children, it appears that the Republicans in Congress are slashing the Ag budget to make room for more tax breaks for the wealthy. Let's have a look at how these priorities balance out. If we got rid of tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires for one measly week, we would pay for the entire WIC Program for a year—a full year. So let's get this straight.

During these times when there is a job shortage, when a person has a job but wages are lower than they should be, when the cost of food is very high and when we have low taxes on the

rich, pregnant women will go hungry and their babies will be born underweight so that someone can afford another beach vacation. Kids will go without breakfast so that someone can buy a second home.

First, the Republicans in Congress passed the Ryan budget act to dismantle Medicare for our seniors and for our disabled. Now they want to take food from the mouths of needy children and women. Honestly, Mr. Chairman, I don't know how they sleep at night.

This shouldn't be a partisan issue. There are WIC recipients in every single congressional district in this country—red States, blue States. Hunger doesn't see political affiliation. This is not some abstract political theory. There are real women and children in every single congressional district who will have to forgo meals. How many of us have ever given up a meal so that a child could eat or have explained to a 3-year-old why there won't be lunch today or have soothed a crying baby who won't get formula?

We should end this shameful spending of $10 billion a month in Afghanistan. We should bring our troops home. We should stop the war tax. We should tax millionaires and billionaires. We should create jobs. We should vote against this bill. Let's show America's working families that we stand with them and that we will be there for them during times of need.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I know this is a very, very tough state of affairs and time frame that we are in. I also know this is a time when America calls upon all of us to stand not for our individual selfish interests but to look at the country as a united team that believes in lifting the boats of all people.

I want to thank my friends who have struggled on this committee to deal with the bare necessities of life, of food. That is why I come today, unfortunately, to oppose this legislation, because it does not take into account that without sustenance and nutrition that people die.

□ 1650

It is plain and simple. We are not talking about knicknacks or trains, buses, highways, bridges, all very important and job creators, and in fact efforts that the Democrats have made very clear that they are the job creating caucus for the press and push that we have made or are making in America. We have asked our colleagues to join us. But today we talk about feeding people.

I rose earlier today to say that it is in the DNA of the 18th Congressional District, because one of my predecessors, Mickey Leland, actually died delivering food to starving people around the world. He thought so much of hunger in America that he organized the Select Committee on Hunger, joined by Tony Hall and Congressman Emerson; and his legacy was that we cannot do without substance.

So it makes no sense to cut $3 billion from WIC; a WIC program that indicates that WIC moms are more likely to have initiated breast feeding than low-income non-WIC moms. Middle- to high-income moms are more likely to have initiated breast feeding than both WIC and low-income non-WIC. One in five children do not drink water easily. WIC children were more likely to drink juice daily than children not on WIC. Ninety-three percent of children drink milk daily. About one-quarter of all children had drunk seven or more sugar-sweetened beverages in the previous week. These are without the ability to have nutritious meals. This is in my own State of Texas, which indicates that food does not matter in terms of how wealthy a State may be.

So I can't imagine why, as my colleagues have said, we can't find $3 billion from the $10 billion a month that is being spent in Afghanistan and the moneys that have been stolen in Iraq, where we don't even know where it is. It is all about priorities.

So I rise today to express great consternation over the cut in WIC and to indicate that WIC is about growing, it is about providing nutrition so that children can think, so that they can be able to be strong leaders. It is to grow children healthy, it is to stop disease, it is to provide the kind of immune system that thwarts disease.

In a State like Texas, the 18th Congressional District which I represent has a strong work ethic. I am so proud of them. But they also have a rate of poverty that is frightening. Food insecurity in my district ranks number 32 in the Nation. That means that there are only 31 districts ahead that have that degree of food insecurity. And yet I am going to have to go home and tell them that the priorities of this Congress were something other than feeding children and providing mothers, prenatal and prenatal condition and after birth, the kind of resources to provide for a healthy child.

That means my pre-K little babies will be going to school hungry. That means they will come home to a nondinner. And that means that we as a country have failed in our natural value that we all are created equal with certain inalienable rights of life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

It is shocking to be able to stand here today and know they are cutting Medicare and Medicaid, and now they add insult to injury that they are cutting food stamps and the WIC program. So I guess our soldiers, who themselves, young soldiers, young families on food stamps, will suffer as well.

But the WIC program, that has gotten blamed for everything but what is right, and that is the Women, Infants and Children program provides nutrition for healthy children, and to stand here today to have to look Americans in the face and those in the 18th Congressional District who are 32nd in food insecurity and say that we do not have the money.

Mr. Chairman, I am asking my colleagues to go back to the drawing board. Don't put this bill on the floor. Take it off, because you are now handing to the children of this Nation a ticket that says no food at the end, no food at this table, no food.

Mr. CICILLINE. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Rhode Island is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CICILLINE. I rise in opposition to the underlying bill.

Mr. Chair, I rise today in defense of 76,000 residents of the First Congressional District of Rhode Island, which I have the privilege of representing who, according to the advocacy group Feeding America, are at risk of losing their ability to feed themselves and their families. That is because this week the majority party in the House is ready to vote on a measure that will undermine the safety net in this country designed for our Nation's women, infants and children.

Mr. Chairman, we all know that one of the greatest challenges before us is reducing our deficit, but we have to do it in a way that is consistent with our values, consistent with the values of our great country. And this week we will be voting on a measure that fails those values miserably.

If the majority party has their way and denies necessary funding to a critical safety net for some of our Nation's most vulnerable citizens, nearly 1,000 women, infants and children in Rhode Island's First District will be denied the assistance they need to survive.

WIC represents the most basic obligation we have to our fellow citizens most in need—food and nutrition. On top of that, it is an incredibly cost-effective program, serving nearly 10 million Americans each year and costing less than $100 per person. In my district, more than 18 percent of the residents suffer from food insecurity and depend on WIC to make ends meet.

At a time when the middle class in our country is being crushed with high unemployment and still reeling from a housing crisis that has left countless families in foreclosure, we are seeing more and more people in need of assistance just to get by. And it is not just affecting people without jobs. It is folks who have a job as well, but they have had their wages cut or they have had their wages diminished or their hours cut.

This is not the time to allow people to lose the lifelines they need to survive. We have helped the auto industry. We have helped big banks. It is time to sustain support for families that are most in need and have been most devastated by this difficult economy.

Yet we see again this week another attack by the Republican majority in

the House on working families while they continue to fight to protect subsidies for Big Oil and to protect tax breaks for the outsourcing of jobs overseas. First they come after seniors by trying to end Medicare, and now they are coming after women, children, and infants who rely on food assistance.

We should not be destroying programs upon which citizens rely for their most basic needs in order to fund tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires or big subsidies for the big oil companies. If we got rid of tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires for one week, we could pay for the entire WIC program for an entire year.

I urge my colleagues to reject this proposal, to ensure instead that families most in need who have been hardest hit by this recession have access to food and nourishment. We have the ability to provide nourishment to families, and that is a cornerstone of a free and decent society. We cannot abandon this great responsibility.

I yield to the gentlelady from Wisconsin.

Ms. MOORE. Thank you so much for yielding.

I just wanted a few seconds to clarify something I have heard over and over again. We continue to say that first they have come after the seniors with Medicare and Medicaid and now they are coming after the children. No. We ended the entitlement to AFDC back in the nineties, and WIC is not an entitlement like the SNAP program, the food stamp program. It is not an entitlement like school lunch programs.

So what this bill does is it double-downs on not providing food to infants and children. No, we have already cut the entitlement and snatched the safety net from underneath kids. This double-downs on that. We have torn the safety net for children, and now we are pulling it through the shredder for the second time.

As a person who has personally had sugar sandwiches, mayonnaise sandwiches and mustard sandwiches, I can tell you that funding this program at only 87 percent of its value will mean we will see a lot more malnourishment in our communities.

Mr. CICILLINE. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BARTLETT. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Maryland is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BARTLETT. Mr. Chairman, I wanted to spend just a few moments putting our discussions in context. This year, the deficit will be perhaps as much as $1.6 trillion.

□ 1700

Now, our total discretionary spending—that's the money that we vote here to spend, and spend nearly a year doing it—is a little over a trillion dollars. A bit more than half of that is the Defense budget. What that means is if we didn't have any government that we vote to spend money for here, if we had no Defense, we had no Homeland Security, if we had no EPA, if we had no NIH, if we had no WIC program, if we had none of the myriad Departments of government that serve us every day, we'd still have a half-trillion-dollar deficit. I'm not sure that the reality of this has gotten through to our Congress or the American people.

Another way of looking at this is that we have revenues of about $2.2 trillion a year, but our mandatory spending—that's interest on the debt and our means-tested welfare programs and Medicaid and Medicare and Social Security—are several hundred billion dollars more than that. What that means is that one second after midnight on January 1, we're already in debt that year several hundred billion dollars, and we haven't even started to pay for the defense of our country, for Homeland Security, for NIH, for the WIC program, or for any of these many, many programs that our government supports.

There is no way with the meager cuts that we're making in these budgets that we're voting on that we're ever going to get to anything near a balance.

Mr. CONYERS. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BARTLETT. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. CONYERS. Thank you very much, sir. We're good friends.

What you're telling me, I presume, is that you approve a $650 million cut from the Women, Infant, and Children's fund. Is that correct?

Mr. BARTLETT. I was just trying to put in context our discussion here and what it means.

Reclaiming my time, we have a $1.6 trillion deficit. We're coming close to that this year. The Ryan budget was kind of an expression of his roadmap. And in the last Congress only eight of us had the courage to sign on to his roadmap, because it was pretty tough. This year, when he filed that roadmap again, I think 13 of us signed on. And then we had the Ryan budget, which is even tougher, I think, than his roadmap, but what else was there to vote for, and almost nobody read it, so we voted for it anyhow.

The Ryan budget doesn't balance for 25 years. It doesn't balance for 25 years. That means with that budget, with all of its austerity, for 25 years we still are accumulating more and more and more debt. Every six hours we have another billion-dollar deficit, which means another billion-dollar debt. About every 12 hours we have another billion-dollar trade deficit.

Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to put our discussions in context. I have 10 kids and 17 grandkids and two great-grandkids. I sure would like to leave them a country better than the country as I find it. And it's going to be really tough to do that. What I want for us to do as Republicans and Democrats, conservatives and liberals, is to sit down and talk through this. How are we going to solve this problem? Grandstanding and making these political points is not going to get us there.

Mr. Chairman, we have got to do something serious. I don't see the Congress doing that.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HOYER. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Maryland is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOYER. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I thank Mr. BARTLETT from Maryland for making the case. I tell my friends that when they say women and children first, it means to save them, not to throw them overboard. Women and children first means that they are the most vulnerable and need to be lifted up, need to be protected, need to be given the hand up, not the handout.

Ladies and gentlemen of this House, I rise in opposition to this bill. I thank my friend from Maryland, for whom I have great respect. I think in fact he did put this in context. We will not balance the budget on the backs of children. We will not balance this budget on the backs of women who need nutrition and health care. That's not how we're going to balance the budget. And the gentleman from Maryland made that point I think very effectively.

If we cut out all defense and discretionary spending, we wouldn't balance our budget. That's the magnitude of the problem that faces us. But a great country, America, should not ask our children who need nutritional programs, who need health programs, to pay the price—to pay the price of our responsibility because we have failed to pay for what we buy.

But let us not repair to our little children and their mothers to pay the bill that we refuse to pay while at the same time we pass a rule the first day in this House that provides for $5 trillion in tax cuts for the wealthiest in America, including me. I don't want a tax cut if it means that a child goes hungry in America, the richest Nation on the face of the Earth. That is not my priority. That is not my morality. That is not my faith. Lift up the little children.

Surely, America is not a country that wants to see its children go hungry or its pregnant women go without services they need for healthy babies. Surely, America is a generous enough country to feed those who need food. My faith tells me to feed the hungry, house the homeless, clothe those who have no clothes.

I rise in opposition to this bill and I rise in strong opposition to attempts to dramatically cut the food programs that serve some of our most vulnerable constituents. Erskine Bowles, a Democrat, and Alan Simpson, a Republican and former member of the United States Senate, just issued a report. In that report it lays forth a number of premises on which that report is based.

And one of its first premises is: do not hurt the vulnerable in America. Because, as my friend from Maryland points out, that won't get you to where we need to get. And we need to get there. I'm going to work with my friend from Maryland, a Republican, and all Republicans who know that we need to get to balanced budgets to reduce debt, and my friends on my side of the aisle.

This appropriations bill would sharply reduce funding for the vital nutrition programs for women, infants, and children. Surely, Americans did not send us a message to go to Washington and undermine women, infants, and children. At a time when we are still recovering from the worst economic crisis in a generation, where unemployment is unacceptably high, where people have lost their homes, where too many people are in great distress, surely this is not a time to say, We turn our back on you.

This bill is pushing to cut $37 million in support for hungry, low-income seniors, not just women, infants, and children. This bill cuts seniors as well. Surely, our people did not send us to this Congress to cut seniors. Also, $11 million in support for our community food banks. By the way, if you visited your food bank, you know that there is more demand on our food banks than there has ever been.

Ladies and gentlemen, reject this bill. Stand up for the values of America and of our people.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Michigan is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONYERS. I would like to follow on to our great whip's very moving statement and ask our good friend ROSCOE BARTLETT, a distinguished Member from Maryland, whether or not he would pass a bill that would cut funding in the amount of $650 million for women, infant, and children out of the Department of Agriculture's program.

□ 1710

So in the four decades that I have served and have been honored to serve in this Congress, I believe that we will have reached an all-time low today if we pass a bill that will cut funding for the Department of Agriculture's Women, Infants, and Children program.

Ladies and gentlemen, my brothers and sisters, how can anybody in Congress with a conscience seriously consider passing a bill, or even proposing one, that would result in more hunger for hundreds of thousands of the poorest and neediest low-income children across this Nation who are already suffering from hunger and malnutrition?

I fail to understand the logic of any elected official who serves in Congress who would actually support a $650 million cut from the Women, Infants, and Children program during one of the worst economic downturns since the Great Depression without feeling some kind of moral or ethical guilt for doing so.

The Women, Infants, and Children program serves nearly 10 million people each year and costs less than $100 per person. What could be more important than supporting a Federal program that provides nutritious food to new mothers, babies, and children under 5 who have been identified as nutritionally at risk?

Cutting the Women, Infants, and Children program for poor children and mothers is clearly an abandonment of our family values. Promoting policies that we know will result in scores of children feeling the painful sting of hunger, not being able to focus in school or not being able to do their homework, is far from what I would consider having good family values. It is simply un-American, immoral, heartless, and unconscionable to take food away from the mouths of hungry children in the name of deficit reduction. Ladies and gentlemen, have we no shame?

The majority of Americans do not support slashing vital food and nutrition programs for our Nation's poorest children. Let's get rid of the tax breaks for billionaires so all children in this country can live the American dream and not go to bed hungry at night.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Illinois is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 2112, the Agriculture appropriations bill. And like so many before me, I'm particularly opposed to cuts in funding to provide food and nutrition to American families, to pregnant women and infants and children and seniors and families struggling in this country to put food on the table at a time of rising unemployment and poverty.

I have to tell you I am at a loss to understand why my Republican colleagues are so insistent in providing even more tax breaks to millionaires and billionaires that they are willing to take food from children. In the Republican world view, apparently, tax cuts to the very wealthy and subsidies to big oil companies and companies that send jobs overseas are a bigger priority than Medicare and Medicaid and education. And, again, in this bill they even take food out of the mouths of hungry children to give those tax breaks.

Understand what this bill does. The Commodity Supplemental Food Program, which provides low-income seniors with emergency food and nutrition education, is cut by more than 20 percent, or $40 million. In this bill the Republicans will take food out of the mouths of hungry, poor, old people.

The SNAP reserve fund will get $2 billion less. SNAP, formerly called food stamps, provides critical nutrition support to low-income families, and the reserve helps meet the demands created by unexpected participation in higher-than-projected food costs, food costs everybody knows are going way up. And with high unemployment and food prices rising, the reserve fund is more likely to be tapped than ever before, and depleting reserve funds will increase the likelihood of a food crisis in the United States of America.

Let me tell you what these cuts mean to people in Illinois. Lorraine Dzieginski is 82 years old and started receiving Social Security benefits at age 65. Her monthly benefit is $695 a month. But this amount doesn't even cover her property taxes, her home insurance, her supplemental health insurance and utilities. That amounts to well over $700. She relies partially on the SNAP, or food stamp program, to feed herself. Her monthly benefit is $16, the minimum SNAP allotment. Republican cuts likely mean that other seniors like Ms. Dzieginski will be turned away from SNAP if they find themselves in that circumstance next year. Our seniors deserve better.

Mr. KINGSTON. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. I want to remind you SNAP actually goes up $5.6 billion on this, and you're not talking about it, but school lunch also goes up $1½ million. So I did want to say that the SNAP portion of this bill does go up $5.6 billion.

I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Thank you very much. It's still $2 billion lower than the President's request.

We want to make sure the money is there at a time of high unemployment, of disappearing 401(k)s and savings. And the Emergency Food Assistance Program is cut by more than 20 percent, or $60 million. And TEFAP provides commodities to food banks to assist in relief efforts. And with unemployment still high, and I know this in my district, many people who used to contribute to food banks are now waiting in line to get the food to keep food on their tables. And with diminished Federal support, they may show up only to find empty shelves.

And then we get to the WIC program. I'm a mother and a grandmother, and for the first time in American history, we will turn away eligible mothers and children from the program, an effective program. With it, infants and children can get a healthy start in life, and without it they can suffer from lifelong health problems. For every dollar spent, WIC provides health care savings of as much as $3—$3 for every $1 spent.

So we talk a lot about children, we've talked a lot about seniors in this House, but let's be clear. The choice before us is not whether we have to deny children food in order to reduce the deficit. The choice is whether we will

make millionaires and billionaires pay their fair share so that low-income mothers, infants, and children will be fed.

The choice is clear. Vote ''no'' on this legislation.

□ 1720

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. I rise today in opposition to the underlying bill, H.R. 2112, the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2012, and the cuts to the WIC program.

We want to talk about right to life. WIC is a right to life. It's an essential program that offers nutrition, education, breast feeding support, referrals, and a variety of nutritious foods to low-income pregnant, breast feeding and postpartum women, infants, and children up to the age of 5. The program is administered through county health departments, hospitals, mobile clinics, community centers, schools, public housing sites, migrant health centers and camps, and Indian health service facilities.

In New York State, the WIC program provides services to nearly one-half million low-income women, infants, and children through 103 local WIC agencies statewide. Local agencies such as Brooklyn's Healthy Start have provided WIC services to low-income women in my district for more than 20 years. It is the work of the Brooklyn Healthy Start and other WIC programs who are on the front lines that are fighting against this country's already shamefully high infant mortality rate. Decreasing funding to WIC programs will undoubtedly increase my district's infant mortality rate and infant mortality rates across this Nation.

Given the spike in demand for WIC and other nutrition programs like SNAP and food stamps, school meals, summer, after-school, and child care food programs, it is unconscionable that the Republican-led Congress is seeking to cut these critical programs that help seniors, children, and low-income people who aspire to be part of our Nation's middle class.

First, Republicans went after our Nation's seniors who rely on Medicare, and now they're going after the children and mothers who rely on our social compact for food assistance. If we got rid of tax breaks for multimillionaires and billionaires for just 1 week, we would pay for the entire WIC program for a year.

It is my belief that cuts to the WIC program are based on an ideological political rationale that defies human understanding and not an honest desire to cut deficits. This Agriculture appropriations bill continues to protect tax cuts for multimillionaires while having poor women and children stuck to pay the dear price.

WIC has been shown to improve the health of pregnant women, new mothers, and infants and children. The food provided through WIC is a good source of essential nutrients that are often missing from the diets of women and young children. WIC participants have longer, healthier pregnancies and fewer premature births.

We all understand the need to reduce the deficit, but we must do so in a way that is consistent with our shared values. It is a moral imperative that we look after those who are forgotten, marginalized in our society. In the words of a prolific, poetic philosopher, Kanye West, ''How could you be so heartless?'' Republicans shouldn't destroy programs upon which citizens depend on the most in exchange to pay for $45 billion in tax breaks for multimillionaires. Shame.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this bill and protect low-income women, infants, and children.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ELLISON. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Minnesota is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Chairman, we're told that we're broke, we're broke, and because we're broke, we can't possibly pay for things like women, infants, and children. We can't have a jobs bill. We can't build our Nation's infrastructure. We can't, we can't, we can't. We have to cut because, according to some, we're broke.

But when we think about how the bounty of this Nation is spread, we're not so broke that we can't give subsidies to oil companies. We're not so broke that we can't ask the richest Americans to do a little more. We're not so broke that we don't call upon people whom America has benefited and allowed them to become millionaires and say, You know what? Now your Nation needs you. We're told, No, those people don't have to sacrifice, but we're broke.

So women and infants and children and seniors, they have to sacrifice. They have to go without. They have to tighten their belts. It's a shame.

We're not asked to be one America, to bear the burden together. If there's a burden to be borne, surely oil companies can bear it with the American people. If there's a burden to be borne, surely the wealthiest among us can pitch in and help out. But not according to the Republican majority. According to them, we're broke, and the poor must suffer. The aged must do without. Those in need have to figure out how to make it one more day because we're broke, and we have to take food out of the mouths of infants and pregnant mothers. And because we're broke, we need to increase the risk of food-borne illness. And because we're broke, we cannot afford to pay cops on the beat who are going to regulate the speculators on Wall Street who drive up the price of gasoline and food. We can't pay for these important public servants because they say we're broke. But we're not too broke to ask our oil companies to help. We're not too broke to ask the top 2 percent to pitch in.

The day must come, Mr. Chair, when the poor are not thought to have too much and the rich are not thought to have too little. The day must come when we have to be one America and come together to deal with the burdens of this Nation and not leave the wealthiest and the most privileged scott free while the other people have to bear the burden of ''we're broke.''

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KUCINICH. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Ohio is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Chairman, my colleagues, what we really have here is a discussion not so much as to which party has moral superiority here, but it's really a deeper question about what's the purpose of our Nation and whether we are aligned with the Founding Fathers' spiritual principles, because while the Founders separated church and State, they did not intend our Nation to be separated from spiritual principles.

And I think that at this moment, if we really want to sincerely appreciate the dilemma that we have created with these cuts, we need to reflect on some of our own spiritual training for those of us who are Christian, when, in John 21:15, Jesus was dining with his apostles. And so when they dined, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?

He said unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.

And the Lord said to him, Feed my lambs.

He said to him again, the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?

He said unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.

And the Lord answered, Feed my sheep.

He said unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?

Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love thee.

Jesus said unto him, Feed my sheep.

There are spiritual principles at stake here. We know what the right thing is to do. We know that feeding the hungry is a corporal work of mercy. We know that we have a responsibility to do this. We know that when the Bible says, Whatever you do for the least of my brothers and sisters, you do for me, in Matthew 25, that we're actually referring to how spiritual is the act of feeding the poor.

□ 1730

This decision that we make with respect to whether or not we are going to fully fund the Women, Infants, and

Children program does have profound spiritual consequences. We cannot escape them. ''For when I was hungry, you gave me food,'' remember that. When I was hungry, you gave me food. You didn't give me war. You didn't give me a tax break. You didn't give me an oil depletion allowance. When I was hungry, you gave me food. Who among you, the Bible asks, if his son asks for bread, would give him a stone? These are spiritual principles we're talking about here. This really goes to the core of who we are as a Nation, whether we recognize people who are out there are suffering. People may not have a roof over their head. Mothers may be living in a car, having to tend to their children.

America today is not the country it was at its founding, but it can be a Nation that aspires to great things again. But it cannot do it if we forget the poor, if we forget the children, if we forget their mothers, if we tell them that, No, you cannot have the resources you need to be able to provide proper nutrition to your child so that he or she can grow up in this United States of America to be a full participant in the affairs of this Nation.

This is a defining moment for who we are as a Nation. This isn't about whether we're Democrats or Republicans. This is about whether we are prepared to realign ourselves with the deeper truths of the spiritual mission of the United States of America. Feed the hungry. Feed my sheep. When I was hungry, you gave me food. Restore these cuts.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. I yield to my honorable colleague from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentleman from Indiana for yielding. I want to make a couple of points.

Number one, this bill increases food stamps by $5.6 billion. Now, somebody has said, But that's not as much as the President requested. Well, it is an increase of $5.6 billion. And I'm sorry, the President's crystal ball isn't always the best one. I don't need to remind you about last summer's celebration of recovery or whatever it was called. School nutrition goes up $1.5 billion under this bill.

We did what has been done in the past with WIC. We fund the participation level that is anticipated. Last year, the Democrats voted to cut WIC funding by $562 million. I have got the votes right here for any Democrat who is not sure how he or she voted. I want to give you the vote. I will put it in the RECORD so everybody can have a chance to look at it because after a while, I have to wonder. I also have the vote record for extending the Bush tax cuts, which was signed by President Obama. I have the vote record for that. I want to say to some of my friends over there, I voted ''no'' on that. Very important.

This bill funds WIC at 8.3 million participants. Now, if it goes up to over 9 million, the contingency fund is there to cover that. The contingency fund for WIC alone is $350 million. It would have been higher, Mr. Chairman, but the Democrats voted to cut it $562 million last year for an unrelated account. Now, to quote one of the well-known Democrats, That's an inconvenient truth to some of the speakers here tonight. But it is very important.

It is not the intention of this bill to let anybody go hungry. And any time the Bible is quoted on the floor of the House, I think it's a good thing. But I think there are some lessons in there that if there is a target on children's backs, perhaps it's the fact that our Nation is over $14 trillion in debt; and for every dollar we spend, 40 cents is borrowed, much of that from China. And who do you think is going to pay that back? It's not going to be the generations who are making the decisions. It's going to be the children.

So what our challenge is, Mr. Chairman, is to balance the fiscal need with the heart, and I believe that this budget very carefully does that. It increases food stamps $5.6 billion. It increases school lunches $1.5 billion. It funds WIC at a level of 8.3 million and has a contingency that will cover over 9 million participants. So for all the drama that we're hearing—and it is some very good rhetoric and some very good drama, but it's not accurate.

Now we could be talking about the WIC overhead, the WIC administrative costs. We could be talking about the fraud in WIC. We could be talking about the coordination of feeding benefits. If a child is 3 years old in America, he or she is eligible for 12 different programs. At 10 years old, they're eligible for nine programs. At 65, they're eligible for five different feeding programs. Those are Federal programs. It does not mention any of the State or the local participation in programs that are out there. It doesn't mention any of the charitable organizations that are out there.

So, again, we're hearing lots of great rhetoric, lots of drama; but it's not accurate. These numbers are important for reasonable debate for people who are trying to balance the runaway spending in this country—a 56 percent increase in the national debt under President Obama—and the need to take care of the poor.

I want to say to my friend from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH), because I know he has been very consistent—and I do certainly agree that everybody here has passion and conviction and idealism, which I think we all need more of—I voted with you, Mr. KUCINICH, last week. I think we are spending a lot of money in Libya. And those are things that are very important for us to be debating on the floor of the House before the President of the United States—of either party—goes and obligates billions of dollars in a new overseas contingency operation. We need to be discussing that. So I would say, put that on the table.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Washington is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. I rise in opposition to this bill in part because the truth of the matter is that the $562 million that was cut in WIC funds last year did not affect participants. The reason it didn't affect participants was that the WIC foods cost less and there were fewer participants in fiscal year 2010. So the funds were not needed.

Now, today it's Flag Day, and we're celebrating Flag Day, and I want to celebrate that great liberal of the United States of America, Richard M. Nixon. Richard M. Nixon put this program in. Now, we all know he was a bleeding heart liberal. Right? He just couldn't wait to give money to poor folks. And he also, by the way, put out here a universal health care plan.

So there is some question you might ask yourself about why we have WIC. Well, the social safety net is like a spider web, and there are a whole lot of places that you have to help people. We have Social Security, and we have unemployment insurance, and we've got foster kid money, and we've got things for women and children.

Now, the Republicans in this session have deliberately set out to go after women and children. The first place was Planned Parenthood. We don't want to give any young women any information about anything having to do with getting pregnant. Now more kids get pregnant. They're 16 years old. They have a kid, and they don't have any counseling, and nobody talks to them about nutrition and gives them the things that they need.

What is the result of that? The result of that is more low birth weight babies, more babies born with poor development because they didn't have the nutrition during the cycle of development. Do you know how much is the average amount spent on a woman in the WIC program? It's $100 to deal with the problems of infants and children, on average.

□ 1740

Now, I happen to know, being a physician, that if you get a premature baby who comes in at 2.5 pounds, and everybody's so excited that we can save these kids, but let me tell you, it costs money. If you can deal with a premature baby at the hospital for under a quarter of a million dollars, you have a real miracle, and you could have prevented it for 100 bucks. You could have saved—if you're really about deficit reduction, I know you don't care about human beings particularly, but you do care about saving money. If you're going to save money, then you're going to put it into the children at the beginning.

Now, there's other reasons for that. If they don't get good nutrition at the beginning and they don't get good brain

development and they don't do well in school, they drop out; right? And then we don't have a workforce in this country to do what needs to be done in this country. So we get immigrants to come in and do things. People don't want immigrants, then feed the children that you insisted that women have in this country.

You don't want anybody to have any planning on birth, and then the kid comes and you won't feed him, you won't take care of him, and you're going to pay the price.

I remember, there used to be a television commercial when I was a kid. It was called the FRAM commercial. It was an air filter on your automobile. And the commercial was, Pay me now or pay me later. Change the filter or you're going to pay having the engine redone.

That's why we have all these kids dropping out of school, because we don't take—that's why it's fascinating.

The children's feeding program in schools was from Harry Truman. Why did he do that? Well, they looked at the records of the Second World War and they rejected so many draftees because they didn't have good bones. They were malnourished. They were maldeveloped and they weren't fit to be soldiers. They put that school lunch program in so that they could make strong kids so we could have a strong army.

This business about saving 100 bucks on a woman who has a child and doesn't know—she's 16 years old, she's 17 years old, she's 18 years old.

This is the most shortsighted bill I've ever seen. Vote ''no.''

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the underlying bill and in strong support of the Women, Infants, and Children program that provides food to new mothers, babies, and children under 5 who have been identified as nutritionally at risk.

WIC ensures that infants and children grow in a healthy manner. The program reduces levels of anemia, increases immunization rates, improves access to regular health care and Social Services, and it improves diets.

Nearly 50 percent of babies born in this country each year benefit from the WIC program, and the success of the program is clear. Numerous studies have shown that pregnant women who participate in WIC have fewer premature births, fewer low and very low birth weight babies, experience fewer fetal and infant deaths, seek prenatal care earlier in their pregnancy, and consume more key nutrients during their pregnancy. Simply put, WIC infants are in better health than eligible infants not participating in WIC.

But the benefits of WIC participation extend beyond the short term. A baby's physical, cognitive, and emotional growth and development depend largely on how much and what types of foods are eaten during pregnancy and the first years after birth, especially the first year after birth. This period is critical because more than half of a child's brain growth is completed by the child's first birthday, and malnutrition during this period can cause irreversible diminution in brain development. And so 4- and 5-year-olds whose mothers participated in WIC during pregnancy have better vocabulary scores than children whose mothers did not receive WIC benefits. This leads to better academic achievement, lower dropout rates, and other factors that we're trying to work on.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairman, if we want our Nation's children to be the strongest and smartest they can be, we need to make sure that our children are receiving the nutritional support they need during these formative years.

Finally, WIC is cost effective. Serving nearly 10 million people each year, it costs less than $100 a person. And that cost is so low that if we suspended the Bush tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires for only 1 week, we could pay for the entire WIC program for a full year. And we save a substantial amount of that little cost by reducing health care costs.

Medical costs for a premature baby are much greater than those for a healthy newborn. For a baby born without complications, the average cost for first year medical costs is about $4,500, compared to a premature or low birth weight baby which will cost about $50,000 in short-term medical costs and significantly more in long-term costs resulting from high incidence of mental retardation and learning disabilities.

And so, Mr. Chairman, for those interested only in the budget impact of WIC, the Department of Agriculture estimates that the health care cost savings within 60 days of a child's birth are between $1.77 and $3.13 for every dollar invested in the WIC program. Let me say that again. The Department of Agriculture estimates that the health care cost savings within 60 days of a child's birth are between $1.77 and $3.13 for every dollar invested in the program.

So, Mr. Chairman, the benefits of the WIC program are not speculative; they are clear. And I commend my colleagues that are here fighting to maintain funding for this important program, and I urge others to do the same.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TONKO. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the underlying bill.

It seems the Republicans aren't stopping at Medicare alone. Now they're cutting crucial assistance to women and to young children.

In addressing our Nation's fiscal future, we simply cannot afford to lose our values. When the going gets tough, are we a Nation that abandons our most vulnerable while giving tax breaks to millionaires and billionaires? Or are we a Nation that holds close the most basic obligations we have to our fellow citizens, food for young children, Medicare and Social Security for our seniors, and an education for our students?

We have many tough choices to make during these difficult economic times. Cutting a program that provides food assistance for families that would otherwise go without should absolutely not be one of them.

The WIC program is one of our Nation's most cost-effective and successful programs. Nearly 50 percent of babies born in the United States rely on WIC. Ten million Americans benefit from this most basic food assistance at a cost of less than $100 per person. The drastic Republican cuts included in this legislation will leave as many as 350,000 women, infants, and children without access to necessary food assistance.

The Capital Region of upstate New York, my own community, ranks among the 100 most in need of food assistance. My constituents see the plans to cut Medicare and the plans to cut food assistance programs, and they are wondering why their health is being put on the line while some of our Nation's wealthiest individuals and corporations are let off the hook with $45 billion worth of tax breaks.

The Republican budget simply doesn't add up, Mr. Chair. Every $1 we invest in WIC saves up to $3.13 in health costs per child just in the first 60 days after an infant's birth alone. Cutting this program doesn't cut spending, and it doesn't even help reduce our long-term deficit. This program brings down long-term health care costs and, most importantly, most importantly, it saves lives.

In just 1 week, millionaire tax breaks cost our country $866 million and reach only 321,000 individuals. The WIC program, on the other hand, costs $33 million less for an entire year of serving 9.2 million women, infants, and children in need.

It is clear from these numbers, Mr. Chair, where Republican priorities lie. We're all concerned about the Federal deficit. But the majority continues to insist upon cutting programs that work and work well for America's middle class and her families.

WIC saves the taxpayers money in future health care costs and ensures some of our most vulnerable citizens that they will have the most basic food and nutrition assistance. Recent polls show that 64 percent of Americans are concerned that this budget plan will take away needed protections for the poor and underserved.

□ 1750

We have good reason to be concerned given the plan to end Medicare and this most recent attack on the WIC program.

In these tough times, we must stand together in solidarity. This is not the time to abandon our friends and neighbors in need of a helping hand to make ends meet. From Medicare, to WIC, to education and housing assistance, we simply cannot turn our backs on our fellow Americans while we reward the wealthiest amongst us. That is not the compassionate thing to do, it is not the American thing to do, nor is it the answer to solving our debt problem. We can and we must do better.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, how many times will Republicans attempt to rob innocent Americans of their health and their wellness? First, they morally bankrupted themselves when they took a hatchet, or I should say a scythe—that's that thing that the Grim Reaper walks with—they took a scythe to Medicare in the Ryan budget, attempting to increase the health care cost to seniors, and passed it unanimously, unanimous Republican support for the Ryan ''Grim Reaper'' budget plan that cut Medicare. It really destroyed Medicare as we know it and replaced it with a voucher system. That's what they have passed in this House.

And now the Grim Reaper is coming again, not to cut tax cuts to the rich, not to cut tax subsidies to big oil companies. The Grim Reaper is not here to cut from wealthy individuals all of the tax breaks that they have been getting. No, the Grim Reaper is here to cut something that is fundamental to life, and that is money for food for human beings. The Grim Reaper, moving slowly, not bouncing at all, just creeping through the night with his scythe, ready to cut the WIC program.

I'm opposed to any effort to remove funding for nutrition assistance for women and children, leaving them to go hungry in the streets. During these difficult times, soup kitchens, pantry shelters, churches, nonprofits, including many in my district, they have reached their limits in terms of the assistance that they can give to those who need it.

Mr. Chairman, the budget brought to the floor today will lead to a drastic multimillion-dollar shortfall for the WIC program, not only resulting in more individuals going hungry, but placing additional strain on many aid agencies who have already reached the end of their rope.

This week, I have spoken to pastors, rabbis, and faith-based leaders of all stripes and haven't heard a single one of them express support for reducing nutrition assistance. In fact, many of them today right now are roaming the halls of Congress speaking to anyone who cares to listen to express their opposition to this bill. They are desperate, desperate to talk about the effects of these drastic cuts.

I came down to the well of the House earlier today to speak about Republican efforts to take food out of the mouths of mothers and children across the country. Today, with the help of this bill, this Congress will accomplish something that has not been done in 14 years. Today, it looks like this Congress, as the Grim Reaper, will pass a bill that doesn't provide enough money to serve all WIC participants. Instead, we will pass a bill that forces vulnerable families to depend completely on the same food banks that have run out of food while we continue to subsidize tax breaks for millionaires, billionaires, and Big Oil. The Grim Reaper is not coming for them, doesn't want to bother them.

I can't, in good conscience, support this effort of the Grim Reapers to rob low-income Americans of basic necessities like food while giving millions to those who no longer need our assistance. In a Nation as great as the United States, we should not be promoting corporate welfare while taking food out of the mouths of hungry children.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. PASCRELL. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I believe we are broke, but we're morally broke, that's how we're broke. Let's be straight here.

What's our vision for America? That's got to be the barometer. What do we want this country to be in the future? We can say we certainly don't want it to be fiscally broke, but no one comes to this well with clean hands. This is something we should be sitting down and talking about together, how can we solve America's problems.

So what's our vision? It may be a balanced budget, our vision; I could support that. It may be cutting waste and fraud; well, that sounds good, we should all be supporting that. It may be to get Americans back to work. Over 14 million are still unemployed. And the underemployed. It may be to halt the loss of our homes like we did on the Western frontier 150 years ago when people worked together to end those foreclosures. My vision does not include hurting our most vulnerable children and seniors just to make a point. You heard the gentleman from Maryland talk earlier about how little this means in bringing down the deficit for 1 year or 10 years. We've got our priorities screwed up.

So yes, we want a balanced budget. Isn't it interesting that the last President who balanced the budget was a Democratic President? Yes, we want business investment. And isn't it interesting that in the past four decades the only President that reached over a 10 percent increase in business investment was a Democratic President? Bill Clinton; almost three times more than Ronald Reagan. Check your facts. We need a fact check here, a fact check.

The last 4 years, the number of children affected has grown from 12.4 million to 17 million. Have we no responsibility for that? In my district, 109,000 constituents suffer from food insecurity, only half of whom are eligible for Federal food aid programs. What do the other half do? Yet, here we are discussing cuts.

And I understand neither party is privy to virtue on these issues, but you cannot tell me we can't rise above if we have a vision of America that encompasses everyone, not just some and not just the few. The long-term effects of a child struggling with hunger does not add up to any real savings. If a child is hungry, he cannot learn. A child who can't learn will not succeed in school. A child without an education will have difficulty finding a job.

We know the records of those who are unemployed. And the records of how many years they are in school are greatly and essentially connected to how many years they have in school, and that tells you how many people are unemployed.

□ 1800

The children affected by these cuts that you're talking about in the Agriculture bill are our future. If they go hungry today, they will not be ready for tomorrow.

I simply disagree, with all due respect, with the other side's logic behind these cuts. It's shortsighted, and we cannot simply cut the safety net while people are still in that net—seniors, children, the working poor. It doesn't make sense. What have we become as a Nation?

We're not asking for handouts or giveaways. We are talking about people who are working, and many of them are poor. There are many of those, and it took a Republican President to recognize it. The Earned Income Tax Credit was something that your side created. So who would yet take away the incentive for people to keep working?

The cuts that you have proposed to the Food and Drug Administration in this bill are $572 million below the President's request. This means fewer inspectors and fewer inspections, plain and simple. Oh, I forgot. That's the idea in this age of anti-regulation. So what we do want to do is go back to 2008. Let's go back to where we were. I say no. I say we are better than that—we are better than 2008—and if we work together, we can get over that hump.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. PELOSI. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. THORNBERRY). The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Chairman, it is 6 o'clock across America, or at least in the eastern time zone. Families across America are getting ready to sit down for dinner at their kitchen tables in many homes in our country.

Moms are saying to their children, ''Eat your vegetables. Eat your dinner.''

But in some homes in America, there isn't adequate food on the table, and there isn't adequate nutrition for our children. It's hard to imagine that one in five kids in America may go to sleep hungry tonight with pains in their stomachs because they just didn't have enough food to eat.

In its wisdom, the United States of America established the WIC Program awhile back for women, infants and children to make sure our Nation was strong. It was to make sure we fed our children. Our country made a decision that feeding our children was a priority. It sounds so obvious. Families make decisions within their budgets that they are going to feed their children. They wouldn't think of saving money by not feeding their children. Yet, for some in low-income areas and for others now, as this is into the middle class, it is very hard to make ends meet.

So you wonder, in thinking of these people who are sitting down to dinner, how the Congress of the United States in trying to reduce the deficit, which we are all committed to do—that's important to our children as well—would decide to balance that budget on the little, tiny backs of our children, many of whom don't have enough to eat.

I want to commend Congresswoman DELAURO for her leadership as a member of the Ag Subcommittee of Appropriations and as the former chair of that subcommittee. She successfully passed an amendment in committee which had bipartisan support—it would have to have bipartisan support to pass—to restore $147 million to the WIC Program to feed the children. I congratulate her for that. It is part of the bill that was supposed to come to the floor. The Republican leadership has decided not to protect that bipartisanly passed amendment. What we are seeing is that the cutting of support for Women, Infants and Children is in the context of something bigger.

At the same time as we are making these cuts, we are giving tax subsidies to Big Oil. The price at the pump is also an imposition on the budgets of these families, and that is something that we can do something about by ending harmful speculation. To do that, we have to fund the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, which is in this bill as well. The Republicans are saying they want to delay, delay, delay, and defeat the enforcement of laws which would end speculation, which would reduce the price at the pump, Goldman Sachs said, by at least 20 percent. At the same time, this same Republican majority has passed a bill, not once but twice, to abolish Medicare.

Food, price at the pump, Medicare, these are assaults on the middle class that are hard to withstand. In fact, they are hard to understand. It's hard to understand why we'd say to seniors, ''You're going to pay more for Medicare, and for fewer benefits as we abolish Medicare, while we give subsidies to Big Oil.'' We are going to say to seniors in nursing homes, ''You're going to go home and live with your families, who can probably ill-afford for you to do so, so we can give tax breaks to corporations to send jobs overseas.'' We are going to say to children whom we are not feeding that we are cutting education funding as well as making college more expensive for nearly 10 million students in our country and, for some, making it unaffordable to go to college while we give tax breaks to the wealthiest people in our country.

So they are cutting support for Women, Infants and Children while handing a blank check to speculators. They are ending Medicare while they give subsidies to Big Oil. These choices do not reflect America's values and priorities. These are tough choices. They will not bring the growth we need to expand our economy and put people back to work as we create jobs. They will not make America strong. As moms across America are saying to children right now at 6 o'clock in the East, ''eat your vegetables; they will make you strong,'' we are acting on this floor to do just the opposite—to cut the funding for the initiative that will help feed the children of America.

It is unthinkable that a family would say, ''We can't afford to feed the children.'' It is unthinkable that a Nation committed to the future would say, ''We can't afford to feed the children.'' These families need our help. It's a large amount of money, $147 million, but very small compared to the subsidies to Big Oil and a small price to pay for the health and well-being of our children and for the strength of our country as we go into the future.

So I commend Congresswoman DELAURO for her tremendous leadership—for fighting for this, for not taking ''no'' for an answer in the committee. I would hope that we could prevail on the floor, but the Republican majority has left little option for that to happen.

I also want to commend Congressman FARR, now the ranking member on the Ag Subcommittee. Probably nobody in the Congress knows more about this. There may be some who are his equal—I don't know—but probably no one knows more about this issue in his representing an agricultural region as he does and also being committed to the health and well-being and to the good nutrition of our children so that they can be strong, so that they can learn in school and so that they can be a part of our great country in the best possible way for them.

So I thank you, Ranking Member FARR, for your leadership as well.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WOMACK. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Arkansas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOMACK. I appreciate the leadership of our subcommittee chair, whom I will recognize and yield some time to in just a moment.

Obviously, we are spending more than we make. I don't know how many times we have to articulate the financial condition of our country: that we are borrowing over 40 cents on the dollar for everything we spend. The country is in a financial crisis, and you've got Members on this side of the aisle who are doing everything they can to bring fiscal sanity back to the table and to put America on a different path.

□ 1810

I am amused at how many times we continue to be portrayed as being insensitive to women, infants and children, to older folks, and how so many half-truths are being spoken about the things that this conference is trying to do in order to right America's financial ship.

Suffice it to say that we have much work to do, and it is our intent to do it in a way that is rational and feasible and brings this country back to fiscal order and can take away that cloud of uncertainty that continues to hover over the job creators in this country, the threat of higher taxes, the tremendous deficit and debt, the overregulation that is keeping those entrepreneurs parked on the sideline for fear of higher costs to job expansion and higher energy prices. On and on and on, the challenges facing this country are many and we have much work to do.

At this time, I would like to yield to the distinguished chairman of the subcommittee, the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentleman from Arkansas for yielding. I wanted to make a couple of points that I think are very important, Mr. Chairman.

Number one, the only budget that has passed is the Ryan budget. The Democrats, for all their crying, have not passed their budget. The Democrats are the majority party in the Senate. The majority party in the Senate, the Democrat Party, rejected President Obama, another Democrat, they rejected his budget by a vote of 97–0. Now, what did HARRY REID and President Obama do after that? Nothing. That is it. It went to the House. No problem. Where is the leadership? I guess it is the same place as the jobs are. We are still looking for it.

If the Democrats were concerned about balancing fiscal responsibility and some of these vital programs which we are all trying to work through, then why aren't they working on a budget? That is point number one.

Point number two, this bill increases food stamps $5.6 billion and the school lunch program $1.5 billion. It also increases from the committee mark WIC $147 million in the DeLauro amendment. It will not be offset by the

Obama WTO cotton agreement, but it will be offset. That amendment is intact as respects WIC.

Number three, Big Oil. Well, when the Democrats were in charge of the House and the Senate and the White House, if they were concerned about tax cuts for Big Oil, why didn't they go after them? What they did do is extend the Bush tax cuts, which I voted against. If they were concerned about the Bush tax cuts for the wealthy, why did President Obama and the Democrat House and the Democrat Senate extend them? I would ask you that, Mr. Chairman.

What this bill does as respects WIC, it funds it at a level of 8.2 million in participation. Should it go up to 9 million in participation, which is higher than the current level, there are three contingency funds that will pick up the difference.

We have reduced WIC, as did the Democrats. The Democrats cut WIC funding $562 million. I have the vote right here. For those Democrats who are forgetting how they voted on it, they might want to look. But they voted to cut WIC funding. Therefore, the contingency fund is not as high as it could be.

So if we want to talk about all these things, there is lots to talk about. But one thing that is very important for Members to realize is that no one is going to fall through the crack.

I keep hearing about how this is going to starve people. WIC is $42 a month. That is why WIC isn't the only program for these people. That is very important for everyone to remember. I don't even think most Members, if you gave them a pop quiz, could say what WIC is, because it sounds like it is thousands of dollars a month. But I don't believe $42 is anything more than a supplement. Yet that supplement will still be there, because, again, Mr. Chairman, we have funded this with an anticipated level of 8.3 million; but should it go up to 9 million—it has been trending down—but should it go back up, the contingency funds will be there that will pick up the difference.

I thank the gentleman for his time.

Mr. WOMACK. I encourage my colleagues to support the underlying bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. I move to strike the last word.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I rise because I want to respond to my chair, who I respect deeply, but I think there is sort of a misstatement of fact here.

The only budget that has ever been balanced in the last 20 years has been the budget that the Democrats did. We did an unholy thing that the other party can't accept that is going to be necessary to balance any budget, and that is we had to increase revenues. And what did we do? We closed the tax loopholes on the richest families in this country and corporations. We closed loopholes. And we made a lot of cuts, because we also dedicated revenue from those loophole closures to pay off the deficit. And, guess what? We paid it off. We paid it off ahead of schedule.

When the Clinton administration left town and the Bush administration came on, we had an $800 billion surplus—a surplus. And what immediately did they do? They repealed the mechanism that was balancing the budget and said, no, we will give back those tax loopholes to the richest people in the country. And then we go to war. Whenever in history we have gone to war, people have paid for it. Not these wars. We just put it on the credit card.

So, Mr. KINGSTON, you know, let's be factual about the Democrats being in charge. We were able to balance the budget, something that your party hasn't done.

And just on this whole WIC thing, we all know that the administration administers the program and has to estimate how many people are going to be in need. That is the way we put together these big budgets, whether they be Medicare or WIC or other kinds of things. And last year what we found out is that the estimates were not needed, so in fact there was a surplus. But it was based on fact after the fact, not ahead of time.

This year the economy is down. We have heard many, many speakers talk about the impacts in their districts, of the number of people that are unemployed and are seeking benefits like this. I think the chairman himself has indicated that almost 15 percent of the children in this country are using one or more of these programs.

So this idea that this cut can be sustained, when it is based on a guesstimate, and a guesstimate that didn't take in, one, the rising food costs, and, two, the number of people that are still unemployed, and, frankly, people that are underemployed, including members of the military and their families who depend on this WIC funding.

So I just want to put it in some kind of perspective here, that the budget has been balanced by this party and paid for and left in a surplus, and the fact that the guesstimates on these WIC cuts are going to do more to do harm than to do good.

I now yield to my colleague from Connecticut, ROSA DELAURO.

Ms. DELAURO. I would reinforce what my colleague from California has said, but there is a repetition on the other side of the aisle that somehow there are contingency funds and carryover funds which can be used if there is a shortfall. You may continue to say it. It continues to be wrong. This is, again, the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities. The estimates reflect the use of all contingency funds, as well as the use of the carryover funds from fiscal year 2011 to close funding shortfalls, and the funding level would still result in the large participation cutbacks that have been outlined.

There are no contingency funds and no carryover funds; and no matter how many times you say it, that money will not materialize.

I thank the gentleman.

Mr. FARR. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. I just wanted to make sure that my friends, the ranking member and former ranking member, know that the contingency fund data that we get did come from the USDA.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Chairman, I want to tell you about a young woman, a young woman named Sarah. She actually lives in a shoreline community in Connecticut in Representative DELAURO's district. She has got four kids. She was playing by the rules, did everything that we asked. She had a good job in purchasing, and last year she got laid off.

□ 1820

She got laid off, like thousands of other Connecticut residents. She has four kids ages 7 to 15. Since that day, she has been confronted every day with a decision. She's got about enough money to put one meal on the table for her kids. They'll get one meal while they're at school. And so she makes the decision: Does she put breakfast on the table to make sure that they have food in their bellies when they show up to school or does she put dinner on the table when they come back. That's her daily challenge every single day. Now, she gets a little bit of help from a food bank, from a soup kitchen around the corner from her—a soup kitchen that likely gets money from The Emergency Food Assistance Program, one of the programs that is cut 25 percent under the President's proposed budget. That's her daily reality.

Let me tell you a story about another American. His name is Tony. He lost his job last year as well. He was the CEO of a big oil company. On his way out he got about a $1.6 million salary payout and a $17 million pension payout. He might be spending part of his summer on his yacht that he's nicknamed ''Bob.'' He might be sailing in the J.P. Morgan Asset Management Round the Isle Race, like he was a summer ago as one of his oil rigs collapsed in the Gulf. His struggle is that he's only been able to raise about $1.6 billion for his new oil exploration venture around the world.

Franklin Roosevelt said, The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide for those who have little.

I have listened to my friends on the Republican side try to create a choice here today; that because our children later on are going to have to pay back the debts that this country owes, that we have to sacrifice the lives of kids who are living today. That's a false choice. The two are not mutually exclusive. The fact is we are making choices in the budget right now. We are making choices to give more and more money to the defense budget, which is already over-bloated, and cutting 25 percent from The Emergency Food Assistance Program. We are handing another $40 billion subsidy to the oil industry. And we're cutting back funding for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program. As the Republican budget calls for, we are further cutting taxes for the richest 1 or 2 percent of Americans while we underfund the WIC program that gets badly needed nutrition to kids like Sarah's kids.

In my district, the story is the same. We've got 17 percent of households in my district who have reported going hungry. At the Friendly Hands Food Bank in Torrington they've had a 40 percent increase this year. New Britain's municipal food pantry has seen a hundred new families come through the doors this year. And they are watching with horror as we try to create some false choice between feeding kids today and protecting this country's fiscal situation down the line.

When I meet Republicans and Democrats in my district, regardless of their political persuasion, they want this body to start working together to solve the biggest problems in this country. But I have news for my Republican friends. They want us to solve Sarah's problem, not Tony's problem.

This budget, this bill, is a travesty, and I urge a ''no'' vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TOWNS. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TOWNS. Let me thank Congresswoman DELAURO and, of course, Congressman FARR, for the work that they're doing.

Here we go again. I rise in strong opposition to the underlying bill. This bill reduces the amount of funds awarded to public nutrition programs such as SNAP, WIC, and many other programs that lend assistance to families in economically disadvantaged communities.

This session of Congress has really been tough on those that are in need. First, our Nation's seniors are threatened with potential cuts to Medicare proposed by the Ryan budget. Now, hunger programs for women and children are being targeted. It is a tough year indeed. But let me tell you, I was not sent to Congress to sit back and watch these crucial programs be cut. I came here to fight for their existence. And I don't plan to stop now. I will not sit idly by as we destroy programs upon which citizens depend on the most to pay for $45 billion in tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires. It is a shame and it is a disgrace. For people to try and stand here and justify as to why we're doing it just does not make any sense at all. If we get rid of tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires for 1 week—just 1 week—I'm talking about 7 days—we would pay for the entire WIC program for 365 days.

Mr. Chair, I'm greatly disturbed by the negative impact this bill will have on those individuals who depend on public assistance to feed their families. It is projected that the expected funding cuts will result in 350,000 people losing their WIC benefits. Nearly 50 percent of the babies born in this country each year rely on WIC. On top of that, it is cost-effective, serving nearly 10 million people each year and costing less than $100 per person.

I don't understand why we want to stand around here and try to hustle backwards. That's what they say in my neighborhood. We need to make certain that we do what is right and is going to benefit the children. Let's not forget that we're here to serve and meet the needs of our Nation. Supporting this bill would be a great disservice to those who elected us to Congress. Supporting this bill will significantly cut the funding to programs that feed thousands of families. Supporting this bill will lead to the devastation of many hunger programs. There are many families who depend on government funding to put food on the table every day and every night. Voting in support of this bill will only make their lives more than difficult. I urge all of my colleagues to vote ''no.'' This bill does not help those that are in need. It protects the millionaires and billionaires with their greed.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. When you're born, you get a birth certificate. When you die, you get a death certificate. That dash on your tombstone in the middle is what you've done to make this place a better place.

I rise in strong opposition against this bill. I can't believe that the Republicans are attacking the disabled, the seniors, and now the children. I really do believe the Scripture, To whom God has given much, much is expected. They really do expect more out of this Congress, the people's House.

I may be the only person in the House with any institutional memory because it seems as if no one remembers that we didn't get in this mess 18 months ago. No. When President Bill Clinton left us, he left us with a surplus. And then we had 8 years of what I have called reverse Robin Hood. You know what I mean. You've got to be a certain age to know who Robin Hood was. But robbing from the poor and working people to give tax breaks to the rich.

My colleagues talk about the fact that the President insisted on passing that $780 billion—not just for the rich and the millionaires, but the billionaires—in December.

□ 1830

And everybody was slapping themselves on the back, what a great job because we didn't raise the taxes on the average American. And I would have voted not to raise it on the average Americans, but I knew that in April we were talking about cutting funds, pension funds, and now cutting funds for the children, the babies. It is inconceivable that we would cut funds to WIC, providing food for new mothers, babies, and children under 5 years old. Nearly 50 percent of the babies born in our country are on the WIC program. In my State of Florida, as many as 19,000 people would be affected by this cut.

Lawton Chiles, former Governor of Florida, former Senator, used to have a slogan: ''This dog don't hunt.'' Folks, this dog don't hunt. The American people will wake up and wake up to what you're doing and wake up to the fact that when you have your head in the lion's mouth, the deficit, you've got to ease it out. You don't destroy programs affecting children and babies and senior citizens while giving tax breaks to billionaires and millionaires. And the sad fact is, if we put it on the board tomorrow, the Republicans would vote again to give the tax breaks to the billionaires and millionaires and yet leave the children and elderly people holding the bag. The American people need to wake up to what's going on. There is money in the House of Representatives, but you're choosing to give it to millionaires and billionaires.

As I close, I really do believe what the Bible says: To whom God has given much, much is expected. And He's expecting more out of the people of the House of Representatives.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Chairman, I ask my colleagues to vote against any language in the Agriculture appropriations bill that would seek to cut funding for the WIC program.

As you know, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, WIC, makes it possible for vulnerable children to have a healthy start. The Republican cuts will deny many children a chance to receive nutritious food by cutting WIC funding from $6.73 billion this year to $6.05 billion in 2012. This cut is a cut of more than $650 million below the fiscal level of 2011. And this is much less than the continuing cost of the high-end Bush tax cuts, oil company tax breaks, and various other write-offs for well-to-do taxpayers or powerful corporations.

If we allow these cuts to take place, approximately 200,000 to 300,000 women

and children nationwide will lose WIC benefits next year. In fact, in the State of New Jersey, approximately 4,000 to 6,000 low-income families will be turned away by WIC. This is very alarming to me because these cuts will negatively impact a substantial number of low-income women and children in my district.

As a former public school teacher in the inner city of Newark, New Jersey, I witnessed firsthand the effects of hunger and malnutrition on children trying to learn. When they came to school to take tests, they couldn't concentrate. They were unable to really focus on what they had before them. The reality is this: If a child is hungry, he simply cannot learn. If a child is hungry, he is unable to focus in class. What are his chances of thriving academically? If we are serious about closing the achievement gap and ensuring that students are career and college ready, cutting WIC will be in direct contradiction.

In light of rising food prices and current unemployment rates, it would be catastrophic to strip funding from this vital program. I strongly believe that by cutting WIC funding, we risk neglecting and preventing children from getting a head start in recognizing the excellence of their human potential.

We, as a nation, are still a great nation. We are the wealthiest nation in the world. We have the greatest ideals and opportunities for people. But I think that we are being shortsighted. We have a problem and we will deal with it, as we have done for all other problems. In World War II, we had no navy. We had no army that was significant. However, we built ships that floated. We trained people in 20 and 30 days to rivet and to make our powerful defense mechanism work, and we won the war for the world.

We can win this war of the deficit in this country. I think that even the constituents of my good friends on the other side of the aisle, my tea party friends, my Republican friends—go back home and ask people, Do you want to pull the food out of the mouths of babes? Because from the mouths of babes ofttimes come gems. And if our Nation is going to be a great nation in the world, as we are today, we're not going to do it by starving the children and harming the women. It's unconscionable, it's disgraceful, and it's a mark on the House of Representatives. It's really something that shouldn't be.

Therefore, I urge my colleagues to vote against any provisions cutting funding for the WIC program.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, I strongly object to this bill.

In his second inaugural address, Franklin Delano Roosevelt laid out, I think, a very good test for us. It was a test for this Nation at one of its most desperate periods. We, too, find ourselves in a difficult situation. We do have a big deficit, and we need to make some tough choices. And today as we debate this piece of legislation, we are indeed making choices and we are being tested. We're being tested about our values. We're being tested about what we think is important. Franklin Delano Roosevelt suggested this be the test:

''The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.''

Ponder those words and apply those words to what we are debating and what we will soon vote for or against on this floor. The test of our progress, whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much. We've discussed many times here in the last couple of hours the options that are given to us on tax policy, continuing to provide subsidies to the wealthiest industry in the world, the oil industry, not to the tune of a couple of billion but, when you add it all up, some $40 billion a year. Whether we continue to provide a tax break to the wealthiest in this Nation, those whose annual incomes are in the millions and, indeed, some who are even in the billions. We're making choices and we're being tested. That's one option that our Republican colleagues seem to want to present to us.

The other option is what we on the Democratic side have been debating and asking for, and that is the second part of what Franklin Delano Roosevelt said, and that is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.

I was on this floor not more than 3 hours ago with my granddaughter, 11 months old. And in the arms of mothers and grandfathers and grandmothers and parents across this Nation are children of that age who depend upon the Women, Infants, and Children program, which this Republican appropriation brought to this floor reduces by 10 percent. 350,000 children will not be able to have the food that they need, the care that they need to be able to be healthy, to be able to grow, and indeed in the future, to be able to pay, as we will today, one way or another, for the deficit that we have.

□ 1840

A 10 percent reduction from last year, and is there anybody in this House that's prepared to argue somehow things are better out there and that a 10 percent reduction in the face of an increased number of women and children who need help, that that is a worthy choice for us to make? I think not.

I think that this bill miserably fails the test that Franklin Delano Roosevelt laid out during the Great Depression. This does not provide for those who have too little.

And it's not just in the Women, Infants, and Children program. Across the board, thousands, indeed, 48 million Americans become ill each year because of food-borne illnesses, and yet, in this budget, another 12 percent reduction from last year's funding for food safety programs at a time when we have a new food safety program to implement. 350,000 Americans wind up in the hospital as a result of food-borne illnesses, and the Republicans want to cut the money to provide the protection for Americans.

It's about choices. It's about values. What do you value in this system? Yes, we have a deficit. Yes, we must deal with it. And yes, according to our Republican friends, we must take that food out of the children's mouths; we must make sure that people will not be able to be healthy. I don't understand.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Wyoming is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle did not produce a budget. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle did not raise taxes on the mineral industry as they now assert we should. My colleagues ran this House for 6 years. My colleagues ran this House with a Democratic President and a Democratic U.S. Senate. The things of which they argue are the fixes are things you did not do when you were in control of all three: the House, the Senate, and the Presidency.

Without a budget, with the Keynesian philosophy that you attempted to implement, and it was worth a try but it failed, the massive increases in spending, in social programs, in entitlement programs, the massive increase in spending that amounts to ObamaCare, the massive stimulus bill, the massive efforts that you made, all the time asserting that you had something called Pay-As-You-Go, PAYGO, when, in fact, there were more exceptions to PAYGO than the rule ever provided. You took half a trillion dollars out of Medicare. You destroyed Medicare. You destroyed it.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Will the gentlelady yield?

Mrs. LUMMIS. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you.

If the gentlelady from Wyoming would recall the years past, she would recall what is known as the Senate filibuster. The graveyard of legislation that the Democrats put forth many, many times died in the Senate as a result of their filibuster.

With regard to the issues of entitlements and this particular bill, we're talking here about the issue of how we care for those who have little. I'd be

happy to debate with you on this floor or any other place the import of the stimulus program, and, in fact, most every economist argues that without the stimulus program we would have fallen into a great depression, not just a very serious recession. I'm sure the gentlewoman recalls those words.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Reclaiming my time from the gentleman, the crisis is worse than the people realize, and, in fact, in some respects, the people are way ahead of us on this, which is why the people of this country chose to elect fiscal conservatives to run this House during the current Congress, and we presented to the American people what we intended to do, which is cut spending.

We told the American people we have a spending problem, not a revenue problem. The American people chose to give my party the opportunity to lead and to exhibit the fiscal restraint that the American people voted for in the last election. We are now exercising that fiscal restraint in a way that preserves 87 percent of the funding level of the WIC program that is currently being alleged that we are destroying.

Now, there are millions and millions of Americans who are functioning in this recession on 87 percent of what they used to make. In fact, we know that small businesses all over this country who are the drivers of our economy, the creators of jobs, are functioning on far less than 87 percent of what they used to make.

It is time for this House to exercise this fiscal restraint in a way that is sensitive to the needs of the people in this country, that we told the American people in November we would do.

I yield back the balance of my time.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair again reminds all Members that all remarks should be addressed to the Chair and not to others in the second person.

Mr. NADLER. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, there seems to be a little amnesia in this Chamber today. In January of 2009, we were losing 775,000 jobs a month. Then the Obama administration and the Democratic Congress enacted remedial legislation and we stopped losing 775,000 jobs a month. We started gaining. We have gained a million and a half jobs in the private sector in the last year and a half, not enough with a million and a half jobs, but unfortunately State and local government had to lay off 1.2 million people because we didn't give them enough to prevent that. But we did reverse the results of the Bush policy of 8 years, which was 775,000 jobs a month being lost.

Don't forget, in 2000, in the Presidential election, the great debate was what should we do about the $5.6 trillion surplus over the next 10 years. Bush got elected. They enacted the Bush tax cuts, which they said would stimulate the economy and pay for themselves. What happened? We had the slowest economic recovery of any economic recovery after any recession in the history of the United States, the only 8-year period in which we did not gain one net new job even before the 2008 recession from which we are now recovering, albeit too slowly.

The American people did not vote to kill remedial programs last year. They voted for jobs. They were told, Vote for the Republicans; we'll get you jobs. You don't see any jobs. So let's forget this revisionist history.

I rise in strong opposition to the Republican effort to cut funding for the special supplemental nutritional program for Women, Infants, and Children, known as WIC. This program provides food for low- and moderate-income mothers, babies, and children under 5. WIC provides the food pregnant women need to help their babies grow. After the baby is born, WIC provides the breast feeding support or infant formula to make sure the babies continue to develop and to grow. And for young children, WIC provides staples like milk, eggs, bread, fresh fruits and vegetables. Nearly 50 percent of the babies born in the United States each year rely on WIC to get a healthy start to life.

□ 1850

But in this time of rampant unemployment, the Republicans oppose—they oppose extended unemployment benefits and now want to ensure that the wives and children of the unemployed who don't get unemployment benefits can't get food and baby formula. This bill says, Let them starve.

This bill will mean that 200,000 to 350,000 pregnant women and children will be denied food. Knocking these families out of the WIC program is an about-face on a 15-year bipartisan commitment to ensure WIC funds cover all eligible women, infants, and children who apply.

Shockingly, at the same time that the Republicans are demanding that pregnant women and children starve, they continue to promote tax holidays for millionaires and billionaires. If we suspended the Bush tax breaks to the wealthiest 1 percent of Americans for just 1 week, we could cover the cost of the Republicans' latest cut of $833 million to the WIC program.

The debate over WIC funding, specifically, and the Federal budget, generally, is about priorities. By supporting the Republican proposal to slash WIC funding, forcing thousands of women and children from the rolls, the Republicans are saying that America prioritizes tax holidays for those who need it the least over providing food to pregnant women, infants, and small children.

Mr. Chair, make no mistake about it. This is about literally taking food out of the mouths of babies. This Republican bill is immoral. Food for women and children is more important than tax cuts for millionaires, billionaires, and oil companies.

Reject this bill. Reject this bill, and maybe, just maybe, the Republicans, given enough time, will find their consciences.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TIPTON. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Colorado is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Chair, you know, it's remarkable, the theater that we see. Looking throughout America, throughout my Third Congressional District—at least in Colorado—I see people who care about their families, who care about our children. What are they asking for? Jobs. They want to be able to go back to work. And we're seeing far too often, from the opposition, people that are willing not to be a steppingstone to American success but to become a stumbling block, to have us rely on another government program.

The proposed cuts, these are minor. These are minor in the sense of the real life that real Americans are living today. Come with me. Come with me and walk through my district. I have communities that are not in a recession; they are in a depression. They need to be able to get back to work. What do I hear as I walk through those communities? City councils, county commissioners, small businesspeople are saying that they are being inhibited from being able to get people back to work so that they can take care of their children, Mr. Chair, so that they can take care of their children by oppressive government regulations, by people who are not willing to allow us that opportunity to live that American Dream.

I see, Mr. Chair, an America that can rise again and become the economic power that we all know that it can be; but this will not happen as long as we try to build reliance on government rather than the rugged individualism that has made this country great.

Ms. DELAURO. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. TIPTON. In just a moment, ma'am.

Ms. DELAURO. Thank you.

Mr. TIPTON. We have an opportunity. We have a challenge. The question is, Will we rise to meet that challenge?

We have a $14.4 trillion debt in this country. Let's put that in a little bit of context. Sunday night, we saw the NBA finals. You had LeBron James, maybe one of the best basketball players the world has ever seen. He signed for $40 million a year to play basketball. Well, if he wants to earn just $1 trillion, he's going to have to play basketball for 25,000 years.

This is the burden that we have put on the backs of our children and our grandchildren that they can no longer afford. The recipe is not the Keynesian economics that my colleague has

brought up. The answer is going to be found in the very solutions that made us the richest, the freest, and the most powerful Nation on the face of the Earth. That is going to be the free enterprise system. Let's encourage it. Let's get our people back to work. Let's create those opportunities once again.

Ms. DELAURO. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. TIPTON. I yield to the gentlelady from Connecticut.

Ms. DELAURO. I thank the gentleman.

I would just talk about rugged individualism. And I will just quote to you from the Citizens for Tax Justice: 12 corporations, largest corporations in the Nation, pay an effective tax rate of negative 1.5 percent on $171 billion in profits.

Mr. TIPTON. I reclaim my time, and I thank the lady for bringing up that very point, Mr. Chair. This is the real challenge that we face, and she points to it directly. We have an oppressive, convoluted Tax Code that is stripping American business of that opportunity to be able to create wealth in this country. Let's simplify that Tax Code. Let's not punish success in this Nation, but let us reward success in this Nation to be able to get our people back to work.

Ms. DELAURO. Let's get them to pay their fair share of taxes.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Colorado controls the time.

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Chair, these are the challenges, and we have very distinct choices to be able to make. Will we continue to follow the pathway to poverty of government programs, government taxation, government solutions? Or will we follow that expressway to real enrichment in this country by getting the American people back to work?

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I really want to thank Ms. DELAURO and Mr. FARR for their wonderful, unbelievable work.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the underlying bill. Mr. Chairman, nutrition programs did not run our economy into the ditch. Nutrition programs did not drive us into debt or stop the banks from extending credit. But my colleagues want to cut programs to feed millions of women, infants, and children. Who is next? I ask you, Who is next? The Republicans went after the seniors' Medicare. Now they are going after the babies. Who is next?

Mr. Chairman, the WIC program is a necessity. It is a lifeline. It is our obligation. This is not the way America treats our seniors. This is not the way America treats our mothers. This is not the way America treats our children. This is not the America we want to live in.

If we repeal the tax breaks for the wealthy for just 1 week, we could pay for this entire program. Make no mistake, this bill will reduce the number of people served by nutrition programs. Right now, over 50 percent of the children born in our country rely on this program every single day, every week. They serve almost 10 million people each year. My beloved brothers and sisters across the aisle know that, but they should also know that this bill will mean empty shelves at food banks and smaller portions at dinnertime—and not a dent in the deficit.

Make no mistake, make no mistake, this bill will hurt people. It will reduce the number of people who receive assistance. The poor, the sick, the mothers, these little babies. They didn't overspend our credit card. They didn't do it. They didn't overspend our credit card. Why are we doing this? Why are we punishing? Why are we cutting the WIC program? It is a lifeline. No one in this country should have to go hungry. It is not right. It is not fair. It is not the just thing to do. It's not the good thing to do.

The Atlanta Community Food Bank in my own district, in the heart of downtown Atlanta, is distributing 35 percent more food than last year. Their funding would be cut as well. Countless people are already on the waiting list. One such man in my own district, Johnny Battle, this man worked all of his life, and he worked very hard. Mr. Battle is 71, and his wife is 76. He can't look for work because his wife has fallen ill. He is her caregiver.

□ 1900

I say we should be their caregiver. We should look after those who are suffering through no fault of their own.

They receive emergency food assistance from Antioch Baptist Church when they can and receive only $16 a month in food stamps. Assistance from the food bank would make a huge difference in their lives.

Sixty thousand people depend on Atlanta Community Food Bank to make it through the month. We cannot allow more people to be pushed onto the waiting list like Mr. Battle and his wife.

Mr. Chairman, and my colleagues, our country is hurting. Our people are hungry. They need our help. This is not how America treats her children. This is not how America treats her seniors. This is not how America treats her little babies, the mothers.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote "no."

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Ohio is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Rugged individualism. Oh, am I glad the gentleman brought that up. Rugged individualism produces a heartless bill like this.

Now, if you look back to why we're in the dumpster economically, go back to the 1990s. Read Alan Greenspan, a great advocate of rugged individualism, and Ayn Rand; right? Just drive them into the ground. Make all of his friends rich. JPMorgan Chase, Wells Fargo, Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley—it's an interesting group of characters up there that took America to the cleaners. They took and outsourced our jobs. Now they took our home equity.

And now, it's getting so bad we even have a bill that's going to take food away from about 350,000 women and children. Now, whose fault is that?

Here's a little note from somebody in my district. She says—she signed up this plate at the food bank, the local food bank. She said: Without help from the food bank, I would be on the streets. I struggle every day to make ends meet so my kids have a place to lay their heads at night. I have a job, but with two kids, it's still very hard. I have a lot of trouble paying rent and bills. I just wish there were more help to parents like myself.

That's from the rural part of my district.

From the urban part of my district, a plate is signed at the food bank: My income is spent on bills, which leaves very little money for me to purchase food for myself and my two daughters.

Now, you know, the majority of people in this House are Christian. And I'm not pushing that, though I am one of them. But the first Beatitude says, "Feed the hungry." It doesn't say "rugged individualism."

I'm as individualistic as anybody else in this Chamber, but I'll tell you what. There's a heartlessness that goes with people who take everything for themselves and turn their back on the rest of the American people. So when Big Oil makes record profits and pays no taxes, there's something really wrong. There's something really wrong with the country, and the American people know it.

They didn't clean house here last November because they thought you were better; they just wanted a change. And they'll vote for it again if their lives don't get better. And their lives won't get better unless we fix what Alan Greenspan and Goldman Sachs and Bank of America and the whole rest of those buzzards up there did to this country. And they're taking bonuses. In fact, they're making so much money they take Members of Congress out. You know the average amount of a meal? $193, $193 a plate. These folks, a couple of bucks in a day they spend on food.

So I stand with the American people, not those wealthy interests who took the Nation to the cleaners. You know, those hedge funds? They pay at a 15 percent tax rate.

Mrs. LUMMIS talked about businesses in her district. They pay at a 35 percent rate. Why don't we hold those accountable up on Wall Street for what they did? Let them pay their fair share

of taxes. We couldn't even take one penny of their bonuses, not a penny. This was the most gutless institution.

And I'll tell you what. The real straw that broke the camel's back was 1998 when Glass-Steagall was thrown out, an act that had separated banking and commerce. And you know the name on that bill? There wasn't a single Democratic name. It was Gramm-Leach-Bliley, all Republicans, and they shoved it through this House. I didn't vote for it.

And then Wall Street, oh, my gosh. You talk about rugged individualism. They hurt the Republic. They hurt our country, and they have not been held accountable. George Bush's Chief of Staff, Mr. Bolton, he came from Goldman Sachs. He was there. He was there in the fall of 2008 when the Treasury was just opened up to them. Isn't that an interesting coincidence? Very interesting when you look back and see what really happened.

I refuse to have the people of my district or any district pay for what they did. I've got people who are lined up in our food banks because of unemployment, and I know who caused it. And I don't have enough power to hold them accountable, but I hope God does, because what they've done is unforgivable. Their rugged individualism is unpatriotic. It is un-Christian, and it hurt this country.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. KAPTUR. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the gentlewoman's striking the last word a second time?

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chair, reserving the right to object, I want to say to my friend, the ranking member, that I understand the passion on that side and a number of people who want to start speaking, or who have been speaking. But if we are going to start speaking twice, then I hope you will give me the courtesy of speaking twice. I just want to mention that.

I've just been informed Mrs. LUMMIS spoke twice while I was going to the restroom, so, once again, I will sit down.

If I could continue on my reservation, I want to explain to my friend from Ohio that I was concerned about Members speaking twice. But I understand that you've done that now with Mrs. LUMMIS, so I certainly will not object.

I withdraw my reservation.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Ohio is recognized for an additional 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Ms. KAPTUR. I thank the gentleman. I thank you for yielding. We may not agree on everything, but I think if we agree on some of the history that brought us to this point, maybe we can do something right for the Republic, and certainly for those people who are lined up across this country as victims of the abuse that came from that rugged individualism for which there has been no justice. There has been no justice to this date. What a sad thing for us to say institutionally.

If we look at this bill, nearly half of the babies born in our country rely on WIC, the Women, Infants and Children food program. They are in every district in this country. And I can guarantee you, for all the big shots that cleaned up at the expense of the American people, they've never even been to a WIC site. They've never seen sat with moms. They've never sat with families trying to figure out how they're going to make it from the beginning of the month to the end of the month on the few pennies that they have to live on.

So I think that the sad fact of this bill is that, rather than Big Oil paying their fair share of taxes, rather than us taking those bonuses from those who truly don't deserve them because of what they did to the Republic, for all the tax breaks that are going to companies that are locating jobs overseas and taking our livelihoods away from us, the answer isn't to take food away from those people that are paying the price.

So I want to thank my colleagues, and particularly Mr. KINGSTON for not objecting, to Mr. FARR for the great job you've done in trying to bring some justice to this bill, and to say, in closing, that there are many people who talk about life. Without decent nutrition, the children who will be affected, the hundreds of thousands of children who will be affected in this bill, their brains won't grow as fast. They won't have the kind of nutrients that produce strong bodies and strong minds for the future.

This is the time to stand up in defense for those who are defenseless. And particularly with this economy, the last place to cut is food. Every Christian in here knows that's true. We need to do better as this bill moves forward.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the bill on final vote, and I thank my colleagues for yielding me additional time.

I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1910

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Hawaii is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. HIRONO. I rise in opposition to the underlying bill.

Ours is a compassionate country. We have leaders who can put themselves in the shoes of Americans who are struggling, doing their best. We have compassionate leaders on both sides of the aisle. This is why it is so inexplicable that the underlying bill, as well as bill after bill brought by the Republican majority to this floor, makes cuts after huge cuts to people's programs—not corporate programs, not programs that hit Wall Street, but people's programs. And again today, in this agriculture spending bill, we are targeting cuts that hit women, infants, children and seniors in Hawaii and nationwide.

In my district in Hawaii, 19.5 percent of our residents experienced food hardship in the last year. Let me repeat: nearly one in five people in my district did not have enough money to buy food that they and their family needed in 2010. Today's bill would cut crucial nutrition programs for thousands of Hawaii's most vulnerable and hundreds of thousands all across the country. And while the richest in our country continue to get billions in tax breaks and the oil companies continue to get their billions in tax breaks, why are we balancing the budget on the backs of women, infants, children and seniors?

First, today's bill makes a $650 million cut to the women, infants and children, WIC, nutrition program for fiscal year 2012. This would cut as many as 350,000 eligible low-income women and young children from the program. WIC provides nutritious food, counseling on healthy eating, and health referrals to pregnant, postpartum and breast-feeding women and their children under age five. This program has had well-documented success in improving the nutrition and health of families in poverty. WIC has reduced low-weight births, anemia and hunger. Let's put ourselves in the shoes of 350,000 women and their children who depend on this program.

Second, the Emergency Food Assistance Program supports food banks on all of our islands and across the Nation to support the hungry. I have visited many of the food banks in my State, in my district; and we know that there is a growing need. There are many, many more families now relying on food banks; and yet this bill cuts $12 million from food banks at a time of great, great need. Let's put ourselves in the shoes of the hundreds of thousands of families all across our country who are relying on food stamps.

Third, today's bill cuts 20 percent from the Commodities Supplemental Food Program, which provides food packages to over 600,000 people nationwide, and 96 percent of these recipients are low-income seniors. You've heard others say ending tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires for just 1 week alone would save $866 million. That is enough to support poor women, infants and children for the entire year. And when we say this bill brought to us by the Republicans literally takes food from babies to give tax breaks to millionaires and billionaires, we are not engaging in hyperbole. This is what is happening in this bill.

Let's get our priorities in order. Balancing the budget on the backs of our most vulnerable is totally indefensible when we are giving tax breaks to those people, the richest people in our country, corporations that are making billions of dollars. It's indefensible. And where do we live? Do we live on Wall Street? People who want this bill, I think they live on Wall Street. Well, those of us who are opposing this bill,

we live on Main Street. That's where the majority of our people live; they live on Main Street. They expect us to support those people—working people, families, women and children all living on Main Street.

I urge my colleagues to oppose these anti-people, wrong-headed, downright cruel cuts to low-income women, infants, children and seniors all across our country.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Maryland is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. EDWARDS. I've been listening all afternoon and I've heard economic philosophy described as Keynesian and I've heard talk of fiscal conservatism and regulation and rugged individualism. We even heard talk of LeBron James. But one thing is really true, we haven't heard anyone on the other side of the aisle talk about hunger, and even LeBron James is not hungry.

So I want to talk about a really simple economic theory and it's called hunger. It means when you wake up in the morning and you're a young child in this country and your parents can't afford to feed you, you're hungry. The demand of hunger when you're going to school and you can't think through the school day because you're hungry. It's about going home on a weekend after receiving a school lunch on a Friday but not eating through the entire weekend because you're hungry. And really, Mr. Chair, that's the only economic theory we need to discuss this afternoon.

So just before I came to the floor, earlier in the day I had a physical. I had to go 10 hours without eating. I described myself as starving. But clearly, neither I nor any Member of this House of Representatives knows what it's like to be really hungry today. And so before I came to the floor, I had my piece of chicken. And you know what? That was more than the Republicans are prepared to give America's women, infants, and children.

And so I rise today in opposition to these extreme cuts to the Women, Infant and Children program and the underlying bill. We know the program is essential to providing nutrition to our Nation's most vulnerable children.

Now, I don't need a study to know what it means to be hungry; but studies show that women, infant and children programs reap tremendous benefits to the participants. They lead to fewer premature births, fewer fetal and infant deaths, and result in better cognitive and physical health for children. That's the difference between eating a nutritious meal and being hungry.

I also rise today in support of my colleague, LYNN WOOLSEY's, amendment to block the GOP's attempts to roll back our USDA nutrition standards for our children because not only are some of our children hungry, but we need to make sure that they are eating to a standard that allows them to learn in our classrooms.

The WIC program is essential to ensuring our youngest Americans receive the nutrition they need, and the underlying amendments will ensure that children continue to receive nutritious foods throughout their school day.

Now, when I first came to Congress, I worked with our then-chairwoman and our friend, ROSA DELAURO, to secure the Afterschool Supper Program in my home State of Maryland for hungry children. We have fed millions of meals through this program. And so I know that in my State and all across the country the Women, Infant, and Children program served 140,000 women, infants and children every month in the last year.

The program serves 9.2 million low-income families across the country. And as our Nation continues to recover from a recession, the benefits provided to these families are an essential safety net for our vulnerable populations. And according to Feeding America, there's a 50 percent increase in need amongst families, seniors, and children right now. This is a time when ensuring the economic security of the American people is critical, and we can't stand by the Republican pledge to cut essential safety net programs.

It's no surprise to the American people that the Republican Conference selected yet another vulnerable group to slash while continuing to support big oil companies, farm subsidies and huge tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires instead of supporting women, infants, and children.

In this 112th Congress, this new and bold Republican majority began with an attack on women. They proceeded to attack our seniors with a plan to eradicate Medicare, and now they are committed to an attack on our neediest and the health of our neediest infants and children.

□ 1920

It's actually really shameful. It's even hard to talk about because it's hard to believe, in America, that even those who sit on the other side of the aisle are willing to take away nutrition programs for needy women, infants and children rather than take away the tax breaks for billionaires and take away the subsidies for oil companies while our gas prices rise. I think that those on the other side of the aisle should be absolutely ashamed of themselves. I know that some of my colleagues have quoted Bible passages. I don't know. Maybe quote the Statue of Liberty. What is happening in this House is not American at all. It doesn't hold to the values that we hold to take care of our neediest, to take care of our poor.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. EDWARDS. I'll be gaveled down, but we need to support Women, Infants and Children and to stop the slash and burn on the Nation's neediest children.

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HINCHEY. I rise in opposition to the underlying bill.

People across this country have agreed that we have to reduce our deficit, but they also understand that we shouldn't do it on the backs of working and middle class people who are already struggling to make ends meet. The Republican-sponsored Agriculture appropriations bill, on the other hand, cuts all the wrong things at exactly the wrong time. Here are five reasons that I plan on voting against it.

First, this bill will raise gas prices by cutting anti-speculation efforts: With speculation at an all-time high, American families are paying now more than 60 cents more per gallon at the pump than they should be; but instead of ramping up anti-speculation efforts, this bill cuts almost half the funding for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission—the very agency charged with policing oil speculation.

Second, this bill takes food out of the mouths of low-income mothers, babies and kids, cutting WIC for about 15,000 people just in New York State alone: The bill cuts food assistance for pregnant women, infants and children by $650 million, or 10 percent, denying food and health counseling for up to 475,000 low-income women, infants and young children throughout America over the course of the next year if this bill passes. The bill also would cut food aid for low-income seniors and would cut help for food banks.

Third, this bill increases the risk to our food supply by cutting safety inspections: As many as 48 million Americans are sickened every year by contaminated food. That's why, with my support, last year we stepped up efforts to increase the inspections of food manufacturing plants and imported foods. With new strains of E.coli sickening hundreds throughout Europe, now is not the time to be gutting the funding for food safety inspections; but this legislation would do just that, making it impossible to implement the new safety standards and guaranteeing millions more Americans will get sick from bad food.

Fourth, this bill cuts anti-childhood obesity efforts: Childhood obesity has tripled in the past 30 years. It's an epidemic. Obesity costs our country $147 billion a year in medical costs, and for the first time in American history, life expectancy for the next generation is going to be lower than for the current generation. But instead of boosting efforts to combat this problem, the Republican bill eliminates funding for the Healthy Food Financing Initiative, designed to combat childhood obesity by bringing healthy foods to underserved urban and rural communities.

Finally, this bill raises the cost of prescription drugs: By severely cutting funding for the Food and Drug Administration, American consumers will get food and medical products that are less

safe due to the erosion of essential oversight and prescription drugs that are more expensive as a result of the agency's limited ability to approve less costly generics.

Just for those five reasons, obviously big reasons, this bill should not be passed. While I oppose these cuts, I do support responsible ways in which we can reduce our deficit, such as cutting wasteful subsidies and give-aways for the oil industry, ending special tax earmarks for Wall Street bankers, and allowing Medicare to negotiate for bulk rate discounts on prescription drugs for seniors in the context of Medicare. These reforms in and of themselves—just those few—would save hundreds of billions of dollars without harming working and middle class Americans who are already struggling to get by.

This Agriculture appropriations bill accomplishes the goal of deficit reduction in the wrong way. Let's move forward with a plan that does it in the right way.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I think it is easy for my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to forget that this bill deals with programs on which the most vulnerable in our society rely.

My Republican colleagues are proposing about $650 million in cuts to the WIC Program. This action would essentially kick 200,000 to 350,000 women, infants and children off the rolls. Now, the Republicans claim that getting our fiscal house in order requires shared sacrifice. However, they are only requiring the sacrifice of those most in need. In fact, the cost of funding this program for 1 year is less than the revenue that would be generated by ending the Bush tax cuts to millionaires for just 1 week. Now you tell me, is that considered shared sacrifice?

If we want to talk about being fiscally responsible, then there is almost no better investment and choice we can make than the WIC Program. For every dollar invested in WIC, $1.77 to $3.13 in health care costs are avoided in the first 60 days after an infant's birth. Doesn't this alone make fiscal sense?

The WIC Program is preventative. It's preventative in terms of public health nutrition. It is a mission-driven program that seeks to improve birth outcomes, improve the nutrition of women and children, and provide nutrition education and food packages tailored to meet the needs of low-income women and children. I can't think of anything that is more preventative in nature and that ultimately saves money.

WIC serves approximately 8.9 million low-income pregnant women, new moms, babies, and children under 5 who have been determined to be nutritionally at risk. Are these really the people that my Republican colleagues want to carry the burden and weight of shared sacrifice?

What do the Republicans expect? I mean, do you honestly expect your constituents to find relief if they're not willing to provide even the most basic of services? You don't even want to provide basic services for people in need. Where are they going to get relief in this economic downturn that we face right now?

If my Republican colleagues continue to pursue this kind of action, they're going to have hundreds of thousands of hungry and malnourished women and children on their consciences—and I really mean that, on your consciences—and that's not something that I am willing to accept.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this appropriations bill and to give the necessary support to our Nation's most vulnerable members.

I yield back the balance of my time.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. DELAURO

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 2, line 14, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $136,070,000) (reduced by $136,070,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Connecticut is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. My amendment offered with my colleagues, Representatives KAPTUR, BOSWELL, FARR, COURTNEY, LARSON, and WELCH, would restore full funding for the President's request to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

The CFTC's mission is to protect the American public from fraud, manipulation, abusive practices, systemic risk related to derivatives, including speculation in the oil markets that drive up gas prices, and to foster open, competitive and financially sound markets. Funding the CFTC at the President's request will put 159 more cops on the beat, will provide the agency with the updated technology it needs to properly regulate the multi-trillion-dollar derivatives market in order to protect American consumers, and will curb excessive speculation by Wall Street banks and oil companies.

The current version of the bill, by gouging the CFTC by as much as $136 million, makes it clear that the majority is putting profiteering and special interests above the basic, commonsense priorities of the American people. Three years ago, we suffered an economic meltdown brought on by greed, corruption and a total lack of regulation in the Wall Street derivatives market.

□ 1930

We are still dealing with the economic ramifications of that collapse today. Millions of jobs disappeared, millions of homes foreclosed on, millions of families are struggling every day to get by.

If that were not burdensome enough, the same families are paying excessive prices at the pump right now because of dangerous oil speculation. Goldman Sachs has found that unregulated speculation adds over $20 per barrel to the price of oil. Even Exxon's top executive recently conceded that the price of gas has been surging due to speculators, who now make up nearly 70 percent of the market.

Because of all the bad behavior by Wall Street, we passed the Dodd-Frank financial reform bill in the Congress last year which would reintroduce transparency and accountability in commodities markets and protect the public from future malfeasance. Among these reforms was the strengthening of the Commodities Futures Trading Commission, their ability to regulate derivatives and to prevent speculation in oil. Yet in this appropriations bill the majority is now trying to starve the CFTC of the resources that it needs to do the job.

The decision helps Wall Street firms and big oil companies. If it passes, Wall Street can continue the risky manipulation of derivatives that brought on the last collapse. Big oil can continue to enjoy inflated profits every year due to artificially swollen oil prices. The losers are Americans families forced to pay more at the pump with this decision, or worse. Eviscerating the CFTC here, the majority is setting up taxpayers to pay for yet another costly bailout of Wall Street.

The choices made in this legislation are reckless and disturbing, more to do with ideology than basic economics. Yet it is part of a pattern by this majority. Under their watch, gas prices reached an average of around $4 a gallon across the country, up dramatically from the $2.78 national average in 2010. And yet they still rush to protect billions in oil company subsidies, even as they cut the budget of the agency we know can do something about this speculation.

CFTC has already made a difference. Earlier this year they charged five oil speculators with manipulating the price of crude, netting them more $50 million, even as oil prices climbed towards record highs of $147 a barrel in the summer of 2008. We need this type of accountability in our oil markets to protect American families. What we do not need is a Congress that puts the profit margins of Wall Street and oil speculators over the needs of American families and the American economy.

We came here to represent the American people, not banks and oil companies, and that means giving the CFTC the resources that it needs to do its job properly. I urge my colleagues to put Main Street before Wall Street and to support this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chair, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman will state his inquiry.

Mr. KINGSTON. I accept the amendment and was wondering if we could go ahead and call the question and move on.

The Acting CHAIR. The Committee is proceeding under the 5-minute rule and debate will proceed on the amendment.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. It is interesting. I want to read this amendment, because I have heard some comments about this bill isn't serious or whatever. Well, look at this amendment. I don't think you could call it serious. It says on page 2, line 14, ''after the dollar amount insert increased by $136 million, reduced by $136 million.''

The effect of this amendment is nothing. It is a legitimate vehicle on a parliamentary rule to discuss something. But if there is a problem with the CFTC not doing its job or being unable to do the job because of this, there should be an amendment that addresses that. This is not an amendment. This is just a discussion. But I will enter into the discussion.

First of all, I want to quote Michael Dunn. He is a Democrat member of the commission. Here is what he had to say as far as oil speculation goes. ''The CFTC staff has been unable to find any reliable economic analysis to support the contention that excessive speculation is affecting the markets we regulate.''

That is from the Democrat member of the CFTC. If I quoted a Republican member and they said the same thing, then the Democrats would be crying, no, no, no. But that was the quote of the Democrat member of the commission.

Now, why are the Democrats so interested in blaming high energy costs on the CFTC? It is because they have opposed our own development of energy domestically. We do not want to explore for oil in Alaska, but the President of the United States goes down to Brazil and apparently understands or in his view believes that they are maybe technologically superior to Americans, that they can drill for oil off the shore of Brazil, and they can do a better job than the good people in Louisiana or Texas or Florida can. So the President of the United States, a Democrat, goes down to Brazil and says, drill for oil here, and we will lend you the money, and we want to be your best customer.

Now, if we want to decrease the price of domestic energy, then we need to explore for our own energy, instead of this phony argument that somehow—and, by the way, I am not sure, but I think Goldman Sachs is a huge supporter of President Obama. In fact, I think they were his second-largest contributor. I am not 100 percent sure on that. I am sure somebody over here might be very quick to correct me if I am wrong.

But I know this: that I have heard over and over again that somehow Goldman Sachs is the problem with this bill. I wasn't listening to every single speech, but that was one of the things that we kept hearing. But if we want to decrease the cost of energy in the United States of America, you need to increase the supply and the production of domestic energy and get away from this, well, it is the CFTC is not getting enough money.

And I want to say this, which is very important about this budget number. The budget of the President of the United States, a Democrat, failed in the Senate, which is also run by the Democrats, by a vote of 97–0. Now, I keep hearing, not this bill, not here, not now. Well, where? The Ryan budget is the only budget that has passed either body. It has not passed the Senate. But the President's budget failed 97–0. So if the Democrats are concerned, then why aren't they working on a budget that is acceptable to them?

We had a number of budget votes here. None of them passed. There was one budget proposal, the RSC, Republican Study Committee budget that was Mr. GARRETT's and Mr. JORDAN's, and it failed because they felt the Ryan budget did not go far enough. But the Ryan budget did get a majority of votes. The President Obama budget did not. And what did the President and HARRY REID do when their budget failed? Nothing. They left. That was it. If they are concerned about funding for the CFTC and the USDA and the FDA, why aren't they working on a budget that is more acceptable? Isn't that what leadership is all about?

So what we are having here now is, because we won't explore for our own energy and we won't develop it, we are going to blame it on the CFTC's funding level. I think that this amendment, although it does nothing, I think we should move on to more serious discussions.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I move to strike the requisite number of words.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Massachusetts is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, having heard the subcommittee chairman's discussion of this amendment, I now understand why he didn't want to have a discussion of this amendment. He wanted simply to accept it so he would not have had to say nothing. Since it was not accepted, he did say nothing, he just took 5 minutes to say it.

I take it back, he did say one very important thing, and it defines this issue. He apparently believes that speculation in oil is no part of the reason that oil prices go high, and he quoted a Democrat. He found a Democrat, one of the three Democratic members of the commission. The other two, of course, vehemently disagree.

By the way, we did not say that this is something Goldman Sachs doesn't like. Goldman Sachs is on the gentleman's side. Goldman Sachs opposes regulation of derivatives. Goldman Sachs merely mentioned in an analyst report that they believe that $20 a barrel of the cost of oil comes from the speculation that they engage in. Maybe they were bragging. They certainly weren't objecting.

Here is what speculation means. By the way, in our legislation that the Republicans are trying to undo and in what the CFTC is trying to do, people who use oil are not regulated. An airline trying to hedge against volatility in prices, they are left alone.

Here is what we want to say. If you do not use oil, if you never go near a barrel of oil, in fact, if you are one of those people whole never goes near the gas pump because you have got somebody to pump it for you, if you never touch a barrel of oil and never use it, please do not buy it up, through derivatives, so that you put up only a little bit, large amounts so that you can keep it off the market and the price goes up. That is what we want to do.

□ 1940

The CFTC, we think, should be able to say to people who don't use the commodity, Please don't buy it up and hold it off the market so you can then sell it when the price goes up and make a profit. The gentleman from Georgia says speculation is not an issue. He says it's drilling. Mr. Chairman, I do not know a thoughtful person who thinks that complex issues like the price of a commodity have a single explanation, except the gentleman from Georgia. I wouldn't want to violate the rules by suggesting that I would exclude him from the ranks of the rational, but every other rational person says that things like the price are set by a number of factors.

No, I do not think speculation is the major cause. Neither does Goldman Sachs. Neither does Wilbur Ross, the great investor. They say it's perhaps 20 percent. So we're not saying we're going to cut the price in half. We are saying you can reduce it by 20 percent. And, by the way, it's not just oil. We just had a debate about food. Well, frankly, the WIC program that they are cutting wouldn't cost so much if we would also limit speculation in food prices.

And here's what we are talking about. Well, maybe the gentleman from Georgia speaks for his party. I've heard no dissent. The apparently official Republican position is: Speculation is fine. Let's not interfere with speculation. It's people who do not use the commodity, who don't use oil, who don't use the foodstuffs, if they want to buy it up and keep it off the market so they can then sell it when the price goes up—why else would they buy it? They're not collectors. This is not stamps. This is not a hobby. It's a way to make money. And how do they make money? By driving up the price of the commodity by buying it and withholding it and then selling it when

they can make a profit. What we want is for the CFTC to tell people who don't use it, No, there are limits on what you can buy. And we believe that contributes to the price of oil, unlike the gentleman from Georgia, who said, No, price only has to do with exploration and drilling. No one I think really thinks that—maybe not even the gentleman from Georgia. What they do is to say, No, the CFTC won't have that money. They in fact in their budget will give the CFTC less money in the next fiscal year than they have this year.

We have given the CFTC new powers under the financial reform legislation, which they don't like, to cover swaps. By the way, it's not simply speculation that's at risk here. AIG helped plunge this country into an economic disaster by an absolutely irresponsible use of derivatives. And that's something, again, we would like the CFTC to be able to regulate. They were allowed to get in way over their heads.

So what we have here is part of a one-two punch from the Republicans. They want to do it legislatively—and that will come up later—but here they're telling the CFTC, You should get less money as we give you this complicated issue of derivatives than you had before. And by the way, they also have added a Catch-22. If you read the current Republican arguments, they are very critical of the CFTC for not moving quickly enough. They aren't using the authority they've got.

So, first, you complain that they aren't doing enough. Then you reduce the money that they need. And by the way, these are complicated things. They need to be able to hire very smart people. They need to be able to hire important information technology. You cannot have dumb people regulating. And I will give credit to those people out there manipulating derivatives and speculating—they're very smart. They have state-of-the-art equipment. And you want to put the CFTC in shackles. It is an effort to make speculation free of any regulation, with a consequent increase in food prices and energy prices. And I hope the bill is defeated.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this amendment. We are slowly rebounding from a financial crisis that crippled our economy and left millions of Americans out of work. Clearly, consumer protection is important now more than ever. The Commodity Futures Trading Commission, known as the CFTC, is an independent agency that protects market users and the public from abusive practices related to derivatives. This includes helping regulate oil speculation and food price speculation.

Now, more than ever, we need a well-resourced CFTC. As Mr. FRANK pointed out, this is new legislation. The agency is growing by hiring people who are going to be regulators, and expects by September 30 of this year to have in place what we have given the money for last year, which is 720 full-time equivalent positions. They will help ensure that the public is protected from fraud, manipulation, and systematic risk, and they will make sure that Americans aren't paying exorbitant prices at the pump and grocery stores. And the CFTC can do just that.

In the past 3 years, the CFTC has obtained over $1.3 billion in judgments for Americans who have been victimized by thousands of profit-hungry investors around the country. And yet now, in fiscal year 2012, this bill, the Agriculture appropriations bill, slashes the budget of the CFTC by 44 percent. So the first time that we begin to regulate an industry, we are going to cut it back by 160 jobs they will have to let go.

Now, remember, they're regulating an industry that is seven times larger than all regulated industry and regulated markets today. Seven times bigger than all regulated markets. This job cut will dangerously undermine the CFTC's regulation of commodities and contribute to rising oil and food prices, as Mr. FRANK pointed out. This is blatant fiscal irresponsibility because here's what these cuts mean. The CFTC can't put enough cops on the beat to prevent the big banks from making risky bets that could lead to another financial crisis. So the American taxpayer will foot the bill to bail out Wall Street all over again. This puts the needs of Wall Street over the needs of Main Street. But you know what else it means? It means Americans will be exposed to manipulation of oil and food prices at the very time when folks are scraping together pennies to pay for rent and cover groceries.

Our job here in Congress is to be the best possible stewards of taxpayers' dollars. And this shortsighted cut will yield absolutely no return on investment. In fact, we could be lining ourselves up to lose big all over again. I urge my colleagues to support the DeLauro-Kaptur-Farr-Larson-Courtney-Welch-Boswell amendment to restore funding to the CFTC and avoid this misguided attack on the American taxpayer.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOSWELL. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Iowa is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BOSWELL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOSWELL. I rise to support the fair and necessary funding for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. The CFTC acts as a Wall Street watchdog, overseeing American markets that directly impact our Nation's workers, businesses, and families. Refusing to responsibly fund this Commission puts our constituents in danger of higher gas prices, higher food prices, and a greater likelihood that Wall Street will once again take advantage of them. While the derivatives market has grown by 400 percent over the last 10 years, the U.S. Government has failed to match that growth in regulators. Now the majority wants to take even more cops off Wall Street, and as someone has said, it's like putting the Little League champions up against the New York Yankees. With speculators making up 70 percent of market players and an industry that invests $25 billion in technology each year, the Commission that regulates behavior on Wall Street cannot afford to be left behind. Our taxpayers cannot afford to pick up the bill again.

To monitor and regulate this market, and to protect American taxpayers, last Congress we passed the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform Act. And I might add that that was not a knee-jerk operation. We took months and months, many, many hearings, as you well know, working across the aisle together to try to do something that would prevent a re-happening of what we were going through and still have the aftereffect of.

As ranking member of the subcommittee that oversees the CFTC, I have heard from countless witnesses, including Chairman Gensler himself, that we must properly fund the CFTC to protect American consumers and market end-users. They need and must have the tools and the resources to do their job. Adequately funding the CFTC would allow the Commission to increase staff to do the job that Congress directed them to do, which is to prevent another 2008 financial crisis. It would allow the Commission to keep pace with the growth of the market they are charged to regulate and invest $66 million in technology to improve oversight of electronic trading.

Still, the majority is dead set on delaying and defunding the CFTC. This legislation returns the CFTC to their 2008 level funding—the same level of funding that led to the taxpayer bailout of Wall Street and only allows half of what they need now to do the job correctly. Defunding and delaying this implementation is the majority's handout to Wall Street millionaires and billionaires, who have already been caught red-handed gambling with the pension plans of middle class Americans and speculating the cost of oil $20 a barrel beyond actual cost.

□ 1950

This is why I support and have cosponsored the amendment to increase CFTC funding to the fair level of $308 million. To fund the CFTC at 2008 levels is an insult to the American taxpayers who were asked to foot the bill in 2008 as a result of Wall Street's reckless behavior.

Our Nation has seen the effects of the 2008 funding level and what happens when our market lacks proper oversight. We must protect our constituents from the vulnerable situation that

led to a financial collapse, and we must fairly fund the CFTC.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Nebraska is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentleman from Nebraska.

I just want to say I find it incredible that I'm hearing people say that the fault of the Wall Street meltdown was because of the CFTC's not doing its job. I cannot believe that the meltdown and the financial situation is now being attributed to the CFTC and, to avoid it, we have to put in more money for the CFTC.

I voted against the Wall Street bailout. The President of the United States voted for it as a Senator, and again as President he wanted part two of it. So I'm not buying that the Wall Street bailout—AIG was mentioned earlier. That was done by the Fed. The Bear Stearns bailout, that was done by the Fed. The bailout of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, that was done by the House Democrats.

So I don't need to be sitting here listening to people preach to me about bailouts and that the solution to lower gas prices is to fund a bureaucracy. It's a group that has been averaging about four regulations a year and between now and late summer 34 regulations.

I understand that those in the Big Government circles of Washington love more regulations, more government growth; but to say to the taxpayers that funding CFTC at a higher, unprecedented level is going to avoid the need for bailouts is ridiculous. And, again, Mr. Chairman, I'm somebody who has consistently voted against these bailouts and these stimulus programs.

I don't believe that government is the answer. I think the market still has the answer. I did not support the Dodd-Frank bill. What this is—a lot of it is just an overreach, more government telling people how to conduct their business.

Do I think there's a role for CFTC? Certainly I do. And can CFTC be effective? Yes. But their own Democrat member says, and I will quote again: ''The CFTC staff''—not his personal opinion but the CFTC staff, which is over 700—''has been unable to find any reliable economic analysis to support the contention that excessive speculation is affecting the markets we regulate.'' Now, that's not my opinion; that's what the Democrat commission member says the CFTC staff has reported.

Should we be concerned about speculation? Yes, we should. But I don't think it is fair for any Member of Congress to go back home to the taxpayers and say, I'm going to bring down the price at the pump because I have put millions of dollars into a Washington bureaucracy and they're really going to get tough on that Wall Street crowd now.

If we want to bring down the price of energy in America, we have to increase our supply. And I don't know of any other way to do it. Supply goes up and the cost goes down. If we want to help the consumers at the pump, we have got to explore and develop our own domestic energy resources. And discussion about CFTC funding comes second, third, fourth, fifth tier to that. So if the objective is to bring down the price of gas at the pump, let's don't pretend that increasing spending for the CFTC is going to achieve that.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Chairman, let me add as well it's a little difficult for me to sit here quietly and listen to the pontificating about Wall Street bailouts. I didn't support the Wall Street bailout either.

There are now five banks who control over 50 percent of the assets, deposited assets, in the country. Those banks that were deemed ''too big to fail'' in reality are too big to succeed. It's the Main Street bank that's under constant competitive pressure from these large institutions that have been empowered by further consolidations by the actions of this very body. So it's very difficult to sit here and take that.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COURTNEY. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Connecticut is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of this amendment, as someone who also voted against the Wall Street bailout.

I, however, would certainly disagree with the conclusion that speculation is not a factor in the price of oil and certainly the huge swing that we have seen just in the last 6 months in this country. And I would cite ExxonMobil as my validator in terms of that point.

On May 14 in Forbes Magazine, hardly a Democratic left-wing publication, there was a story regarding an interview with Rex Tillerson, the CEO of ExxonMobil, who stated that the real price with traditional supply and demand for oil and gas should be roughly between $60 and $70 a barrel, not $115 a barrel, which it was back in mid-May. And this is what the article said: that Mr. Tillerson stated that the reason it's above $100 a barrel is due to the oil majors using futures contracts to lock in current high prices and speculation that is engineered by the high-frequency trading of quantitative hedge funds.

Again, traditional supply and demand, according to ExxonMobil, suggests that the price of oil and gas should be roughly $60 to $70. Well, how will the CFTC bring us back to a market that is actually connected to supply and demand forces as opposed to the market that we have today?

Under Dodd-Frank, what the CFTC was given was the authority to impose position limits on noncommercial interests that have swamped the commodities trading markets of this country since Congress foolishly deregulated the commodities markets back in 2000. Today, the number of noncommercial traders in the commodities markets is twice what it was in 2000 and using virtually no money down, because the margin limits are almost nonexistent. They have basically hijacked this market so that real end-users, the people who depend on futures trading to lock in positions, whether it's airlines or back home in Connecticut whether it's oil delivery guys who are trying to figure out whether they can offer lock-in contracts for next winter, they have been basically driven from this market. In Connecticut today you cannot get a lock-in contract for next winter because of the fact that these traders now have absolutely no confidence in whether or not this market will be in any rational place 6 months or 8 months from now.

So the need for the CFTC to reimpose some reasonable ''appropriate limits,'' which is what the Dodd-Frank bill empowers them to do, is the reason why their staff needs to be put into place so that we can have a market that existed back in the 1990s, our parents' commodities trading market, which was a stable market which was basically for the use of end-users and not for people who were using high-frequency trading, which the CEO of ExxonMobil cited as the cause of the swing in prices that we're seeing.

And let's be clear here, folks. Supporting this budget from the majority is not about being a deficit hawk. Secretary Ray Mabus from the Navy testified before the House Armed Services Committee that every $10-a-barrel increase of oil costs the Navy, in terms of annual fuel costs, $300 million a year. If you look at what the CEO of ExxonMobil says, the Navy right now is overpaying easily on an annualized basis anywhere from $300 million to $500 million a year, and that's just one branch of the military. The Air Force uses a greater amount of fossil fuels of oil and gas than the Navy does.

So if you are truly a deficit hawk, if you really want to make sure that the Pentagon, which is going to be going through some gut-wrenching decisions about whether or not to provide for the Warfighter in this country and protect weapons platforms that we need to defend this country, then we need a high-functioning CFTC to make sure that the Pentagon as well as the rest of the government at the State and local level are not overpaying for gas and oil.

The taxpayer has a huge stake in making sure that this agency, the CFTC, has adequate funds to do its job because the savings to not just consumers and small businesses but the savings to the taxpayers will be in the billions and billions of dollars. It far exceeds any of the claimed savings that this budget seeks to obtain through the

cuts, through the unbelievably shortsighted cuts to the CFTC in terms of being able to do its job.

We should oppose this budget. We should support this amendment which is on the floor of this House.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. COURTNEY. No, I will not yield.

Not only small businesses and consumers but the taxpayer needs us to act to make sure that we have a rational oil trading market that is tied to real traditional supply and demand, which the CEO of ExxonMobil has told us is overpriced today to at least $20 to $30 a barrel.

□ 2000

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I was listening to the previous speaker's arguments, and I'm glad to hear that he's concerned about the U.S. Navy's energy supplies, and I was going to ask him, if he had been kind enough to yield to me, whether he was in favor of us starting to develop our own energy resources here in the United States.

We've got a tremendous amount of energy that our Creator has given us here in this country off the northern coast of Alaska, in the Western United States, in the gulf coast, and certainly, I would like to see the oil prices drop. The best way to get those oil prices to come down to a reasonable level is for us to start developing our own energy resources here in this country. Certainly, our oil and natural gas resources need to be developed, clean coal energy, alternative sources of energy, nuclear energy, all these other things.

And I just hear all this pontification from my colleagues on the other side about the CFTC and the oil speculators. The best way to make the oil speculators lose money, which they would do when they increase the prices of oil by speculating on future prices, is by producing more oil here in this country. We've got a tremendous amount of uncertainty with all the things that are going on in the Middle East today, and that causes speculators to think the price of oil is going up.

Now, I'm not one who's here arguing for the speculators by any means. I believe in the marketplace. I believe that the marketplace, unencumbered by government regulations and taxes, is the best way to control quality, quantity, and cost of all goods and services, including oil. And the best way to do that is to lower the cost of oil here in this country, natural gas and all of our energy supplies for the U.S. Navy as well as for the Federal Government and for everybody, to lower the cost of gasoline at the pump. It's best to develop our own natural resources, our God-given resources that are plentiful in this country.

But I have seen in, now, three Congresses that I have been here my Democrat colleagues block every effort that we have made to develop our own resources. I never will forget in 2008, while we were coming during the August break and talking about the Republicans' all-of-the-above energy policy, that a Democratic staffer said that the Democrat Party's energy policy was drive a small car and wait for the wind. That's not an energy policy.

We need to develop the God-given resources that we have here in this country, to lower the cost of gas at the pumps, to lower the cost of heating oil, particularly for our elderly citizens and poorest people across this Nation that this winter are going to be suffering, suffering tremendously economically because of the high cost of oil.

It's not the speculators and the CFTC that's going to do that. Drilling for oil and natural gas and developing our own natural resources here in this country is going to be the solution. And I just encourage my Democratic colleagues to join with me and others here on our side, let's develop these resources, not just talk about the CFTC, not just talk about more regulations on the marketplace, because the more regulation we put on the marketplace, the higher the cost goes. So let's get the regulatory burden off of the energy sector so that we can start developing our own God-given resources here in this country.

So, if the gentleman had been kind enough to yield, I would have asked him and congratulate him on being concerned about our U.S. Navy and how much extra they're paying for oil, for all the energy sources that our military has to spend. We've got to stop this outrageous spending that the Federal Government's been doing, and the way to do that is lower the cost of energy here and that will help everybody.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. KAPTUR. I move to strike the last word, Mr. Chairman.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Ohio is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. I rise to associate myself with the fine efforts of Congresswoman ROSA DELAURO and Ranking Member SAM FARR to point out the anemic funding that is contained in the base bill for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. The Republican bill reduces below the President's request by 44 percent the necessary funding for staff for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission and provides significantly fewer resources for the agency to do the job America expects.

Now, why is this important? The CFTC is supposed to regulate betting, B-E-T-T-I-N-G, because really what's going on is all the American people know is a very sophisticated type of gambling that when the bettors lose, rather than absorbing their losses, they come to the American people, but they're very powerful and they create new mechanisms. They create mechanisms. They don't call it betting, but they have a term, ''collateralized debt obligations.'' That gives it a kind of luster. And from that, they might drive a credit default swap.

But in the end, as the book by Joe Nocera, ''All the Devils Are Here,'' recounts what we really have is a Wall Street and a Chicago futures market that has run amok, where market manipulation, speculation, and outright fraud led our country into the worst economic recession since the Great Depression.

Make no mistake about it: These folks are very powerful, and one of the most important trades involved in this very sophisticated gambling is oil. This particular chart shows the profits being made by the major oil companies and compares the profits in the first quarter of last year to this year. If you look at ExxonMobil, over $10 billion more profits this year than last year. And the list goes on. Whether it's Conoco at $2 billion, whether it's BP at $7.2 billion, these folks are not hurting.

President Obama said, back in April, that part of the oil problem and the gas price problem is speculation. He's absolutely right. Even Goldman Sachs, one of the big beneficiaries of the betting, admits that a huge portion of the increase in the gas price is due to betting. And of all people, the chief executive officer of Exxon admitted in testimony in the other body recently that $60 to $70 per barrel of oil, whether it's $60, $70, $80, $90, $100, is actually due to speculation. So even those involved in it are admitting they're crying for help. So let's give it to them. Let's give them the help they want and desperately need.

This Commodity Futures Trading Commission has been charged with shining a bright light into the dark recesses that Wall Street and the futures markets would love us to ignore. In fact, I think the currency markets actually got themselves exempted, so there's huge sections of trades that are going on in our world today that aren't even the subject, even if we were to have the staffing we need over at the CFTC, that would not be affected by it.

But I ask myself: Could it perhaps be the intent and consequence of this restrictive funding proposal at the CFTC to prevent robust regulation of this market? If we look at what happened with mortgage-backed securities and all the derivatives that flowed from that, we know absolutely for certain that the lack of regulation is the reason for our demise.

We must make sure that the CFTC is able to take on speculation in the markets, and there's no more nontransparent market than this one in oil. So when the American people go to the pump and they cuss, they have to think about this little agency called the Commodity Futures Trading Commission that back in 2000 tried to get the

right to regulate derivatives, and they were denied that right by a vote right here in the Congress, and most Members had no idea what they were voting on because it was included in an omnibus appropriations bill.

□ 2010

Isn't that interesting? Legislating on an appropriation bill, and nobody found it. Well, they must have a lot of power in order to do that. So if we look at a few years ago when these derivative markets were worth about $13 trillion—now nobody I represent, including myself, can even imagine $13 trillion. But that derivative market grew from the mid-nineties to the present where it was about $40 trillion, and we had 475 employees over at the CFTC trying to figure out what was going on in all these markets. Well, today that market is over $600 trillion in notional value and 15 times more than before, and there's not sufficient staff in order to regulate these markets. It's pretty obvious where we need support in order to rein in these abuses.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. WATT. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from North Carolina is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WATT. Mr. Chairman, I don't come to the floor very often anymore to debate. I have kind of changed my pattern. Eighteen years ago, 19 years ago, when I saw egregious things, I would be right here in the heart of the debate, ranting and raving, some people would say.

When my colleagues and sometimes my constituents now ask me, Have you lost your passion, I tell them that there are some reasons that I don't come to the floor anymore. One is that I find that most of the time, my colleagues on the opposite side are tone deaf. They are not really listening to what anybody is saying to them. They are off on some radical right undertaking, falling off the right edge of the Earth, and they are not listening to anything I say.

They don't share my values, and they don't really care about this debate that we had, 3 hours of talking about women, infants, and children going hungry. They really don't much care about that, I say to my constituents. And, third, they just make up stuff. You know, they have this—you know, if we repeat it enough, it's got to be true, and we will convince the American people of about anything if we just keep saying it over and over again. Or they . . . have convenient memories that forget that it was President Bush——

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman will suspend.

For what purpose does the gentleman from Nebraska rise?

Mr. FORTENBERRY. The gentleman has accused our side of the aisle of lying. Is that a cause for having his words taken down?

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair construes that as a demand that words be taken down. All Members will suspend. The gentleman will take his seat.

The Clerk will report the words.

□ 2020

Mr. WATT. Mr. Chairman, in the interest of time, some people have said that I called somebody a liar and, obviously, that would be in violation of the rules. I am aware of that. So if I did, I ask unanimous consent that those words be removed from the RECORD.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from North Carolina may proceed in order.

Mr. WATT. Can the Chair tell me how much time remains in my 5 minutes?

The Acting Chair. The gentleman from North Carolina has 3 minutes remaining of his 5 minutes.

Mr. WATT. All right. Well, let me try to pick up essentially where I was without offending anybody else.

There's some conveniently forgotten items that I think we need to be reminded of. Number 1, that it was President Bush who requested the government bailouts. That occurred on his watch. It was President Bush that was responsible for the tax cuts for the rich that got us out of surpluses as far as the eye could see and into this deficit spending. And it was rampant speculation and abuse of derivatives on Wall Street that resulted in a meltdown that made Dodd-Frank and the CFTC regulation that we're here debating necessary. Those are the three important things that I think we need to take note of.

It also resulted in a tremendous economic downturn that resulted in more people needing food stamps and the benefit of the WIC program. So these two things are really not disconnected from each other, the 3 hours of debate that we had previously and the debate on whether we are going to adequately fund the CFTC, which has been given authority under the Dodd-Frank legislation to rein in the speculation that is taking place that's driving up food prices, oil prices, and if we're not careful, will result in the same kind of economic meltdown that we experienced that got us into this in the first place.

So this whole process of being in denial about this and ignoring the facts is something that I think we should not countenance on this floor. We need the CFTC to regulate derivatives and speculation. And to the extent that we cut the staff and the funding of the CFTC, we could be replicating exactly what led President Bush to say we needed a bailout in the first place.

So, that's what this debate is all about. I think it's terrible that we are cutting funds under this bill for women, infants, and children, the most vulnerable in our society. But it's even more terrible that we are going to run the risk of allowing the same kind of rampant speculation, unregulated, to get us back into another meltdown that will result in our being back here trying to figure out how to dig ourselves out of this ditch. A year from now, 18 months from now, 2 years from now we'll be right back here again.

Now, this is not rocket science. It's all just connected to each other. And my colleagues can deny it all they want. They can say that this is about drilling for oil in the United States. That's not what it's about. All of the science I've seen says there's more supply of oil now than there is demand, and if we were operating in a regular domestic market on regular economics, the price of gas would be going down.

We need to regulate the CFTC. We need to have them regulating derivatives and speculation.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting Chair (Mr. REED). The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. It seems that if I'm the American people watching this on C–SPAN tonight, I think we have a very clear picture of the difference between what the Republicans want and what the Democrats want.

Now, as my good friend from North Carolina very eloquently laid out the scenario of how we got to where we are, the question becomes: How do we solve this problem? The Democrats are saying we got into this problem because we did not have the proper oversight to abusive practices, to manipulation, to the use of derivatives, and allowing them to use a leveraging position that brought great havoc to our economic system in a way that brought about a havoc to our economic system not seen since the 1930s and the Depression.

The American people, under the leadership of President George Bush and his Treasury Secretary Paulson, came to our Financial Services Committee with just one little piece of paper, but on that piece of paper it said, We need to be able to bring some oversight and regulation to this new area of derivatives and credit default swaps. It is tearing a hole in our economy. We moved. We moved and we passed the Dodd-Frank bill.

Now, what we have before us now is a continuation of a very misguided policy by the Republicans. Let me remind you, this same scenario was carried out to cut Medicare. It's all been cutting programs, cutting efforts to respond to the basic needs of the American people.

Now, my issue is this: If my Republican friends were very sincere about what they were doing—and let me qualify that because I don't want my words taken down. But ''sincerity'' is a very important word here. And my sincerity point is this:

If they were sincere, why would they advocate cutting the very programs

that the American people need at the time and, at the same time, saying we're in such dire budget consequences but yet we can give billionaires and millionaires $2.5 trillion, but we cannot adequately fund the CFTC to go in and have the power to put forward the very controls needed so that we will never have the kind of meltdown that we had before?

That is the hypocrisy here, Mr. Chairman. That's what the American people are watching tonight on C–SPAN in this debate, and I hope they see a very clear message of who it is that's standing up for the American people at their time of need.

□ 2030

And there's no greater need than to rein in these speculators who have been a primary cause to the high rise in gasoline. That's what they want us to do, and that's what we're doing. But the Republicans want to cut the budget so that we will not be able to have the staffing, so that we could go into the dark corners and the crevices and be able to shine the light and pull out these speculators that are driving up these gasoline prices to $5 a gallon.

So I hope that tonight, after this debate, the American people will clearly see who's on the side of the American people. Without any question, without any doubt, it is the Democrats who are standing in the way to make sure that we do all we can to make sure the CFTC, our primary regulator, will be able to put in place those entities, those regulations that will prevent this meltdown from happening before and will rein in these speculators and give the American people the day that they deserve, a better day in the sun.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Nebraska is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Chairman, I think it's important to address this issue of who's on the side of the American people. We have a $1.6 trillion deficit this year. Over 40 cents on every dollar that the government is spending is borrowed. We have $14 trillion of debt. This is a very tough Agricultural appropriations budget. I don't like it.

The CFTC is a very important organization; it does very important work. I think as well there are structural flaws in the commodities markets. Futures markets that are designed to decrease volatility and mitigate risk are actually increasing volatility and causing risk. There's a structural problem there. But the issue comes down to what are we going to prioritize and where.

The CFTC has received—since the recklessness of Wall Street in 2008 and those bailouts that were voted on by a majority of this body—has received a 53 percent increase in its funding. I wish it didn't have to be reduced, but it's being asked to share in this overall budget of reducing the entire cost of the Agricultural appropriations bill by a margin that is actually less than other parts of the bill.

It's a tough budget. I don't like it either. But we've got to try to tighten our belt in a responsible manner. And given the increases that have occurred, I think it's important to have some historical perspective here.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, I represent metropolitan Detroit. And not too long ago I took some corporate officials for a tour of neighborhoods on the city's east side near where I grew up. I showed them blocks of big, beautiful brick homes, three and four bedroom homes. And when you got up close to those homes, you realized that none of them had windows, none of them. There were blocks and blocks and acres and miles of neighborhoods that have been devastated, devastated.

Now, I'm a member of the Homeland Security Committee. My duty is to protect metro Detroit from terrorist attack or tornado or some other natural disaster, but it wasn't a flood or a fire that destroyed those neighborhoods. They were devastated because of foreclosures, foreclosures that this body—that I accused when I was a member of the Michigan legislature of not effectively addressing the housing crisis. But also foreclosures that were caused in part by a lot of rich folks around here who are hoping, praying, gambling, wishing, betting that homeowners would lose everything that they have. What kind of country is this that we encourage people to make money—billions of dollars—off people losing everything? That's outrageous. That's not American. Come on, people. We want folks to get rich because families lose their homes and other neighbors stay in their homes but they lose their entire life savings that they invested in it? Of course not.

This is why I ask us to support the Rosa DeLauro amendment, because the Commodity Futures Trading Commission needs more staff, it needs more resources. And some of you are saying, well, we can't afford it. But look at the cost, the cost to our families, the cost to our local units of government that can no longer afford to hire police and fire, the cost to our taxpayers who are now living in fear of crime because they don't have the protection of their first responders. That's a cost that we cannot afford to bear.

I urge all of you to support the DeLauro amendment. It's something that we need, and it's right for this country. We want people to earn money from offering value, not by destroying neighborhoods. I'm appealing to the best in you, support this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Chairman.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. KINGSTON. Isn't it true, for the record, that we do support the amendment?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman has not stated a parliamentary inquiry.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. I rise in strong opposition to the underlying bill and in support of the DeLauro amendment.

Mr. Chairman, hardworking families all across America have been whipsawed in recent years by Wall Street and special interests who have had free rein to place bets on mortgages and place bets on future oil prices. And you know what? We fought back. We fought back, and we passed a Wall Street reform law that outlaws risky financial practices by banks and lenders and that protects consumers.

Taxpayers should never, ever again be left on the hook for Wall Street's reckless actions, and yet my GOP colleagues propose to do just that with this bill, let Wall Street off the hook and put consumers and our economy at risk again. This bill significantly cuts the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. The CFTC is a major piece of the landmark Wall Street reform law because the law put cops back on the financial beat into areas where the financial industry was left largely unsupervised. And you know who suffered because of that? American families suffered the firsthand consequences of an unsupervised and unregulated Wall Street.

And now they're proposing a real double whammy to the American family, because my GOP colleagues are pairing their push to put consumers at risk and threaten their economic security with their GOP plan to end Medicare as we know it and undermine retirement security.

I would have hoped that we would have all learned a lesson and that you do not return to the policies of the past that led to the financial meltdown and the economic hardship for all Americans, but it appears that some have not learned that lesson.

And you have to ask why, why are we trying to go back to the same policies that led to the meltdown and led to such pain all across the country that started back in 2007?

□ 2040

I'll tell you why.

I have an article that was published during the debate of the Wall Street reform legislation. It is dated December 8, 2009. The headline reads: ''House Republicans Huddle with Lobbyists to Kill Financial Reform Bill.''

The article continues: ''In a call to arms, House Republican leaders met with more than 100 lobbyists at the Capitol Visitor Center on Tuesday afternoon to try to fight back against financial regulatory overhaul legislation.''

Now, in another article written during the consideration of H.R. 1, the headline reads: ''Industry Looks to Derail Dodd-Frank Enforcement.''

It continues: Republicans ''make no bones about their goal: to defang Dodd-Frank,'' our landmark Wall Street reform law that was put in place to protect consumers and hardworking American families.

[From Roll Call, Dec. 8, 2009]

HOUSE REPUBLICANS HUDDLE WITH LOBBYISTS TO KILL FINANCIAL REFORM BILL

(By Anna Palmer)

In a call to arms, House Republican leaders met with more than 100 lobbyists at the Capitol Visitors Center on Tuesday afternoon to try to fight back against financial regulatory overhaul legislation.

House Minority Leader John Boehner (R–Ohio) kicked off the 4 p.m. meeting, along with Minority Whip Eric Cantor (R–Va.) and GOP Reps. Kevin McCarthy (Calif.), Scott Garrett (N.J.) and Jeb Hensarling (Texas).

''The message was [House Financial Services Chairman Barney] Frank and the Democratic majority are ruining America, ruining capitalism, and stand up for yourselves,'' said a lobbyist who attended the meeting. ''They said, 'Look, you all oppose this bill, but only a few of you have come out publicly.' ''

In addition to asking trade associations to get their members in Congressional districts to write letters opposing the legislation, Republicans asked for companies and trade associations to use their Democratic consultants to gather intelligence on where members of the Congressional Black Caucus and the Blue Dog Coalition are in supporting the legislation.

INDUSTRY LOOKS TO DERAIL DODD-FRANK ENFORCEMENT

(By Kelsey Snell)

Wall Street and the banking industry, unable to stop Congress from passing the huge Dodd-Frank financial reform law last year, might get better traction this year by squeezing regulators through the budget process.

For the second year in a row, President Obama is pushing for big budget increases at the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. But Republican lawmakers are headed in exactly the opposite direction, and they make no bones about their goal: to defang Dodd-Frank.

Both the SEC and the CFTC received broad new powers to regulate the financial industry, especially the vast and largely unsupervised swaps market for financial derivatives. Both agencies need to hire hundreds of additional people to both make and enforce a sweeping array of new rules and to revive their depleted enforcement ranks.

But Congress has frozen their budgets at 2010 levels, and House Republicans now want to slash them even more.

In a multi-pronged assault, banks and other financial firms have been blanketing lawmakers with testimonials and industry-funding ''studies'' that warn about the lost jobs and lost economic growth that new financial regulation could cause.

But the real battleground is the budget.

Under Obama's budget, the CFTC would see its budget nearly double from about $169 million in 2010 to $308 million. The SEC, which has new responsibilities to oversee hedge funds, private equity funds, and complex new market tools, would see its budget jump from $1.1 billion to $1.4 billion.

House Republicans would move the other way. Under the House GOP's stop-gap spending bill to fund government operations for the remainder of this fiscal year, the CFTC's budget would be slashed to just $112 million and the SEC's budget would be essentially frozen at $1.07 billion.

At a hearing Tuesday of the House Financial Services Committee, Republican lawmakers made it clear they wanted to stop the agencies in their tracks.

''When you look at this freight train of rulemaking that is running down the track to a July deadline, I think not enough alarm has been raised about the potential devastating impact this rulemaking could have on the U.S.-based derivatives marketplace,'' said Financial Services Capital Markets Subcommittee Chairman Scott Garrett, R–N.J., in his opening statement.

Mr. Chairman, we need to ask ourselves: Who is being represented here in the Nation's capital? Do we come to this House to represent the people or do we come here to represent the special interests and the high-flying financiers of Wall Street who have already caused so much damage to this economy?

The financial meltdown caused many people to lose their life savings, their pensions, their homes. I have had six foreclosure prevention workshops since 2008 in Florida. These were largely middle class Americans, our neighbors, and we are here to fight for them and not for those who caused the damage to the economy.

But do you know what?

Since January, under this new majority, day after day, we have to come to the floor of the House to fight the misguided agenda of the majority that wants to roll back policies that are beneficial to the middle class—roll back Wall Street reform and end Medicare as we know it. Big Oil gets to keep its tax break, and companies still get breaks for exporting jobs overseas.

Meanwhile, the GOP majority has not brought one bill to create jobs across our great country, and instead thinks it is wise to undermine the economic and retirement security for American families, end Medicare as we know it, and roll back consumer protections under Wall Street reform—take the cops off the beat.

Mr. Chairman, I think it is time for Representatives to represent their neighbors back home, to get their priorities in order—to represent these hardworking American families and put their interests before the special interests on Wall Street.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I strongly oppose the underlying bill, and I support the proposed amendment.

Earlier today, we had a long discussion about one portion of the bill that dealt with Women, Infants and Children and the way in which the legislation inadequately funds the necessities for pregnant women, infants and children to lead healthy lives. We are now on to another issue that is extraordinarily important.

In the '90s, the idea of deregulation took hold and was expanded throughout the 2000 to 2008 period, so much so that we had the financial meltdown. We had Wall Street bankers and hedge funds running wild, gambling on the future, and America was the great loser in that gamble.

Over the last several years, we have seen the derivative market increase from a $30–$40 trillion notional value to an over $300 trillion notional value today. Every day across the Wall Street tickers—across the wires—and in the back rooms of the hedge funds and the big banks, $300 trillion of risk is traded back and forth, risk that is not backed up by assets but by bets that are made. It is the great crap shoot in the alley of Wall Street—$300 trillion.

Where is the money? Where is the enforcer to make sure that the bet against Greece and the bet against the price of oil is going to be backed up? It's not there. It is the shell game of all shell games. There are no assets. I was the insurance commissioner, and we understood a couple of things very clearly: If an insurance company were going to make a bet that something would go wrong, then they had to have the asset to pay if that bet ever came to pass.

That's not the case here. There is no regulation of this market.

Understanding the need for this back in the 1930s, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission was established to make sure that, if bets were made on the future price of grain, somebody would be able to pay if that bet had to be paid off. It worked okay until the great period of deregulation. Let's understand the definition of ''insanity.'' It's when you repeat what you did before and expect a different answer.

This bill is asking us to, once again, repeat the deregulation of the derivative market by defunding, not providing adequate funding, for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. We are betting that things are going to work out, that this $300 trillion of notional value out there in the derivative market is somehow going to work out okay. We learned in 2007 and 2008 that it doesn't work out okay—literally collapsing the entire financial market of the world.

Okay. Speculation? Let it rip. We did that once before. It is insanity to assume that this time it's going to work out okay.

This amendment puts back in the necessary money for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to adequately regulate a huge market beyond the imagination of all of us. We need

this money. We need the systems in place to make sure that this derivative market is adequately regulated so that we do not, once again, find this Nation bailing out or falling into a great recession and depression yet again.

Mr. KINGSTON. Will my friend yield for a minute?

Mr. GARAMENDI. No, I don't think so because, I suspect, I'm pretty much out of time.

Let us understand what is at stake here. It is the very nature of our economy to be able to survive in an era of rapid speculation that has driven up the price of oil. We know from Goldman Sachs and we know from the CEO of Exxon that some $20 of the $100-per-barrel oil price today is speculation. We can take a look at the other markets where speculation is also running rapid, and it is the Commodity Futures Trading Commission that is specifically under Dodd-Frank required to rein in the excesses of this market, to end the speculation, to ultimately make a rational market out there for the futures market.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. NUGENT. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NUGENT. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I want to point out to my friend from California of a number of the previous speakers who keep speaking about the DeLauro amendment. The DeLauro amendment does not do anything. We accept the DeLauro amendment, but I'm not sure that the folks over there who are speaking for the DeLauro amendment have read the DeLauro amendment because, if they had, they would know that it does nothing to restore the funding.

I will be glad to yield to my friend from California because I understand your speech was right, but that's not what the amendment did.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida controls the time.

Mr. NUGENT. I reclaim my time, and yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Let us understand that the underlying bill does not provide the necessary money for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to conduct the necessary oversight and regulations to adequately control the derivative market.

Are we in agreement on that?

Mr. NUGENT. I reclaim my time, and yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. We are not in agreement on that. No, I did not support the Dodd-Frank bill, and I can tell you some of the problems with it.

The gentleman sounds like somebody who has studied the CFTC; but as you know, of the many rules which they are planning to implement under Dodd-Frank, some of them actually were implied under Dodd-Frank and not specifically laid out. A number of them have no cost-benefit analysis, and a number of them will strap American companies and not the Asian or the European markets.

□ 2050

The reason why that is important is because you are a market. You know, it is not like a manufacturing plant where you are making automobiles or tanks or something like that. The commodity business is more computers. So if you change the rules in an international marketplace where American companies have to deal with things at one level and their Asian and European counterparts and competitors don't have to, then what is going to happen is these companies are going to go overseas.

We keep talking about jobs, and the gentleman knows that this is the one-year anniversary of the summer of recovery, when I guess we were—I am not sure what we were celebrating last year because the jobs were not created. But this runs off jobs, and that is what we are concerned about.

The CFTC has averaged four regulations a year, and this year they want to put in 36 regulations. I am concerned about the cost-benefit analysis. I am concerned that American companies will have a different set of rules than their competitors. I am concerned about the overreach. I am concerned about the way the rulemaking sequence is going.

The gentleman also knows there is a lot of terms that they haven't even defined, like who is a swap dealer, a mega-swap dealer, a swap participant. And, by the way, I am not trying to filibuster. I think that franchise does not go to the Republican Party tonight.

Mr. NUGENT. I reclaim my time, if you would allow me to speak just for a second.

States and counties and cities have figured out that they don't have the money to spend. America has got to figure out, the Federal Government has to figure out that we in fact have to cut spending. I hear this across the aisle all the time, that we all agree that America has a debt of over $14 trillion and a deficit of over $1.4 trillion.

We hear the same arguments, but we never hear how are we going to do it, other than one gentleman that was up here earlier that said we just need to raise taxes. That is the answer to all of our problems. That is not the answer. The answer to our problems is really about using the dollars that we have, spending them efficiently and looking at ways to maybe work harder with less.

I will tell you, as a sheriff, we had to cut our budget and we worked harder with less. And, do you know what? The Federal Government doesn't believe in that. The Federal Government believes that how we solve a problem is to throw more people at it, to spend more money. And I think what the American people were telling us, what the American people told us back in November, was that we have got to get our house in order. We have got to get our spending under control. It is not about taxing us to death. It is not about over-regulating us. It is about bringing common sense back into the Federal Government that has been sorely lacking.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Hawaii is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the irresponsible cuts this bill makes to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission budget and in support of the DeLauro amendment which allows us to debate this issue.

These cuts to CFTC indicate that the majority believes that CFTC can carry out its duties with even less funding this year than they had last year, or that their duties aren't of great importance to the American people to begin with.

For those of us who may have forgotten, the financial crisis was the result of some very bad bets, bets made by Wall Street firms in the unregulated $300 trillion derivatives market. The bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers, the collapse of the mortgage market, and the bailout of AIG and other firms are all a result of these bad bets. The 14 million unemployed, the still weak job market, and the tremendous loss of hard-earned home equity and retirement savings are also a result of these bad bets. That is why we worked so hard this last Congress to pass the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. This act gives CFTC tremendous responsibility for making sure that the public never again has to bail out the Wall Street firms that rolled the dice with taxpayers ending up holding the bag.

CFTC's new responsibilities are important, and so is the job that CFTC already does. The current role of the CFTC is to regulate the commodity futures and options markets in the United States. What began as a market for buying and selling agricultural products has become a complex, wide-ranging market for financial contracts. These contracts are based on commodities like oil, wheat, livestock, metal, and cotton, the types of products that we all use every single day. We have to prevent unnecessary increases in the cost of these necessities, increases brought about by speculation.

Preventing speculative price increases for basic necessities is vital to consumers in Hawaii. As the only island State in the Nation, we must import 85 percent of our food and 90 percent of the oil we use for energy. We know what $6 a gallon gasoline is like in some parts of my district, and we constantly face higher prices than the mainland for food.

So I am strongly opposed to underfunding CFTC, the cop on the beat that watches out for price manipulation. Without a strong CFTC, prices will increase for our basic necessities while speculators pocket millions of dollars. Make no mistake about that. We know this is true because the oil executives, themselves, have told us this is so. At a recent congressional hearing, the Exxon CEO testified that oil should ''only'' cost—''only,'' that should be in quotations—$60 to $70 a barrel. Instead, the price has hovered around $100. Why? Because of speculation.

Clearly, to protect the public from fraud, manipulation, abusive practices, and systemic risks, we need to fully fund the President's request for CFTC. This bill not only cuts $30 million from the current CFTC budget, it seeks to deny the agency the vital resources that it needs to meet its new responsibilities under Dodd-Frank. This bill is a de facto repeal of Dodd-Frank. What the Republican majority can't do up front, which is repealing Dodd-Frank, they are seeking to do by the back door by making sure CFTC can't do its job as the cop on the beat.

To keep things in perspective, the Republicans are taking a meat ax to people's programs to address the $14 trillion debt, and yet they are perfectly happy to give Wall Street traders a $300 trillion unregulated playground. Talk about going backwards. Cutting the funding for an agency with such important responsibilities is a roll of the dice, and, again, the people of America will be the ones who lose.

Once again I ask: Where do we live—on Wall Street, which is where cutting CFTC is, or on Main Street, where the rest of us live?

I urge my colleagues to vote against the underlying legislation and the defunding of CFTC.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I am listening to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and I am really saying to myself, who are they kidding? They are saying that this effort to cut the CFTC is for deficit purposes because, of course, all agencies have to be cut in the name of cutting the deficit. But you have to look at everything, every cut and every agency in terms of what it actually does.

And we all know, we all know what the GOP is up to. The Republicans side with big banks and Wall Street and big insurance companies and Big Oil and against the middle class. So here we go again. They are siding with the Wall Street speculators and the profiteers by cutting the CFTC.

Well, what does the CFTC do? It is responsible for policing commodities trading and speculation, including oil and food products. Well, I have to tell you, last week we were at home, we weren't in session, and what did I hear from my constituents? All of them are very concerned about the price of oil going up and about the price of food going up. So you are basically taking money out of the middle class people's pockets.

□ 2100

The average American has got to pay more for oil because of speculation. And more for their food. And it hurts the economy because if people have to pay more money for that, then industry, for example, has to pay more if they want to function, because the oil costs more. And it has a downward effect on the economy. It not only impacts individual people and our constituents who can't afford to pay more for gasoline and for food, but it also has a downward impact on the economy itself because it means that businesses don't expand, they don't invest, and as a consequence we don't recover from the recession.

The Agriculture appropriations bill reduces CFTC funding by $136 million. That's from the President's request. What it essentially does is cripple the agency's ability to do its job. And make no mistake about the Republican intentions. They're defunding. And that's the same as deregulation. And deregulation will allow the speculators and profiteers to engage in the same reckless actions that caused the financial meltdown on Wall Street. The end result with commodities is higher gas prices and higher food prices. The Wall Street speculators get rich while everyone else pays at the pump and the grocery store. The speculators treat the markets like a casino, but the risk of another market meltdown is harm to everyone else.

Some industry experts say that speculators have added $15 to a barrel of oil. Goldman Sachs put the figure higher at $27 a barrel. The bottom line is that the Dodd-Frank bill brought more oversight to Wall Street and provided resources to empower the CFTC to police speculators. The Republicans are trying to cripple the CFTC by slashing its funding so much that it would force layoffs of one-third to one-half of its staff. They're not doing this because they're trying to save money, save the taxpayers' money, trying to the reduce the deficit. They're doing it because they want to cripple this agency, force layoffs of one-third to one-half of its staff.

In case there are any doubts about the Republicans' motives, they're also pushing legislation that would delay all the reform measures in Dodd-Frank. Terms like derivatives, leveraged positions, future markets, buying long and buying short, these are foreign to many Americans, but it's a vocabulary of practices that can be abused as easily as they are used. Most Americans know that allowing Wall Street bankers to run wild contributed to financial chaos and the recession. What they need to know and what we're stressing more and more on the floor is that allowing commodity traders to run wild contributes to higher gas and food prices.

I am shocked, frankly—I shouldn't be, but I am—that my colleagues on the other side, when you go home, didn't you hear complaints about higher gas prices? Didn't you hear people complaining about higher food prices? That's what I heard when I went home. People want us to stand up for them. They want us to stand up for the little guy. They don't want us to stand up for the speculators. They don't want us to stand up for those people that caused the recession to begin with. And by doing this, all you're doing is prolonging the pain—the pain for the average American who's got to pay these higher prices and the downward impact on the economy. Because we know in the last couple weeks that the economy is struggling once again. We were starting to recover. But now signs are not good. So why in the world would you try to contribute to the same problem that caused this recession to begin with? A very simple answer: All you care about are the big banks, Wall Street, the big insurance companies, and Big Oil. The special interests. That's who you're for, and that's who you're always going to be for.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Chairman, this underlying bill muzzles the Federal watchdog agency now responsible for regulating agriculture, energy, and financial markets while letting speculators run loose. By cutting 44 percent from the President's budget request for the CFTC, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission that we've been talking about, we're saying it's just okay to have fewer and less qualified regulators to protect us from market abuses, to protect our constituents from market abuses. Haven't we learned any lessons?

Speculation on Wall Street has caused massive harm on Main Street. Not sufficiently funding the CFTC will hamper our efforts to recover from the recession and hinder middle class prosperity. Commodity futures and options markets are complicated systems. We know that. They require a complicated skill set to understand. Some of the smartest people are engaged in doing this. But this bill ensures that the playing field is tilted toward those who are in favor of the same risky practices that led to the financial crisis.

Without full funding the CFTC will have 159 fewer full-time employees and an inability to procure the technology needed to properly regulate the derivatives market. If the last 5 years has taught us anything, we need more consumer protections, not more market speculation that will drive up gas prices, food prices, and play Russian roulette with our financial system.

What is disturbing, Mr. Chairman, is that this bill continues the House majority's assault on lower- and middle-income families who are struggling to put food on the table and gas in their cars. I cannot support, I will not support, a bill that refuses to protect American families. And so I urge my colleagues to please review this bill carefully and join me in opposition.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TONKO. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I rise today in support of my colleague from Connecticut to properly fund the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, otherwise known as the CFTC. All eyes are upon us. Well, at least we hope they are. Unfortunately, the regulatory eyes of the speculating process are slowly being closed. The CFTC represents the cops on the beat, the regulators in charge of overseeing Wall Street speculators, the eyes of the watchdog, specifically as it relates to the price of oil we're asked to pay.

Let me be clear. Without a proper cop on the beat, the roads are not safe and wrongdoers will get away with whatever mischief they can. In the same way, without a cop on the beat of Wall Street, oil speculators will run rampant and drive the cost of oil and gasoline even higher than it is today. Make no mistake. Fluctuating oil prices with extremely high peaks make many on Wall Street extremely rich. But their gain becomes our loss. Their profit drains our pockets. Their greed causes our pain. Their joy drives our sticker shock at the pump, estimated to increase the cost per gallon by some 67½ cents due to speculation.

To his credit, President Obama has asked for increasing the investment in cop count on the beat of speculators. Not only does the Republican bill reduce the President's request, but it ends up providing less funds than we have available this year, all while the CFTC is supposed to prepare itself to take on the enhanced powers and responsibilities granted to it under the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform bill. This will mark the third time this year that House Republicans will vote to effectively cripple the CFTC by draining funds it needs to do its job.

Since 1990, the number of oil speculators has more than doubled—from 30 percent of the market to nearly 70 percent today. Even oil executives admit that oil prices are higher than they should be, with Exxon CEO Rex Tillerson recently testifying before Congress that a barrel of oil should cost some $60 to $70 based solely on supply and demand, not the $100 like it is today. Yet the Republicans are once again choosing Wall Street over Main Street. This bill chooses more pain at the pump over reason and fairness.

The world's largest commodity trader, Goldman Sachs, recently admitted that speculation was to blame for higher oil prices, telling its clients that it believes speculators, like itself, had artificially driven the price of oil as much as $27 higher than supply and demand would dictate. Nearly 90 percent of all traders betting on rising prices are speculators, while about 12 percent of those bets were held by producers, merchants, processors, and users of the commodity.

Our families and small businesses simply cannot afford the Wild, Wild West of Wall Street that runs roughshod over our wallets and family budgets. That is why I commend my colleague from Connecticut for her leadership on this issue and implore this body to increase the number of cops on the beat, not lessen them. And who wins in this scenario? The profit-rich oil industry, which is on pace to make over $100 billion in profit this year alone.

□ 2110

And who loses? You got it—working families and middle class Americans that work hard and play by the rules and now are asked to pay for this free rein that keeps driving up prices.

We cannot keep mindlessly handing billions of tax breaks to big oil companies that don't need it while they're raking in record profits at our expense. Again, we simply can't afford it.

The best way we can control gas prices is by developing alternative technologies that will drive down our demand and compete in the marketplace. We can better use the billions going to oil companies in the form of tax breaks on clean energy alternatives that have the potential to make a real impact on our energy costs and on our wallets and will create jobs in the process.

With that, Mr. Chair, I urge a ''no'' vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I rise to support the gentlelady from Connecticut's amendment and thank her for her vision.

I thank my good friend from Georgia who is the chairman of this committee, and I thank the manager who has represented our good friends very well tonight. I thank them for their courtesies. And I thank our ranking member, Mr. FARR, for his passion about ensuring that every person in America has an opportunity for good and healthy food. The Agriculture Department and the work that the Agriculture Department does is both domestic and international.

But today we rise because there is an inequity and an unfairness. It is complicated to discuss something called the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. What is that and how does that have an impact on making sure that Americans have a quality of life that they are deserving of, hard-working, everyday Americans that get up at the sign of dawn and carpool their children and go to work and return at the end and attempt to be able to provide for their families? The Commodity Futures Trading Commission is that arbiter. It's the entity that will implement the consumer protection and armor that was given during the Dodd-Frank legislation.

And how in the world can you work on behalf of consumers and Americans if the legislation that is before us obliterates this commission, eliminates 600 positions that would allow these hard-working Americans to gain what they deserve? And what is that? A better quality of life.

I am glad my good friend from New York cited the energy industry as recognizing themselves that the price of oil has gone beyond reason, that the gasoline prices have gone beyond reason. But who is gaining? Speculators whom you cannot see. You couldn't find a speculator if you tried. And that is the purpose of a commodity trading commission, which is to find the individuals that want to cripple the system and make sure that the American public suffers.

Look at this document that I'm holding in my hand. It lists the States and the districts that have the highest degree of poverty, States and districts that, in essence, have individuals who do not eat, for example, who have to borrow from one payment or one bill to take care of another need. So maybe the electric bill goes or the home mortgage or the rent goes so they can actually feed their families. Or they put the car up and cannot get to work because they cannot afford the gasoline.

This is what the underfunding of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission will do. It will pile onto people who cannot afford any more pile-on; 600 workers taken away from implementing legislation and laws that protect the consumer from the daggers of high gasoline prices, the daggers from high food prices, and the daggers from a poor quality of life.

There are people in the United States that go hungry. And in talking to seniors while I was home, you cannot understand their life until you talk to them one on one. When they get their benefits that they worked so hard for and they have to parcel out dollars for their needs and they go to the grocery store and the food prices are soaring, that is speculation. That's the speculators raising food prices. So seniors can't eat. Families that are on a single income, disabled persons, single parents, they can't have a nutritious meal; compounding them with the high costs of moving around, gasoline prices, the high cost of rent, and, of course, the difficulty sometimes in finding work.

Let me say this. This administration and Democrats have been working hard to shove jobs out on this economy. And if you listen to the economists, they

believe that as bad as it is and how sympathetic we are and how we know that we can't rest, that we've got to put a jobs bill out here, there is some suggestion that those businesses will be hiring because we've tried to make sure that we study the economy. Do you think they'll be hiring with 600 jobs thrown out of the commodity commission that is supposed to regulate to ensure that consumers can get the best deal; that if you do get a job, you can pay for the gasoline; that if you're in need of a healthy meal, you can go to a grocery store and actually pay for it because the speculators haven't raised the prices of food?

This is what we are talking about when we are arguing against the underlying bill and the elimination of $136 million to devastate this commission so that consumers cannot be protected.

Mr. Chairman, it's time to recognize who's boss. It is the American people. And I like them being a boss. I'm going to stand with my boss, the good boss, and fight for them to be protected. This bill does not do that.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. I yield to the gentlewoman from Connecticut.

Ms. DELAURO. I thank the gentleman.

In 2002, Warren Buffett called derivatives ''financial weapons of mass destruction.'' As Wall Street firms used these derivatives to construct highly leveraged speculative positions in 2008, these positions generated losses so large across the financial system that the Federal Government bailed out Wall Street to prevent a financial and an economic collapse. The cost of the bailout was $800 billion. By choosing not to sufficiently fund the CFTC, and we are talking about $130 million, the Republicans are ensuring average American taxpayers will once again have to bail out their friends on Wall Street potentially to the tune of $800 billion.

Tonight on this floor, we heard a colleague say that the savings to the Navy in taking speculative trading out of the market would result in billions of dollars saved with regard to the cost of fuel. We are talking about $130 million to protect taxpayers.

The 2012 Defense bill is $118 billion for two wars the American people did not support. The previous administration spent hundreds of billions of dollars without paying for it, and this majority is unwilling to pay $136 million to prevent another financial collapse.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle like to think that they're talking seriously about deficit reduction, about a country going broke, and that what they're here to do is to save money.

Well, in trying to save $130 million, why don't we, once again, take a look at the $8 billion that we supply for agricultural subsidies, not to small farms like dairy farms in my community or specialty crop farms, but to big agribusiness? What about the $8 billion to the multinational corporations to take their jobs overseas? Why aren't we closing that loophole? What about the $41 billion to the oil industry where they're reaping profits hand over fist and speculating, driving up the costs so that American taxpayers cannot afford to go to work, can't afford to get their kids to school?

That's what this is about. If you're really serious about it, do not permanently extend the tax cuts to the wealthiest 1 percent of the people in this country. That costs $750 billion, none of which is paid for. It only adds to the deficit.

□ 2120

You do not want to spend $130 million tonight. This is a false construct. The people of this country see right through what it is you're doing, and it is about protecting banks. It's about protecting the oil interests. It's about protecting the oil companies—that's where you come down—and not protecting the American people and American families who are struggling, struggling day in and day out to be able to provide a decent economic future and security for their family.

Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the DeLauro amendment.

The underlying bill slashes Commodity Futures Trading Commission funding to levels well below what is needed to implement the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. Dodd-Frank will ensure the CFTC receives information on swap trading and it also directs the CFTC to set position limits on swaps and futures. These provisions are crucial to monitoring and understanding the role of speculation in the energy commodity markets.

Oil rose above $140 per barrel in the summer of 2008, only to fall below $40 per barrel six months later. The prices of commodities rise and fall; however, it is difficult to explain a 70 percent price drop without wondering about the role of speculators. Just 10 years prior to that oil shock, in 1998, hedgers—producers or commercial users of commodities who use the markets to offset price risk—outnumbered speculators by a ratio of three to one. Now speculators outnumber hedgers by a ratio of four to one.

CFTC Commissioner Barton Chilton feels that the increased amount of speculation in the market is a reason to put limits on speculation. CFTC Chairman Gary Gensler has stated that it is necessary to ''address excessive speculation through aggregated position limits.'' Even Goldman Sachs reported that speculators could be driving up oil prices by up to $27 per barrel, saying that there was an eight to 10 cent increase in the price of oil for every million barrels of oil held by speculators.

With all this in mind, I cannot understand why Congress would move to handcuff the CFTC. Earlier this year, oil topped $110 per barrel and gas prices hit $4 per gallon. Previous oil price spikes have come in the summer, and already in April working families had to make tough decisions as gas prices approach the all-time high. While speculators may not be the single driving force behind dramatically increasing oil and gas prices, I do believe their role is not insignificant and that we must ensure the CFTC has the resources it needs to keep speculators in check.

I believe it is unconscionable that while Americans face the prospect of a summer of record-high oil prices, this bill would deny funding to the CFTC for putting in place position limits that could help deter, detect, and measure any inappropriate speculation that might drive up the costs of oil.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the amendment by Representative DELAURO to H.R. 2112, the FY 2012 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, which would fully fund the Commodities Futures Trading Commission (CFTC). By gutting funding for the CFTC, the underlying bill would fulfill the Republican agenda of dismantling the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010.

As Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Capital Markets and Government Sponsored Enterprises, I am very concerned that in the absence of this amendment, we will continue to see the same unregulated, unchecked, and unmitigated speculation in the derivatives market that led to the financial collapse, the impacts of which included:

Over $10 trillion in household wealth destruction, with the average household losing 23 percent of its stored wealth;

Nearly 10 million lost jobs;

Wage losses of approximately $3,250 per household;

12 million expected foreclosures; and

A 30 percent peak to trough decline in home prices.

Moreover, by underfunding the CFTC, this bill would contribute to the high gas prices that are already harming our economy and our constituents. The CFTC wants to set position limits on speculative trading, including speculation on gasoline. Without adequate funding, the CFTC will not be able to do this.

We know that consumers felt the pain of runaway speculation at the pump. According to a recent poll by the Associated Press, 71 percent of Americans said rising prices will cause some hardship for them and their families, including 41 percent who called it a serious hardship. While gasoline prices have recently declined—several weeks ago the average cost of a gallon of gasoline in Los Angeles was $4.27—if speculation on gasoline rises to the levels it was several weeks ago, gasoline prices will shoot back up.

According to Goldman Sachs, speculation on gasoline alone added $20 to the price of a barrel of oil. The CFTC has a proposed rule that would prevent this type of abuse. But by underfunding the CFTC, H.R. 2112 would stop that rule, an action that will ensure that our constituents continue to feel pain at the pump.

As you can see, Mr. Chair, it is our constituents who suffer the consequences of unregulated derivatives. Underfunding the CFTC is not only irresponsible, it is a slap in the face to the taxpaying Americans that bailed out the institutions that cost them their retirement funds, their jobs, and their homes.

This is why I support the amendment by the gentlewoman from Connecticut. If her amendment is not adopted, passage today of H.R. 2112 will come at the expense of these Americans, who will see higher oil prices as a direct result of this bill.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. DELAURO

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 2, line 14, after the aggregate dollar amount insert ''(reduced by $200,000)''.

Page 3, line 4, after the dollar amount insert ''(reduced by $300,000)''.

Page 3, line 10, after the dollar amount insert ''(reduced by $100,000)''.

Page 3, line 19, after the dollar amount insert ''(reduced by $300,000)''.

Page 7, line 17, after the dollar amount insert ''(reduced by $50,000)''.

Page 8, line 7, after the dollar amount insert ''(reduced by $50,000)''.

Page 51, line 18, after the aggregate dollar amount insert ''(increased by $1,000,000)''.

Page 53, line 17, after the dollar amount insert ''(increased by $1,000,000)''.

Ms. DELAURO (during the reading). I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Connecticut?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. My amendment would transfer $1 million to the Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition at the Food and Drug Administration. The funding would come from the U.S. Department of Administration from several of the administrative accounts: Office of the Secretary, the Chief Economist, Budget and Program Analysis, Chief Information Officer, Office of Communication, and General Counsel. The intent is that it will be used to protect the American public from E. coli sickness originating from FDA-regulated foods. This is something we have to do. Our primary responsibility as the people's representatives is to protect the health and safety of American families, and the current funding level for the FDA in this bill puts these at risk.

We know that food-borne illnesses are always a major public health threat. They account for roughly 48 million illnesses, 100,000 hospitalizations, and over 3,000 deaths in our country each year. Put another way, one in every six Americans becomes sick from the very foods they eat each year.

Specific to E. coli, well over 200,000 sicknesses every year are because of this one type of food-borne bacterial sickness, and the threat of a more serious outbreak is also very real. Right now in Europe we are witnessing just such a lethal outbreak. In Germany, thousands have been affected, hundreds have become sick, and 37 have died from an E. coli outbreak. Just this morning, a 2-year-old German boy perished from kidney failure as a result of E. coli poisoning, which authorities think began with raw bean sprouts in northern Germany.

This sort of fatal outbreak could all too easily happen here. In many ways, we have been extraordinarily lucky that it has not happened more often. In recent years, all types of food have become contaminated and forced into recall from Froot Loops to SpaghettiOs and salami to eggs. We have to be continually vigilant on the food safety front to keep families safe.

That is also why we passed the Food Safety Modernization Act last year, to give FDA the tools to better respond to food-borne illness outbreaks and to hold industrial food production facilities to higher standards. But for no budgetary purpose to speak of, this legislation would undo all of these overdue and much-needed improvements.

In so doing, it effectively ties the hands of the FDA, ensures it will not have the funds to implement or enforce the Food Safety Modernization Act or to fulfill its mandate to guard against contaminated foods. Once again, we will be stuck with the status quo, and that status quo means that people will continue to become sick and people may die.

With so much food coming in from overseas, we should be improving our food safety system right now. For example, the GAO recently issued a report highlighting the shortcomings in our ability to ensure the safety of imported seafood.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this amendment to restore $1 million in funding to food safety efforts at the FDA. We should be doing more, not less, to keep our fridges and our kitchen tables safe.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. And I wanted to say food safety is something that we all place a very high priority on and we're very concerned about, and we have been watching this situation in Europe daily as we're all concerned, and our prayers are with the people who have suffered and those who have died.

I do want to read a quote that Secretary of USDA Mr. Vilsack said yesterday, and I will just quote: Secretary John Vilsack said he is ''reasonably confident'' that U.S. consumers won't face the same sort of E. coli outbreak now plaguing Germany. And we're doing a lot and have done a lot in the last 15 years to make sure that we address potential E. coli infection. For example, the type of ground beef that has had a repeated problem with it has actually been cut in half.

Also, I want to say I do have concerns about the FDA implementation of food safety. We hear quite often that 48 million people have suffered from food-borne illnesses—a very high number, a number that we're all very concerned about—but only 20 percent of these are from known pathogens. If you look at it even further, 60 percent of the illnesses from known pathogens come from norovirus.

And how do we address this? Well, CDC said on March 4, to update the norovirus, that appropriate hand hygiene is the likely most single important method to prevent norovirus infection and control transmission. Reducing any norovirus present on hands is accomplished by thorough hand washing with running water and plain antiseptic soap.

Now, in the FDA 630-page budget request, there was not one single mention of norovirus. I would ask anybody, isn't that odd to you? That's something we need to be concerned about. Why would they not mention that, if nearly 60 percent of the illnesses are from norovirus?

Second highest cause of illness is from salmonella. And under the authority that FDA had before the Food Safety Modernization Act and the authority that the FDA has right now, they finalized the salmonella egg rule in July of last year, almost a year ago. According to the FDA's own press release, FDA said that as many as 79,000 illnesses and 30 deaths due to consumption of eggs contaminated with salmonella may be avoided each year with new food safety requirements. They have that authority right now, and that was last year's budget. They can still do it this year with this budget.

The third highest cause of food-borne illness comes from crossbreeding, and crossbreeding is mentioned one time in FDA's 2012 budget request as it was related to food defense. And the reason why this is important is because the FDA always seems to be ready to take on new initiatives, and yet it doesn't seem to be tackling the food safety challenges that we have right now in an orderly fashion under its current budget.

Now, the CDC statistics, which we got through hearings, go back to that 48 million food-borne illnesses a year, 128,000 hospitalizations, and 3,000 deaths, very high numbers, numbers that we are all concerned about. But if you look at 311 million Americans eating three meals a day, that would be 933 million meals eaten daily or 340 billion eaten each year. If you do the math on this, the food safety rate is 99.9 percent safe.

Why is that relevant? Because something's working without the FDA and without the USDA and without the nanny state saying we're in charge of everything. And that's how the private sector—the private sector is a dirty word for many people in Washington, D.C. But food processing companies are very concerned about food safety and their customers' safety, because the way you keep your customers coming back to buy more is to keep them happy, and that means to keep them safe.

□ 2130

And it would be hard for me to believe that some of the leading companies in America, such as McDonald's or Burger King or Coca-Cola, have anything on their minds except for food safety.

So I appreciate the gentlewoman offering this amendment, but it's only $1 million. And if it were a serious amendment, certainly it would be more than that. But based on what we've seen so far, I don't think this amendment is going to do anything.

[From USA TODAY]

VILSACK: U.S. LARGELY SAFE FROM EUROPEAN E. COLI OUTBREAK

(By Dan Vergano)

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said he is ''reasonably confident'' that U.S. consumers won't face the same sort of E. coli outbreak now plaguing Germany.

But the European episode ''reinforces that we need to remain vigilant here about food safety,'' Vilsack said Monday, speaking with the USA TODAY editorial board.

Public health experts, however, warned that another serious outbreak in the U.S. is just a matter of time and luck.

''Could it happen here? It already has,'' says infectious-disease expert Larry Lutwick of SUNY-Downstate College of Medicine in Brooklyn, citing past U.S. outbreaks that involved strains of E. coli other than the one that has struck Germany.

He points to last year's romaine lettuce-related outbreak of an E. coli strain that sickened 26 people, and the 2006 fresh spinach-related episode that hospitalized 199 people in 26 states.

In Germany, officials backtracked Monday for the second time in a week and said testing ruled out bean sprouts from an organic farm as the possible source for the outbreak that has killed 22 people and sickened more than 2,330 people across Europe. Testing earlier ruled out cucumbers from Spain as the culprit.

''This investigation has been a disaster,'' Michael Osterholm, director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota, tells the Associated Press.

''This kind of wishy-washy response is incompetent,'' he says, accusing German authorities of casting suspicion on cucumbers and sprouts without firm data.

Some U.S. health experts say government assurances face constant trials.

''Food isn't just grown locally, it comes from all over the world, which poses a lot of challenges'' for food safety, says epidemiologist Elaine Scallan of the University of Colorado-Denver. She notes the current system heavily relies on rapid responses to outbreaks but is not as well positioned to prevent them.

''We are relying on state and local health departments to pick up these outbreaks, just like their equivalents in Europe,'' she said.

In January, President Obama signed a food safety act ramping up Food and Drug Administration authority to police food imports.

But Caroline Smith DeWaal of the Center for Science in the Public Interest warns those inspections may be cut in the ongoing congressional budget battle.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Connecticut will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE OF TEXAS

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 2, line 14, after the dollar figure, insert ''(increased by $25,000,000)''.

Page 5, line 5, after the dollar figure, insert ''(reduced by $25,000,000)''.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order on the gentlewoman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

The gentlewoman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I thank the distinguished chairman from Georgia, who I am hoping will be inclined to recognize the importance of this amendment and work with those of us who are interested in healthy food.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment would fund and seek to have the Secretary of Agriculture focus on the healthy food funding initiative. This initiative would increase the availability of affordable healthy foods in underserved urban and rural areas and, as well, particularly through the development or equipping of grocery stores and other healthy food retailers.

We call these ''food deserts.'' And the reason why I am standing next to this tragic picture of the disasters that have hit the American public is to emphasize what Americans go through. In this instance, we see a disaster of unbelievable proportion, from Missouri to Alabama to the flooding that occurred up and down the Mississippi. I can assure you that these individuals are suffering from the lack of access to healthy food. We've got to get them back on their feet.

This idea of food deserts impacts rural and urban areas, but it also impacts the millions of Americans, thousands upon thousands of Americans who have recently been impacted by disaster. Everything is gone. And although they are now probably experiencing the distribution of food from food centers sponsored by FEMA and volunteers, they will come back to a food desert. Particularly in the African American and Hispanic communities, for example, food comes from fast foods and convenience stores. And as I indicated before, those fast foods come from, if you will, the places where the expiration dates are sometimes way over the time of expiration.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 80 percent of black women and 67 percent of black men are overweight. African American children from low-income families are at a much higher risk for obesity. Why? Because there is no access or limited access to good food. The CDC also estimates that African American and Mexican American adolescents ages 12 to 19 are more likely to be overweight at 21 percent and 23 percent, respectively.

This amount of money will allow us to focus on the importance of correcting food deserts.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture identified 92 food desert census tracks in Harris County alone, and that is in the 18th Congressional District. These areas are subdivisions of a county with between 1,000 to 8,000 low-income residents, with 33 percent of the people living more than a mile from a grocery store.

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, 32 percent of all children in Texas are overweight or obese. These statistics underscore the staggering effect food deserts have.

I am asking that we look at the idea of ensuring healthy food. Targeting Federal financial assistance to food desert areas through the Healthy Food Finance Initiative will provide more healthy food to affected areas.

We can create jobs, we can help farmers, and we can bolster the development in distressed areas. It is an easy fix, and the fix is to find a way to cooperate, collaborate—not do a handout, not dole out—to make sure that we provide the incentives to come into our areas to ensure that we have a healthy child.

This is a healthy child, we hope, getting access to health care. But I can assure you that their health is based upon not only health care but the food that this little one will eat.

I can tell you, Mr. Chairman, that I represent communities that have the inability to access good food. This initiative will increase the availability of healthy food alternatives to the 23.5 million people living in food deserts nationwide.

We must be reducing the deficit, I agree, but cutting programs that provide healthy food—and create jobs, because it would certainly create jobs by adding access to healthy food and sites for healthy food, meaning grocery stores, farmer's markets. All of those will be part of this initiative. And it would assist the many, many census tracks in Houston, alone, that are now suffering from the lack of access to good food.

Just a picture of green vegetables inspires us to support this amendment. I would ask my colleagues to support this amendment.

I thank the Chairman for this opportunity to explain my amendment to H.R. 2122, which allocates an additional $25 million to the budget of the Office of the Secretary, in order to fund President Obama's Healthy Food Funding Initiative (HFFI).

Funding HFFI will increase the availability of affordable, healthy foods in underserved urban and rural communities, particularly through the development or equipping of grocery stores and other healthy food retailers.

These "food deserts", communities in which residents do not have access to affordable and healthy food options, disproportionally affect African American and Hispanic communities. Fast food restaurants and convenience stores line the blocks of low income neighborhoods, offering few, if any, healthy options.

Many of my colleagues across the aisle have made arguments about the economic climate, and the need for budgetary cuts, and I agree that we must work to reduce the deficit. We cannot, however, continue to make irresponsible cuts to programs for the underserved, lower income families, and minorities.

Since the mid-1970s, the prevalence of overweight and obesity has increased sharply for both adults and children, and obesity is a grave health concern for all Americans. However, food deserts have taken a toll on low income and minority communities and exacerbated growing obesity rates and health problems.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 80 percent of black women and 67 percent of black men are overweight or obese. African American children from low income families have a much higher risk for obesity than those in higher income families.

The CDC also estimates African American and Mexican American adolescents ages 12–19 are more likely to be overweight, at 21 percent and 23 percent respectively, than non-Hispanic white adolescents who are 14 percent overweight. In children 6–11 years old, 22 percent of Mexican American children are overweight, compared to 20 percent of African American children and 14 percent of non-Hispanic white children.

Food deserts have greatly impacted my constituents in the 18th Congressional District, and citizens throughout the State of Texas. Texas has fewer grocery stores per capita than any other State. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) identified 92 food desert census tracts in Harris County alone. These areas are subdivisions of the county with between 1,000 to 8,000 low-income residents, with 33 percent of people living more than a mile from a grocery store.

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, 32 percent of all children in Texas are overweight or obese. These statistics underscore the staggering effect food deserts have on the health of low-income and minority communities. In Houston and other cities across the country, local programs have proved that well targeted funding and assistance can create viable business outcomes and increase access to healthy food.

Targeting federal financial assistance to food desert areas through the Healthy Food Funding Initiative will provide more healthy food to affected neighborhoods, open new markets for farmers, create jobs, and bolster development in distressed communities.

The Healthy Food Funding Initiative is not a handout or a crutch. Funding through this program is intended to provide financial and technical assistance in support of market planning, promotion efforts, infrastructure and operational improvements, and increase availability of locally and regionally produced foods.

This initiative will increase the availability of healthy food alternatives to the 23.5 million people living in food deserts nationwide. Yes, we must work toward reducing the deficit, but cutting programs that provide healthy food to those who simply do not have access to nutritional options, is not the way.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word, and I wanted to object to this and explain the point of order.

The Acting CHAIR. Does the gentleman continue to reserve his point of order?

Mr. KINGSTON. I continue to reserve.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. KINGSTON. The reason is that the amendment may not be considered en bloc under clause 2(f) of rule XXI because the amendment proposes to increase the level of funding and outlays in the bill. And under the House rule, the amendment has to be budget neutral with budget authority and with outlays. This only does one of those.

I know the gentlewoman has worked very hard on this, and that was the intent. But because the budget authority and outlay both have to be considered, that is what the problem is under rule XXI. I know the gentlewoman is an expert in this, has put a lot of time and a lot of compassion in it, and it is something that the committee is not turning our backs on at all. But that's why we're objecting to it.

And I know that my friend from Houston is very passionate on this and will be back again doing other things to try to make sure that we address food deserts and so forth. I appreciate her conviction on that, and I wanted to explain that.

The Acting CHAIR. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I would, Mr. Chairman.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Texas is recognized.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. First of all, let me thank the ranking member, Mr. FARR, as well as his staff for recognizing the importance of food deserts. And let me thank Mr. KINGSTON. If I might, I would offer, out of your thoughtfulness, I would even ask for the point of order to be waived in the face of 23.5 million individuals who live in food deserts.

I will make the argument, in speaking to the point of order and, particularly, procedurally, of course, that, you know, it was a challenge to be able to frame language that would allow us to address this crisis. So I believe we made every effort to ensure that we were in compliance.

It is my understanding that the language or funding for this initiative was not in this legislation or pulled. We wanted to give the discretion to the Office of the Secretary to not leave places like this, that I just lifted up, disasters, suffering from not having access to food.

I would simply ask the gentleman in this moment when I'm asking for a waiver of the point of order to have the ability to work with this great subcommittee to think of this as a valuable issue and to work on this point that has to do with helping those who live in food deserts.

I yield to the gentleman.

□ 2140

Mr. KINGSTON. I reluctantly have to insist on the point of order. It's actually scored by CBO at $5 million, and that is beyond my authority to waive anything. And it's not a numerical thing. It's just a rule.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Do you have an interest in working together?

Mr. KINGSTON. Let me say, we'll see what we can do. I'm not fully versed on it. But the gentlewoman knows that the door is always open to my office, and we'll continue to work with you. But I do have to insist on the point of order.

The Acting CHAIR. Members may not yield or engage in colloquy on a point of order. The Chair is prepared to rule on the matter.

To be considered en bloc pursuant to clause 2(f) of rule XXI, an amendment must not propose to increase the levels of budget authority or outlays in the bill. Because the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas proposes a net increase in the level of outlays in the bill, as argued by the chairman of the Subcommittee on Appropriations, it may not avail itself of clause 2(f) to address portions of the bill not yet read. The point of order is therefore sustained. The amendment is not in order.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

OFFICE OF TRIBAL RELATIONS

For necessary expenses of the Office of Tribal Relations, $423,000 to support communication and consultation activities with Federally Recognized Tribes, as well as other requirements established by law.

EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ECONOMIST

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Chief Economist, $10,707,000.

NATIONAL APPEALS DIVISION

For necessary expenses of the National Appeals Division, $12,091,000.

OFFICE OF BUDGET AND PROGRAM ANALYSIS

For necessary expenses of the Office of Budget and Program Analysis, $8,004,000.

OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY

For necessary expenses of the Office of Homeland Security, $1,272,000.

OFFICE OF ADVOCACY AND OUTREACH

For necessary expenses of the Office of Advocacy and Outreach, $1,209,000.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Chief Information Officer, $35,000,000.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. FORTENBERRY

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 3, line 19, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(reduced by $1,000,000)''.

Page 39, line 10, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(increased by $1,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Nebraska is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Chairman, before I begin the discussion on the amendment, I'd like to correct the RECORD in regard to something I said earlier. The CFTC budget is actually decreased by a slightly higher amount than the overall Ag budget, rather than a slightly lower amount.

In addition to that, I do wish to address a number of charges laid before the chairman of the Ag Appropriation Committee. We've heard for hours that this bill is about supporting Wall Street, Big Oil and tax breaks at the expense of food security. I think it's very important to note that food security is an important American value. It's important to me. It's important to many of us. So much so that in a time of very tight budgets, this bill actually raises food and nutrition spending by nearly $7 billion, approximately 7 percent more than current levels, because there are many vulnerable Americans out there who now qualify during these very tight economic times.

Secondly, I also wish to reiterate, I did not support the Wall Street bailouts. Many of us didn't, both Democrat and Republicans. Five banks now control more than 50 percent of the deposited assets in this country. Main Street banks, many of whom had no role in the reckless behavior on Wall Street, are now under the constant competitive pressure from those banks that were deemed too big to fail, but in actuality are too big to succeed.

Mr. Chairman, I'd also like to point out that I did not vote for the tax deal passed at the end of last year, an 11th-hour deal that was cobbled together because of the mismanagement of this institutional process. We could have done much better for the American people, both Democrats and Republicans.

So the reality is this is a very difficult process we're in now to right-size our budget and make government more efficient and effective. In that regard, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to offer an amendment that invests in renewable energy in rural America.

Clearly, America needs a bold new energy vision, and this amendment, I believe, can help. A sustainable energy future must include the integration of conservation and new technologies, powered by clean renewable sources such as wind and solar, geothermal, biofuels, and biomass. Increasing our energy portfolio and the diverse range of opportunities available to produce energy domestically is all the more important in light of skyrocketing fuel prices. Rural America should continue to play an important role in this regard.

Specifically, Mr. Chairman, my amendment would transfer $1 million from the United States Department of Agriculture Office of the Chief Information Officer to the Rural Energy For America Program, also known as REAP. While I recognize the importance of funding for the Office of the Chief Information Officer, and its role in providing enhanced technology for the USDA, I believe it is appropriate to transfer a small amount by Federal standards, $1 million, to our Nation's renewable energy efforts.

The REAP program funds a wide range of renewable energy projects that stimulate rural economies, help create jobs, and address environmental concerns. This funding promotes energy efficiency and renewable energy production, and is directed to farming communities and rural small businesses.

Mr. Chairman, renewable energy is changing today's agriculture and rural communities. It is clearly in our national interest to help rural communities integrate a wide variety of renewable energy sources and technology as we move toward energy independence and environmental security.

New development and signs of interest in renewable energy production are booming, Mr. Chairman. This amendment strengthens Congress' resolve to creatively develop new energy options throughout America, and I urge its adoption.

I want to also thank my colleague from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) for his support of this amendment, a native son of Nebraska.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. We do accept the amendment with reservations. I want to say to my friend from Nebraska, he's been working very hard on this amendment, particularly in the last 5 hours. But we had a debate about this in the full committee. Ms. KAPTUR offered an amendment that restored funding for the REAP account. It was my intention to zero it out because I do want to reduce the number of Federal programs that are out there. The full committee did restore it. I'm not sure what $2 million in that account will do.

I do support renewable energy, but I will say that there are dozens of programs and dozens of research channels available to people for renewable energy, particularly in the rural area.

So I want to say to my friend from Nebraska and from Minnesota that we'll accept the amendment, but you need to keep your eye on us because it's not a program I particularly like. And I'm very serious about eliminating as many programs as possible. So we need to continue talking about that.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the gentleman from Georgia, first of all, for his generosity to us. And we certainly understand the position you're coming from.

And I think yes, it's probably a small amount of money, but I think all of us recognize too the need to send a strong clear signal of the importance of these programs to the Senate and let them take a look at it over there.

So with that, I do rise in support of the gentleman's amendment. I want to thank my colleague from Nebraska for his hard work on behalf of all rural communities.

I certainly urge support of this amendment. It restores $1 million to the REAP program. And the gentleman's right. It is a small amount, but these are important programs.

And I'd like to also thank Ms. KAPTUR from Ohio for putting that back in this program. REAP's vitally important for rural communities. Farmers and rural small businesses in my district use REAP grants and loan guarantees to cut their energy bills and improve energy efficiency. REAP allows farmers and small businesses to help move our country to cleaner energy future by building wind, solar, biomass, anaerobic digester, geothermal, and cutting edge technologies that were funded by this.

I think all of us recognize it's far better for us, Mr. Chairman, to get our energy needs and control our energy future from here at home instead of putting our national security, our energy security in the hands of countries that don't like us. We spend $400 billion a year on imported oil from countries that hate us. They'll hate us for free. We can keep the money at home through programs like this, investing in diversity to keep the jobs at home.

And I want to say that I've seen this through the energy manufacturing supply chain in my district, that the spin-off from these jobs in the private sector is incredibly valuable.

□ 2150

Unfortunately, while I think the REAP amendment is a good one, the underlying bill I don't believe reflects the priorities of rural America.

Our farmers and ranchers clearly understand that we've got to tighten our belts, cut our budgets, and become more efficient. I simply think this piece of legislation puts a disproportionate burden on those that are doing so much for this country. A 25 percent cut over the FY10 bill is irresponsible. In fact, I would argue that if it doesn't ensure that a safety net is there, that abundant, safe and affordable food supply that we keep talking about will be put in jeopardy.

This bill decimates farm bill conservation programs, takes money away from proven nutrition programs, and strips, as you heard for the previous 3 hours, the CFTC of critical resources it needs to regulate irresponsible behavior. For that reason, I'm going to have

a difficult time supporting the overall bill.

But I do believe the REAP program does give America a way to move towards energy independence. I have seen these programs that have worked in my district. I believe it lets us take control of our energy future, lets our farmers and ranchers be part of the solution, and lets us get back on the track to prosperity.

So I want to thank the gentleman from Nebraska for his work on this and other issues in rural America, and I truly do thank the gentleman from Georgia for indulging us and for hearing us and letting us put it forward.

Mr. BOSWELL. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of this amendment and to stand up for rural America and our Nation's farmers.

The appropriations bill in front of us today eliminates a program that helps rural communities invest in energy-efficient and renewable energy projects to improve their quality of life and local economies.

The Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) has given Iowa farmers and businesses more than $57 million in grants and $74 million worth of loan guarantees since 1993 when it started, according to the USDA.

The majority of the projects have helped growers purchase higher-efficiency grain drying equipment which saves them thousands in propane costs. Additionally, helps farmers install geothermal heating and cooling systems and wind turbines. Just this year, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the Department would begin award grants to rural gas stations to install gas pumps for ethanol-blended fuel.

Iowa is the largest beneficiary of REAP funds, and I am committed to working with my colleagues in the House and Senate to reach a compromise on its funding. REAP has already been cut by 25 percent for this fiscal year and the majority's intention to reduce its funding from $75 million to $1.3 million is unacceptable.

When the House Appropriations Committee passed this legislation, Members chose to dismantle a program that helps rural communities thrive and their economies grow in order to maintain tax breaks for oil and gas companies and incentives for companies that outsource American jobs. This is not about reducing spending. It is an outright attack on Middle America to protect Corporate America.

I will not stand by as appropriators blindly cut spending in programs that truly grow the economy and support rural businesses and communities.

Every American needs an affordable and accessible food supply grown in the most efficient way possible. Effectively terminating the REAP program will reduce efficiency in food production, increasing prices in the grocery store, and, in the end, hurting every American family, not just rural America.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment which will slowly rebuild the REAP program and send a message to the Senate that this program is important to every American.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, $5,310,000: *Provided*, That no funds made available by this appropriation may be obligated for FAIR Act or Circular A–76 activities until the Secretary has submitted to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives a report on the Department's contracting out policies, including agency budgets for contracting out.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. SESSIONS

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 3, beginning line 22, strike the proviso relating to FAIR Act or Circular A–76 activities.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, I know that the Federal Government employs some 2 million executive branch, non-postal full-time and permanent employees; 850,000 of these employees hold jobs that are commercial in nature. Of the 850,000 commercial jobs, only a handful have been characterized as government employees or private sector workers who can perform these activities more efficiently and more cost effectively.

My amendment strikes the current insourcing language found in this legislation which, as drafted, would prevent the funds spent by this bill from being used to conduct public-private competitions or to direct A–76 conversions for any program, project or activity within the United States Department of Agriculture without a contracting report to Congress by the Secretary.

Two weeks ago, the House voted in favor of striking similar problematic and anti-competitive A–76 language from H.R. 2017, the Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill. The same change and reversal of bad policy which I undertook at that time should also be implemented in this legislation by striking this anti-competitive, free market language.

The A–76 process provides a valuable option for taxpayers and requires real competition. A former assistant director at USDA, Shawn Kingsbury, managed information technology programs at the Department. Mr. Kingsbury, in his tenure, implemented A–76 by transitioning to the first performance-based project management organization within the USDA, and it resulted in over $100 million in savings.

Without the ability to add competitive insourcing, ballooning deficits and out-of-control spending will continue in our government. It is time that Congress explores and gives all solutions to save taxpayers and the managers of the business in the government their hard-earned money.

The Heritage Foundation has reported that subjecting Federal employee positions which are commercial in nature to a public-private cost comparison will generate on average a 30 percent cost savings regardless of who wins that competition. Rather than preventing market competition that would improve service and lower costs, we should be encouraging agencies to find the best way to deliver services to citizens of this great Nation. The role of government should be to govern, not to operate businesses inside the government.

Our Nation's unemployment rate stands at 9.1 percent. We must allow the private sector the ability to create jobs without an unfair disadvantage. We must get more results for our money.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this commonsense, taxpayer-first amendment and ensure cost-saving competition is available to the managers within this agency. Congress should be looking to use all the tools that it can find to help save taxpayer dollars.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this bill primarily because if it ain't broken, don't fix it.

This has been a law for a long time. It allows our committee and the public to know what the A–76 circular review did. The report is on the Department's contracting-out policies and its budget for contracting out, that information, which Congress has been getting year after year without any problems. The language has been in the bill for many years, and we have always received the report allowing the contracting-out activities to proceed. It hasn't stopped anything.

The language specifically requires a report to go to the authorizing committee reflecting the agreement reached with the former Republican chairman of the Oversight Committee many years ago. It was his amendment that did this.

I have to say personally too that I've done the A–76 circular contracting out. We have a military base in my community, the Defense Language Institute, and the city of Monterey surrounds it. We ended up with an A–76 review, ended up where the city could provide the base operation services much cheaper than the Federal employees on the base, saving the Army about $4 million a year and having much better services delivered.

So, again, delivering this report to Congress seems to me hasn't been a problem for anyone. And it ain't broke, so I don't think we ought to support fixing it with Mr. SESSIONS' amendment.

I urge a ''no'' vote.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas will be postponed.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, $760,000.

OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

For necessary expenses of the Office of Civil Rights, $19,288,000.

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration, $683,000.

AGRICULTURE BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES AND RENTAL PAYMENTS

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For payment of space rental and related costs pursuant to Public Law 92–313, including authorities pursuant to the 1984 delegation of authority from the Administrator of General Services to the Department of Agriculture under 40 U.S.C. 121, for programs and activities of the Department which are included in this Act, and for alterations and other actions needed for the Department and its agencies to consolidate unneeded space into configurations suitable for release to the Administrator of General Services, and for the operation, maintenance, improvement, and repair of Agriculture buildings and facilities, and for related costs, $209,505,000, to remain available until expended; of which $151,396,000 shall be available for payments to the General Services Administration for rent; of which $11,452,000 shall be available for payment to the Department of Homeland Security for building security activities; and of which $46,657,000 shall be available for buildings operations and maintenance expenses: *Provided*, That the Secretary may use unobligated balances from prior years to cover shortfalls incurred in prior year rental payments: *Provided further*, That the Secretary is authorized to transfer funds from a Departmental agency to this account to recover the full cost of the space and security expenses of that agency that are funded by this account when the actual costs exceed the agency estimate which will be available for the activities and payments described herein.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. FARR

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 5, line 5, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $342,000)''.

Page 5, line 10, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $342,000)''.

Page 17, line 25, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $300,000)''.

Mr. FARR (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to waive the reading.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I am offering this amendment to move funding from the Agriculture Building and Facilities and Rental Payments account and investing that money in the Organic Data Initiative.

Organic agriculture is a very important and growing sector of our farm and ranch community. It has continued to grow at a double-digit rate since Congress passed the Organic Act in 1990.

The office collects and disseminates data regarding organic agriculture through the Agricultural Marketing Service, the Economic Research Service, and the National Agricultural Statistics Service. The organic sector should have the same access to data available to all agriculture—a building block to a successful U.S. agricultural economy.

As the industry surpasses $29 billion, this information is vital to maintain stable markets, create proper risk management tools, and negotiate equivalency agreements with foreign governments. It is imperative that we continue to collect information gained by ODI.

The AMS collects organic prices and disseminates the data through Market News Reports.

□ 2200

NASS conducts surveys and collects data used for the Census of Agriculture. The ERS published the consumer survey ''Marketing U.S. Organic Foods: Recent Trends from Farms to Consumers 2009,'' and continues to produce reports which used the data collected by AMS and NASS in addition to surveying Americans about their organic consumption patterns.

This amendment is needed for the following reasons:

The AMS needs to continue to expand organic price reporting services to more commodities and price points and distribute the data through Market News, creating price stability.

The NASS will be collecting more information on organic production in the next agricultural census.

It is needed to understand the size of the organic industry and create risk management tools.

The ERS is continuing organic economic analysis and expanding to include organic trade data needed to expand export markets.

The President's fiscal year 2012 budget requests $300,000 specifically for AMS to continue the collection of and distribution of data.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support this amendment to continue the Organic Data Initiative.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MR. BROUN OF GEORGIA

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 5, line 5, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $20,900,000)''.

Page 5, line 6, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $20,900,000)''.

Page 80, line 2, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $20,900,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. This amendment simply reduces by 10 percent the account for Agriculture Buildings and Facilities and Rental Payments.

My friend from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) and I have partnered to bring this commonsense amendment before the House, and I would like to thank him and his staff for all their hard work.

Mr. Chairman, we are in an economic and fiscal emergency. The Federal Government spends too much money. It is irresponsible and immoral to keep spending beyond our means. Not only do we need to reduce our deficit, but we need to begin to make an impact on eliminating the huge debt that has been accumulating over the last few years.

I greatly appreciate the effort and the difficult decisions the Appropriations Committee must make. That said, we must continue to make meaningful cuts to show the American people and the President that we are serious about controlling spending and serious about the future of our Nation.

I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense amendment. Let's show the American people that we are serious about controlling spending and stopping the outrageous spending that has been going on here in Washington under Democrat as well as Republican leadership. I encourage a ''yes'' vote on this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR (Ms. FOXX). The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. I normally wouldn't oppose this because it cuts from the account that I just tried to cut from, but I only cut $300,000 to pay for something. This amendment cuts $20 million, and it pays for nothing. I just think that that's not a very good proposition.

We have an awful lot of facilities that are around this country. Agriculture is everywhere—in every single

State and in almost every congressional district. I happen to represent the leading agricultural State in the United States—California—where we grow some 40, 50 crops that no other State grows in addition to hundreds and hundreds of other crops, so we need facilities out there.

I know this is an account that is easy to be offset, and as I said, I tackled the same account myself. Yet, since the gentleman opposed my amendment, I think it's only good quid pro quo that I oppose his.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Chairman, I rise in support of the gentleman from Georgia's amendment to cut $20.9 million from the Department of Agriculture's Buildings and Facilities and Rental Payments account and redirect those funds for deficit reduction.

I commend the Appropriations Committee, Chairman ROGERS and Chairman KINGSTON for crafting a bill that is $5.041 billion or 22.6 percent less than the President's FY 2012 budget request, and $2.672 billion or 13.4 percent less than the FY 2011 enacted level. However, I believe the financial catastrophe facing our Nation today requires us to do even more.

Recently, the CBO released their annual Budget and Economic Outlook report which projects that the FY 2011 deficit will reach an all time record high of $1.48 trillion; the third year in a row our Nation's budget deficit has exceeded $1 trillion. Our national debt is a staggering $14.2 trillion, almost more than our entire economy.

We are borrowing nearly 42 cents of every dollar we spend, much of it from the Chinese, and sending the bill to our children and grandchildren. Every child born today already owes $45,500 in debt they didn't create.

Now, more than ever, it is clear that we must be bold and take the steps necessary to tackle the unprecedented deficits and debt facing our country and get our economy moving again. I urge my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to work together on this bill to cut spending where we can, get our fiscal house in order, and protect the American Dream for our future generations.

In light of the looming and ever growing Federal deficit, an amendment like this is simply common sense. It merely cuts $20.9 million a modest cut of only 10 percent; a very measured step that reduces spending without threatening the mission of the Department of Agriculture.

Our country has a spending problem—not a revenue problem; support the Broun Amendment.

Mr. FARR. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BROUN).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses of the Department of Agriculture, to comply with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (42 U.S.C. 9601 et seq.) and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (42 U.S.C. 6901 et seq.), $3,393,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That appropriations and funds available herein to the Department for Hazardous Materials Management may be transferred to any agency of the Department for its use in meeting all requirements pursuant to the above Acts on Federal and non–Federal lands.

DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For Departmental Administration, $23,900,000, to provide for necessary expenses for management support services to offices of the Department and for general administration and other miscellaneous supplies and expenses not otherwise provided for and necessary for the practical and efficient work of the Department: *Provided*, That this appropriation shall be reimbursed from applicable appropriations in this Act for travel expenses incident to the holding of hearings as required by 5 U.S.C. 551–558.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. CLARKE OF MICHIGAN

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 6, line 11, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(reduced by $5,000,000)''.

Page 46, line 22, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(increased by $5,000,000)''.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan (during the reading). Madam Chair, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. This amendment would restore $5 million to the Women, Infants and Children Farmers Market Nutrition Program. This would allow low-income pregnant women and low-income women who have just given birth to purchase food directly from farmers to benefit their young infant children up to age 5.

This is very important in many areas around the country, especially in the area that I represent, the city of Detroit, where you don't really have that many markets around. Many times, families—even young mothers—have to go to gas stations and drug stores just to purchase groceries. That's not acceptable. That really encourages poor eating habits, poor nutrition, and it really increases our health care costs that all of us as taxpayers ultimately bear.

So I urge you to consider this amendment. It's a fair proposal, and it's very cost-effective. It provides low-income mothers and their children with good nutrition, which is the best medicine for health care—helping to get better nutrition to prevent people from getting sick.

The other thing, too, is that, throughout the entire debate on this budget, many of the speakers would say that those who benefit from these programs—low-income women, infants and children—really don't have a voice, so many of us here in Congress have to be their voice. I'd like to say, though, that the people who have benefited from these programs do have a voice.

My mother, Thelma Clarke, was a single parent, and she raised me. She was a child of the Great Depression. Ironically, during the Great Depression, she passed out in her school classroom because of malnutrition. It was during the 1930s, and times were very dire in the city of Detroit. She was experiencing tough economic times all the while I was growing up as a young kid and as a teenager. She vowed what happened to her would never happen to me, so she provided me with all the food I wanted—great meals with groceries that she purchased with food stamps. It worked for our family, so I want to say this, not just about this amendment but about the role of government.

□ 2210

I think the reason why this country is so great, and I thank God that my dad immigrated to this country, the United States, as opposed to another one, we are so great because we understand the value of pooling our tax dollars together to help each other. That makes this country stronger. It provides everyone, everyone, with an equal opportunity. That is what makes this country one of the most extraordinary in modern civilization. So I ask for $5 million. Let's give every child that same chance.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. I was going to ask my friend if he is planning to offer his other amendment. Don't you have another related amendment?

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Well, it relates to a different issue. It deals with food safety, and that comes right after this. It does amend page 6 as well.

Mr. KINGSTON. You don't have anything else on this section of the bill?

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. At least not dealing with this specific subject matter. I do have an amendment that amends this same page, page 6, and page 17, but that deals with reinstating funding on a food safety bill.

Mr. KINGSTON. You are taking from the same account twice?

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Let me consult with our staff here.

Mr. KINGSTON. I wanted to explain to my friend about it. I am uncertain about this current amendment, but

that departmental account, as unglamorous as they are to all of us, has been cut about 15 percent, and then this cuts it, and then your food safety amendment will cut it as well. So that is what my dilemma is at the moment. I don't know if anybody over there has actually heard from the department. I am assuming they are going to be against it.

Also I want to point out to my friend that one of the things that I think our authorizing friends should do is combine this program with food stamps anyhow, because there is duplication and overlap.

I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. FARR. The concern here is that this amendment double dips from the same account. Maybe we can work something out here. Mr. BROUN took money out of this account. I took money out of this account.

Mr. KINGSTON. Reclaiming my time, we were talking earlier about some of the overlaps in these Federal food assistance programs. To me, this is a case where this is a program where there is a lot of overlap with food stamps, and we should look at that, realizing that that is the authorizing committee's jurisdiction. There is not much more that I can do than comment on it.

I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Thank you very much, and I will ask for a vote on this.

Mr. KINGSTON. With that, I withdraw my objection, and we accept the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CLARKE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. YOUNG OF INDIANA

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 6, line 11, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(reduced by $2,390,000)''.

Page 80, line 2, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(increased by $2,390,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Indiana is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Madam Chair, this amendment is quite simple. The amendment would simply reduce by a modest 10 percent that part of the USDA's budget used for ''general administration and miscellaneous supplies.''

This category of spending is so broadly defined that Washington bureaucrats could use this money as a sort of gift card for these general administration and miscellaneous expenses. My amendment would put over $2 million of the money back into the spending reserve account to reduce our Federal deficit. That, of course, will lead to lower future taxes, lower future interest rates and thus a lower future unemployment rate.

I was sent here by the great people of Indiana's Ninth Congressional District to focus like a laser on creating jobs and to get our Federal spending under control so that we can keep our tax burden low. That will serve to the benefit of businesses and all that work for them around our country. Since being sworn in on January 5, that has been my mission, and I know it has been the singular focus of many of my colleagues.

So this simple amendment advances this mission by trimming more bureaucratic fat from Washington, and it signals to all job creators and to our financial markets that we in Congress are serious, very serious, about cutting unnecessary spending wherever we can find it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. Does any Member wish to speak in opposition to the gentleman's amendment?

If not, the question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CONGRESSIONAL RELATIONS

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations to carry out the programs funded by this Act, including programs involving intergovernmental affairs and liaison within the executive branch, $3,289,000: *Provided*, That these funds may be transferred to agencies of the Department of Agriculture funded by this Act to maintain personnel at the agency level; *Provided further*, That no funds made available by this appropriation may be obligated after 30 days from the date of enactment of this Act, unless the Secretary has notified the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress on the allocation of these funds by USDA agency: *Provided further*, That no other funds appropriated to the Department by this Act shall be available to the Department for support of congressional relations activities.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

For necessary expenses of the Office of Communications, $8,058,000.

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

For necessary expenses of the Office of Inspector General, including employment pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978, $80,000,000, including such sums as may be necessary for contracting and other arrangements with public agencies and private persons pursuant to section 6(a)(9) of the Inspector General Act of 1978, and including not to exceed $125,000 for certain confidential operational expenses, including the payment of informants, to be expended under the direction of the Inspector General pursuant to Public Law 95–452 and section 1337 of Public Law 97–98.

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL

For necessary expenses of the Office of the General Counsel, $35,204,000.

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND ECONOMICS

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics, $760,000.

ECONOMIC RESEARCH SERVICE

For necessary expenses of the Economic Research Service, $70,000,000.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. CHAFFETZ

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 8, line 15, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $43,000,000)''.

Page 8, line 18, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $85,000,000)''.

Page 9, line 5, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $650,000,000)''.

Page 49, line 23, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $1,040,198,000)''.

Page 80, line 2, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $1,818,198,000)''.

Mr. CHAFFETZ (during the reading). I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Utah is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Madam Chair, this amendment deals with three different services within the Department of Agriculture. The idea and the goal of the situation here is that perhaps they could take a reduction in funding, not totally zero them out, and really look at these duplicative programs as being something that can be ultimately unified over the course of time. My amendment simply drives down the cost of these, and the hope and desire is that they will somehow unify to do and accomplish what these duplicative services are. This relates to the Agricultural Research Service, the Economic Research Service, and the National Agriculture Statistics Service.

□ 2220

Now, the one other one that I would also point out that is funded is the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, where we are not suggesting a reduction in the amount. But the overall goal here is to reduce the amount of the expenditure here 50 percent from 2011 and 43 percent from the current bill. I think this is common sense.

We have to make difficult decisions. We recognize the value the Department of Agriculture brings. A lot of people rely on these types of statistics and information that is needed so that we can make sure that we have the very best Department of Agriculture that we can.

But in these tough and difficult economic times, it is imperative that we make difficult decisions. And sometimes that means we are looking at duplicative programs, maybe scaling those back a little bit, and refocusing the mission so that they can actually do what matters most and prioritize their own mission.

So we think it is the financially responsible thing to do. I would urge my colleagues to look closely at this. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. This amendment cuts ERS by $43 million, and that's the Economic Research Service for Agriculture. Then it goes on to cut another $85 million out of the National Agriculture Statistical Service, which is essentially the census of Agriculture. And then it goes on and cuts $650 million out of the Ag Research Service, which is two-thirds of the entire budget—and a budget that is absolutely to keep America competitive.

This is an agrarian world we live in. If we're going to stay ahead of the competition and not have all our food imported, we've got to stay ahead of the curve. That's the think tank, the creativity of America. It's also where we know whether we're getting all the bugs and infestation that's coming in. That's what agriculture research is all about.

It zeroes out the Food for Peace program. My God, in the world that we're living in now, we don't want to have any friends left? It puts all that savings into a spending reduction account, does nothing to help anybody except do a lot of damage for agriculture, for all the economics of agriculture, the research of agriculture, and the Food for Peace program. I think this is a very bad amendment, and I hope we strongly oppose it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Ohio is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JORDAN. I first want to thank the committee, and in particular the chairman of the subcommittee, for the good work he's done on the bill overall. But I support the gentleman from Utah's amendment. Any Member of Congress can do this in their district. You're at any group giving any speech and you say, Do you think maybe there's a little redundancy, maybe a little duplication, maybe a little overlap in the Federal Government? And the whole audience begins to laugh and everyone raises their hand because they get the joke.

In fact, we just had a hearing in the Subcommittee of Oversight dealing with regulation and overspending and the GAO was in there and they had done a study and we asked them, How many different means-tested social welfare programs are there? And they said, Well, we really can't give you a number because we can't tell; it's so ridiculous in government. But there are over a hundred.

They couldn't even tell us. But what they did tell us was there's a lot of redundancy, a lot of duplication, a lot of overlap. The gentleman from Utah's amendment just seeks to deal with that and says, Look, it recognizes a couple of facts. It recognizes that, yes, there is redundancy, but also we're broke. In fact, it's not we're going broke. We are broke. And we have to cut some spending, just like every single family, every single small business in this country has had to do over the last several years.

Remember some of the numbers because at some point something has to give. And we've got to be willing to cut spending. We've got a $14 trillion national debt. We've run trillion-dollar deficits for the last 3 years in a row. The three largest deficits in American history have been in the last 3 years, and $200 billion we're paying each year in interest. Right now, interest rates are at lowest levels—historically low levels. They're going to go up.

Something has to give. And the gentleman from Utah has a basic amendment which says, Let's reduce the spending in five programs that the Federal Government doesn't need and, frankly, cannot afford. And it would save the taxpayers of this great country $1.8 billion at a time when we're going broke. Some people would say we are broke.

So this is a commonsense amendment, something we should do. It builds on the good work that the gentleman from Georgia is getting ready to speak on, the gentleman from Georgia, who's the chairman of the committee, has already done. But it builds on their good work and respects the taxpayers.

I would urge a ''yes'' vote on the amendment.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, frankly, I think that statement is a flat Earth statement because it doesn't even look before you leap. It just says, Let's whack because there's redundancy. There is redundancy in our own body. We've got two eyes, two ears, two arms, and two legs. Why don't we just whack one of them out because you've got the other one.

Look at the consequences. ARS is the Agricultural Research Service. Do you know what they do? They look at how we can make a plant structure more healthy, how we can combat the bugs that come in. I represent a county where we have glassy-winged sharpshooters that affect the wine industry. It's a multimillion-dollar eradication program. We wouldn't know how to eradicate it without the research. We have the brown apple moth that infects nurseries, multimillion dollars of attacks. This is a war, just like those disasters you have been seeing on television that are natural disasters. These are natural disasters, only they're small little bugs. Or E. coli that we've talked about. Why would you want to cut the very service that keeps American agriculture healthy and competitive? This amendment wipes out two-thirds of the entire budget.

I'm one of those that thinks there's a lot of redundancy in government, but what I do is try to get the agencies together in my district and figure out where they overlap and how we can consolidate them, how we can get them to do joint operations. I think if you want to really consolidate a lot of Federal Government, it's going to take a lot more than just whacking away with an amendment making a list of zeroing out money for economic research for the census for agriculture. That's the last thing we want to do. It's a huge, huge market. You've got to have market information. As I said, you certainly don't want to whack ARS. That's the competitive arm. That's where America stays ahead of the rest of the world.

So redundancy is a problem, but it's not always smart just to knock off something because there's more of it, just like your arms, legs, and eyes. I ask for a ''no'' vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GRAVES of Georgia. Madam Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRAVES of Georgia. I appreciate the gentleman from Utah bringing this forward. This is a time when we've got to be looking for every opportunity to be wise stewards of the taxpayers' dollars. And all we're asking here is $1.8 billion out of trillions of dollars of spending here in the Federal Government, $1.8 million more. I think the taxpayers understand that. They expect that.

I don't know that anyone here has criticized the use of these funds, where it is going. It's not that. It's just the fact that the money is not there. How can you continue spending money you do not have? I think back on the average American families at home. They have to make difficult decisions. There are a lot of things that the average family would like to do each and every week; but if they don't have the resources to do it, they wait until they can save up and do it at another appropriate time. They enjoy it at a later date when they have the ability to do that.

Madam Chair, right now we do not have that ability as a Federal Government. For far too long we've spent too much. It's not a partisan issue, necessarily. Both parties are responsible for the reckless spending that's gone on in Washington. But this is the day, this is the time that we can correct that course. We can correct the path. We don't have to continue down this same path that's been going on over and over and over again. The status quo is not acceptable.

In fact, the American people, they deserve better. We have an opportunity

right now to send a strong message to the American people that $1.8 billion is being sent back to the taxpayers. Just imagine that—taking money from the Federal Government that it's used to absorbing from the taxpayer and allowing the taxpayers to choose how they wish to spend it. What a great concept. How novel is that, to allow the taxpayers to choose how they invest their money, where they might spend it. Which leads to the number one issue facing this Nation—and it's jobs and the economy.

If we want to see the economy improve, if we want to see revenues here in Washington improve, it's not through tax increases. It's through the economy improving. It's through the GDP, the engine of this Nation moving once again. And how do we do that? We release the dollars we hold as a Federal Government and the additional dollars that we're borrowing from foreign countries and we allow the private sector to hold that, allow the private sector to make those investments, allow them to be the dreamers. Those that have the ideas, those that have the ideas, entrepreneurs, allow them to be the risk-takers, the job creators we know they are and they want to be.

□ 2230

Instead, we hear again opposition which says, no, we know better as the Federal Government. Let us keep that money. Let us take it from your wallet. Let us distribute it out as we know best. I think I heard a speaker earlier today say the Federal Government is better at making decisions than the American people. I mean we've heard that concept expressed here already, that we know better. Well, the fact is the American people know better how to spend their money.

So the gentleman from Utah brings up a great amendment that says $1.8 billion in additional cuts, saving the taxpayers once again additional money. That only adds to the savings that the chairman of the subcommittee has already fought for, and I'm happy to serve with him on the committee. He's done a fabulous job of taking us back to 2006 spending levels, an amazing effort on behalf of the subcommittee, and this just takes it back just a little bit further. Surely we can do that for the American people tonight in this House.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I rise in opposition to this amendment.

I heard a very instructive quote. Even as important as this legislation is, in actuality it appears that my friends on the other side of the aisle simply want to zero out this whole appropriation for the important agricultural work that is done in this Nation, just zero it out. Mr. CHAFFETZ's amendment seeks to zero out a very important program, which includes zeroing out Food for Peace, and it apparently ignores the basic purpose and the crisis that we're facing dealing with food insecurity in the world.

The United Nations World Food Program acknowledges severe acute malnutrition affects an estimated 20 million children under the age of 5 worldwide and is responsible in whole or in part for more than half of all the deaths of children. Malnutrition kills approximately 1 million children each year, or an average of one every 30 seconds.

This is not the direction we want for the world or the United States. There are priorities. And I ask my colleagues, what are their priorities?

Now, I have a deal for them. Let's make a deal. Let's take the $10 billion that we're spending every month in Afghanistan and spread it out on deficit reduction. I will take up that challenge and accept that challenge. In fact, we will be able to put $1 billion or $2 billion every week for a 4-week timeframe in deficit reduction if we bring the troops home from Afghanistan. And while we do that, we'll have the opportunity to answer the question that I'm asking to my colleagues: Who will stand by while a child dies, one every 30 seconds around the world?

Food for Peace is a program that our farmers have bought into from the perspective of the service and the Good Samaritan that they do by providing the goods of the world's bread basket. The United States is the world's bread basket. We have been blessed with the bounty of topography and weather, in spite of the disasters we've now faced, to be able to feed the world. And Food for Peace is that program.

Just a few hours ago, I stood on the floor of the House and I mentioned my colleague, the Honorable Mickey Leland. Some of my new friends should read about this unselfish man. I know she didn't ask me to call out her husband's name, but those of us who knew Mickey knew that he loved Congressman Emerson and Congressman Hall. They had a passion for finding out how can we stop the devastation of hunger. So they circled around programs that dealt with it, programs like Food for Peace or the Select Committee on Hunger or a number of other programs around the Agriculture appropriations, not to waste money but to partner between the great agricultural agrarian society of the United States, and its ability to grow food, to also be able to provide for those who cannot.

Do I have to say it again? We buy the food from our farmers. Let me make it very clear. In the very places where, as I showed earlier today, the devastation of tornadoes and floods, these people are trying to come back. Some areas did not suffer. They're trying to get their goods to market. It cuts here in the very jobs that we are saying that we want to keep. We're cutting jobs. We're throwing people out of work, the work that farmers love. You try to get a farmer off his land or her land. They don't want to go because they love the soil. They love producing food. They love helping people. Yet my friend wants to come and cut this program that creates jobs, buys the food, and sends it to starving, dying children.

I don't understand. In the legacy of our friends, some of them you did not know, but if you read about them, you will understand their passion and their heart. Mickey Leland used to bring us to tears because he would leave the devastation of Fifth Ward, Houston, where there was poverty, and he'd get on an airplane to deliver food to the dying around the world. He lost his life in the course of delivering food.

My final word, Madam Chairman, is to ask my colleagues not to support this amendment and to support Food for Peace and support the underlying message of providing the jobs and a helping hand.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chairman, I oppose this.

I want to say to my friends who have offered it, I did support this budget on the House floor and did support this 302(b) allocation in full committee. However, as I pointed out several times to my Democrat friends during the course of the debate today, the only budget that has passed is the Ryan budget. The President's budget failed in the Senate 97–0. The RSC budget fell on the House floor. The Congressional Black Caucus budget fell on the House floor. The Progressive Caucus budget fell on the House floor.

Our job is to try to move this under the circumstances that we have and the restraints that we have. The bill before us represents a cut in discretionary money of 13.4 percent, which is one of the largest cuts that we will be considering in the 12 appropriation bills.

I want to point out also that in terms of P.L. 480, that account alone has been cut 31 percent. And I met with the World Food Program three different times now and certainly expressed lots of concerns about America's role around the globe. We need to be engaged in the countries that we are engaged in. Sometimes this program is oversold as national security, which I believe it contributes to. It is not necessarily everything people want it to be in national security, but it is a program that keeps America engaged around the world and therefore promotes stability around the world. And when you have instability, there is a concern in terms of national security. It also actually does have an implication for the merchant marine because there's a cargo preference clause to it. It keeps the American merchant marine healthy, and those are the ships

that take our military equipment overseas during engagements such as what we have going in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Ms. JACKSON LEE had raised some of the points about the war. I voted for the Kucinich amendment the other day because I do not think we should be in Libya at this time. I'm very concerned that that's going to be one of those classic cases of mission creep, that right now we're saying no troops on the ground, but after we get through blowing up their buildings, who do you think is going to rebuild it? It's going to be America. So that mission is going to morph into troops on the ground in one form or another. That's why I thought the Kucinich amendment was appropriate.

I want to just conclude, though, that I think the spirit of the gentlemen—and they're very consistent in terms of their fiscal restraint, but, again, the only budget that has passed any body is the Ryan budget.

□ 2240

One of the balancing acts of this, if you go too far, you lose votes; if you don't go far enough, you lose votes. The Ryan budget got over the finish line and did not get all the Republicans voting for it, so I'm going to have to oppose this amendment, but I want to say to my friends, I appreciate the vigor in which you've offered it and your consistency on things.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Wyoming is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I yield to the gentleman from Utah.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Thank you. I will be brief, Madam Chair. I recognize the spirit in which you are doing this, and I appreciate the process and the back-and-forth.

I did want to say for the record, I would join with the gentlewoman from Texas, and I have advocated for a long time that we pull out of Afghanistan and that we put that towards deficit reduction. But I also think we have to bring back discretionary spending even further.

And I would like to mention to this body that really what happens with the so-called Ryan budget, the budget that this House passed, is that sets ceilings but it doesn't set floors, and I believe that one of the greatest threats in security to our future is the out-of-control debt and deficit that this country is encompassing.

Let's also remember that we spend in the neighborhood of $40 billion on U.S. aid. We haven't been able to take care of our own pocketbooks in our own country, and so it's very difficult to justify not only a very healthy and robust USAID budget—by the way, having conducted oversight is not necessarily accountable. You can't go back and actually look at the accounting and see where all this money is flowing and what it's doing. But let's also remember that then we still have tens of billions of dollars to help people across the world. We have 149 countries in this world that are getting USAID money. They're getting aid from the United States of America through various programs.

So, again, I would just want to briefly say I do think we can do better. I think we have to do better. The out-of-control spending in the past puts us in a perilous position where we spend $600 million a day just in interest on our debt. And so when I look at $1.8 billion in reduction and I look at the fact that our interest payment is $600 million a day, the best thing we could probably do for the world and certainly for ourselves is to get that deficit under control. We could do a lot more good in this world if we were to take care of our own financial pocketbooks, and we have not yet done that.

I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me. I appreciate the spirit of this body allowing me to add this extra comment.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Utah will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. BROUN OF GEORGIA

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Madam Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 8, line 15, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $7,000,000)''.

Page 80, line 2, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $7,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Madam Chairman, I rise to offer my amendment that would reduce the budget for the USDA's Economic Research Service by $7 million. We don't know what's going to happen with the previous amendment, but whether it passes or fails, this would cut another $7 million. It's just a modest 10 percent that would help end some of the duplicative research the USDA is currently conducting.

For example, the USDA has four separate services that conduct research, as Mr. CHAFFETZ has already spoken about here on the floor. All four of these entities have numerous overlapping issues, and it would be more fiscally responsible to simply consolidate them, and I wish we had done so.

The American people have demanded that we cut the outrageous spending that's going on here in Washington, and we must cut the spending in every corner of the budget possible. They deserve our very best efforts in being good stewards of their tax dollars. I urge my colleagues to support my amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. You know, it's very easy to just go through and start cutting these services because they sound like they're sort of bureaucracy offices, but, in fact, we've been on the committee a long time and we get, you know, oversight of these budgets. We get the Economic Research Service to come before us. And I remember a couple of years ago when they were before us, and I think the committee really got engaged because this is the research service that does the study on the WIC program, what the economic effects are, does the study on the economic conditions of rural America, something that's totally ignored. We've been finding out from them that essentially rural America has been in a recession for the last 10 years, maybe even a depression.

So, if you're going to have strategies which are going to include the Federal Government as part of your strategy, it's also going to include local and State government, you've got to have the economic data on which to build those strategies. And I think to just go and take $7 million out of there because you can and get no benefit out of it and hurt what they do, I mean, these services, whether they be the Economic Research, that information is also used in our marketing activity.

Now, it's a little bit different than the census stuff that we talked about earlier, but I think that this is really a cut that does a lot more harm than the gentleman who's introducing it intends to do, and I think if he really understood what the full scope of the Economic Research Service was he wouldn't ask that he take 10 percent out of that Department just merely to reduce the amount of money that we're spending.

So I oppose this amendment, and I think it does big harm to rural America.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BROUN).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

For necessary expenses of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, $149,500,000, of which up to $40,000,000 shall be available until expended for the Census of Agriculture.

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses of the Agricultural Research Service and for acquisition of lands by donation, exchange, or purchase at a nominal cost not to exceed $100, and for land exchanges where the lands exchanged shall be of equal value or shall be equalized by a payment of money to the grantor which shall not exceed 25 percent of the total value of the land or interests transferred out of Federal ownership, $993,345,000: *Provided*, That appropriations hereunder shall be available for the operation and maintenance of aircraft and the purchase of not to exceed one for replacement only: *Provided further*, That appropriations hereunder shall be available pursuant to 7 U.S.C. 2250 for the construction, alteration, and repair of buildings and improvements, but unless otherwise provided, the cost of constructing any one building shall not exceed $375,000, except for headhouses or greenhouses which shall each be limited to $1,200,000, and except for 10 buildings to be constructed or improved at a cost not to exceed $750,000 each, and the cost of altering any one building during the fiscal year shall not exceed 10 percent of the current replacement value of the building or $375,000, whichever is greater: *Provided further*, That the limitations on alterations contained in this Act shall not apply to modernization or replacement of existing facilities at Beltsville, Maryland: *Provided further*, That appropriations hereunder shall be available for granting easements at the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center: *Provided further*, That the foregoing limitations shall not apply to replacement of buildings needed to carry out the Act of April 24, 1948 (21 U.S.C. 113a): *Provided further*, That funds may be received from any State, other political subdivision, organization, or individual for the purpose of establishing or operating any research facility or research project of the Agricultural Research Service, as authorized by law.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. NUGENT

Mr. NUGENT. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 9, line 5, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(increased by $2,000,000)''.

Page 48, line 11, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(reduced by $2,500,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NUGENT. Madam Chair, every night millions of families sit down to meals where ingredients are produced here in the United States. The Agricultural Research Service is a vital part of our Federal Government's continued efforts to help farmers, producers and, ultimately, consumers.

I firmly believe that the Federal Government has a terrible spending problem and that tough decisions must be made.

□ 2250

I have the utmost respect for Chairman KINGSTON and all of the members of the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee. They have done a great job of crafting this piece of legislation.

My amendment would reduce $2.5 million from the Foreign Agricultural Service and transfer $2 million of that money to the Agricultural Research Service. By adding these funds back to ARS's budget, we will be helping guarantee that our farmers remain competitive with farmers from other nations. We should be supporting increased food production here in America and maintain our domestic independence in this area of our economy and not increasing our usage and demand for foreign agricultural imports. There is still important work to be done by ARS, and that must be continued. There have been significant cuts made to the budget of ARS that jeopardize research already in progress.

During my 5 months in Congress, I have had the great pleasure to meet and interact with many farmers and ranchers in my district. These men and women are some of the hardest workers that I know. They are the first up and the last to go to bed. Research must continue to be funded in order to guarantee that America's agriculture community is independent, that it remains the most productive and the greatest agricultural producer in the world.

ARS's work has resulted in an oat-based cholesterol fighter, a replacement for blood plasma, a biofungicide to help prevent apple and pear rot—and I'm sure on grapes from California—and is a method to increase production of penicillin and other antibiotics.

As you can see, ARS's research successes are not just limited to the agricultural community, but they help all Americans. So my goal is to make sure that America remains strong as an agricultural producer, that we don't outsource agricultural production to other nations to provide our food, and maintain a safe food source for Americans.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. I am very interested. One of your colleagues just cut the heck out of this Department, and you want to add money back in. I am kind of for that. But I am kind of curious because I understand—and the question is, do you intend in the general provisions of this bill later to add some language regarding cattle research?

Mr. NUGENT. We have withdrawn any other amendment. There is no other amendment.

Mr. FARR. So there is no other amendment? This hasn't to do with an earmark to try to stop closure of—

Mr. NUGENT. Sir, there is no other amendment. We withdraw that amendment.

Mr. FARR. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. I want to clarify some things on this that are important. Number one, I want to make sure that we all realize that ARS is currently, in this bill, funded at $993 million and that the Foreign Ag Service is at $175 million. And the Foreign Ag Service actually does have an invaluable role in representing U.S. agriculture overseas. And it's not all about importing their products as much as it is working and making sure that it's kind of a two-way street.

But I wanted to yield to the gentleman if he wanted some more time to explain it. My inclination is to take the amendment—although ARS, as I am saying, has a pretty big funding level already. And I just wanted to invite you to speak a little bit more and maybe warm us up a little, because I am like Mr. FARR. There's a lot of criticism of ARS. So somebody coming in to increase it, the amendment is paid for. I don't know that $2 million is going to help significantly one way or the other.

Mr. NUGENT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. NUGENT. Our goal with regards to strengthening ARS is to make sure that we strengthen the American ability to produce goods within this country. It is simple and focused. It's about keeping American agriculture strong. While we may be asking to reduce what we send overseas, I think it's more important that we have a strong agricultural base here.

I will tell you, just in my home State, that agriculture accounts for over a third of the income to the State of Florida. It is one of the three legs that support Florida. One is tourism, the other one is industry, but the third one that has been there for Florida in this downturn economy has been agriculture. So our goal is to make sure that Americans can depend upon American sources of food that are safe for Americans.

Mr. KINGSTON. I will accept the amendment. I want to say to my friend from Florida, we're going to be looking at all this as the process goes on, and we'll certainly work with you. We, Mr. FARR and I and the committee, do appreciate all the research that the ARS does and all of the good things. And I am glad to know that you are following them because I do think it's a significant agency within the USDA.

Mr. NUGENT. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. NUGENT).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE OF TEXAS

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 9, line 5, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $681,750,000'').

Page 44, line 19, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $681,750,000'').

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I reserve a point of order on the gentlewoman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

The gentlewoman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. As the gentleman rises, I ask myself the question and I ask this body, Who will speak for the children? And that's why my amendment attempts to fully fund the Women, Infants, and Children program that provides food for the Nation's children. It provides Federal grants to States for supplemental foods, nutrition, education, and health care referrals to low-income pregnant and postpartum women, infants, and children up to 5 years old.

We must remember that children have always been the largest category of WIC participants. Of the 8.7 million people who received WIC benefits, each month in fiscal year 2008, about 4.33 million were children, and 2.2 million were infants. This bill cuts $650 million out of WIC, and I am so glad my good friend from Georgia—and I appreciate his friendship—just got up and said the Agricultural Research Service is pretty darn well funded, $900 million.

I am simply asking to address the question of the staggering devastation of malnutrition in our children. And I have indicated that when you look at worldwide numbers, malnutrition can kill. But here in the United States, there are children that go to bed hungry. There are women that do not eat properly. There are babies that do not get nourishment.

In Texas alone, between 23,000 and 40,000 people are expected to be dropped from the WIC program if the funding is not restored; and each and every State in the Union is going to receive that kind of devastating impact. Can you imagine 40,000 women, infants, and children not being able to eat because we won't restore full funding? Texas has three of the top 40 districts with the highest national food hardship rates; and in the 18th Congressional District, there are 159,000 food insecure people. The food insecurity rate is 23 percent, and Texas stands 32 in the Nation out of 435 districts. We are 32 in food insecurity.

So, let me just say, alongside of obesity, eating wrong, we have to face the actual question of hunger. Children who are served by the WIC program in Texas are less likely to eat fast food in comparison to children who are not in this program.

□ 2300

Again, I want you to look at this picture. Healthy children need to eat healthy. And I ask my colleagues why, in fact, would we not want to fully fund the program of women and infant children?

I will say that the impact of not eating healthy is obesity and poor health. This healthy baby, healthy-looking baby has a future that is undetermined when you have an issue of lack of healthy food and access to such.

So $650 million, when we're, in essence, funding research for $900 million, I believe you can share a little, because the WIC program is beneficial in helping the most vulnerable in our country.

I ask the question: Who will speak for the children? It is important that the WIC program, 9.2 million through 10,000 clinics, among this group, 4.9 million children, 2.1 million infants, and 1 million women have the ability to be served around the Nation. It's a complementary program, having healthy mothers, healthy pregnant mothers to give birth to healthy babies, to raise healthy children, not obese, nourished and ready to be leaders in this Nation. Who are we if we are not going to speak for our children?

And I ask my colleagues to consider waiving procedural issues to ensure that children are served. I believe that is an important issue. And in my district, in the 18th Congressional District, with 1,000 census tracts of people who are food insecure, I am arguing vigorously for the full funding of the WIC program to help our women, our infants, and their children.

Who will speak for our children? What will their future be, and how will they lead this country if we do not invest with them today?

I ask my colleagues to support this amendment.

I rise today in support of my amendment to H.R. 2112 ''Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2112,'' as it restores full funding to the Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) program.

As the Founder of the Children's Caucus and a Member of the Women's Caucus, I have firmly stood in support of the nutritional needs of our Nation's families. As a country we must protect and safeguard the health and nutrition of our Nation's low-income families. Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) provides Federal grants to states for supplemental foods, nutrition education, and health care referrals to low-income pregnant and postpartum women, infants, and children up to age 5 who are found to be at nutritional risk. During the final quarter of Fiscal Year 2009, the number of women, infants, and children receiving WIC benefits each month reached approximately 9.3 million. We must remember that children have always been the largest category of WIC participants. Of the 8.7 million people who received WIC benefits each month in Fiscal year 2008, about 4.33 million were children and 2.22 million were infants.

WIC is essential because it affords many women, especially women of color in lower income brackets, the opportunity to care for themselves and their newborns after birth. Without programs such as WIC, many mothers would not be able to maintain a healthy lifestyle during pregnancies and after childbirth.

Because of WIC, mothers can afford the nutritional foods they need to sustain their pregnancies and avoid miscarriages, stillbirths and defects caused by malnourishment during pregnancy.

Today, I am proud to support a full restoration of funding to WIC. This program, which is distinctly American, demonstrates that we place a high value on feeding our Nation's children and tending to the needs of our Nation's poor.

Thomas Jefferson wrote in the Declaration of Independence that we are endowed ''with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. . . .'' I believe that it is no coincidence that life is listed first—for without it, the Founders realized, no other rights can be realized. Over many years, the millions of Americans who could not access medical services were denied their right to life—a life with access to quality and affordable health care.

Let me set the record straight, WIC is good for the American people and will go a long way in ensuring access to quality and affordable care to those millions of Americans who will need access to proper nutrition. WIC helps to ensure that our country will not succumb to one of the most staggering causes of death in children around the world: Malnutrition. Malnutrition remains a significant problem worldwide, particularly among children. It should not be a problem within the United States; that is why we have programs like WIC. According to the United Nations World Food Programme, severe acute malnutrition affects an estimated 20 million children under the age of five worldwide and is responsible in whole or in part for more than half of all deaths of children. Malnutrition kills approximately one million children each year, or an average of one every thirty seconds. This is not the direction we want to take the United States.

Madam Chair, when I stand here today and reflect upon what we are about to embark upon, I cannot help but think of some of the last words that the Great Senator Ted Kennedy shared in his letter to President Obama. The Senator said, ''And so because of your (Obama's) vision and resolve, I came to believe that soon, very soon, affordable health coverage will be available to all, in an America where the state of a family's health will never again depend on the amount of a family's wealth. And while I will not see the victory, I was able to look forward and know that we will—yes we will—fulfill the promise of health care in America as a right and not a privilege.'' Well, Senator, your life's work shall today be proven to not be in vain. I continue to stand by protecting the health needs of low income families. And, yes, this program ensures the health of infants and children will never again depend on the amount of their family's income.

In the words of the great President John F. Kennedy, ''the voters selected us, in short, because they had confidence in our judgment and our ability to exercise that judgment from a position where we could determine what were their own best interests, as a part of the nation's interest.''

Madam Chair, while my colleagues on the other side of the aisle seem to believe that

without a cut to WIC this will harm Americans, nothing could be further from the truth. This bill is indeed in their best interests:

There are 110 million school-aged children suffering from hunger every day, and they are counting on America's leadership and generosity to provide them with an opportunity to break the cycle of poverty. The WIC program provides that leadership and generosity and it is for this reason that I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for restoring full funding to WIC.

In the words of the great civil rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., ''We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now.'' We cannot wait. We will not wait to protect the lives of our children. We can not delay in providing the most vulnerable citizens of this great Nation access to proper nutrition.

FACTS ON WIC—THE 18TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

In Texas, between 23,000 and 40,000 people are expected to be dropped from the WIC program if the funding levels are not restored.

Texas has 3 of the top top 40 districts with the highest national food hardship rates. In the 18th Congressional district there are 159,000 food insecure people. The food insecurity rate is 23% and ranks 32nd nationally.

WIC COMBATS OBESITY

Let us remember that 1 in 3 American adults is overweight or obese and more than 9 million children are struggling with obesity. WIC aims to improve the eating habits of Americans, particularly our children through programs that provide children with healthy food. At its core, H.R. 2112 decreases funding for nutrition programs for children.

Obesity is associated with 35 major diseases including chronic and life-threatening conditions such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease. It is important to keep our nation healthy by providing access to high consumption of vegetables and fruits to the future of our great country, our children. By supporting WIC we assure a healthy consumption of nutritional foods for children whose only crime is that their families are poor.

Children who are served by the WIC program in Texas are less likely to eat fast food in comparison to children who are not in the program. These children are also more likely to eat home cooked meals. When children reduce their consumption of less fast food then they drastically lower their chances of developing heart problems, diabetes, and obesity which could again end up saving billions of dollars in the healthcare system. All the health issues that are currently contributing to health disparities among minorities in this country.

Certain minorities have a higher rates of diabetes-related complications and death, in some instances by as much as 50 percent more than the total population. It is truly an epidemic. Combating obesity in from childhood utilizing programs like WIC is vital to decreasing health disparities.

24% of Texans were obese in 2001, the 3rd highest rate in the nation. Nearly 31% of African American girls in the 4th grade were overweight and 52% were overweight or ''at risk of overweight'' in Texas in 2001. 13% of Houston high school students are overweight and 17% are at risk. Over 71% of African American Texans are overweight or obese.

Over 34% of African American women are obese, compared to 19% of white women.

44% of African American women are projected to be obese by 2020, and 47% by 2040.

OBESITY

Although the obesity rates among all Americans are alarming, as Chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, I am especially concerned about the childhood obesity epidemic among African-Americans. More than 40 percent of African-American teenagers are overweight, and nearly 25 percent are obese.

When ethnicity and income are considered, African-American youngsters from low-income families have a higher risk for obesity than those from higher-income families. Since the mid-1970s, the prevalence of overweight and obesity has increased sharply for both adults and children. Eighty percent of black women and 67 percent of black men are overweight or obese. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), among African-American male adults aged 20–74 years the prevalence of obesity increased from 15.0% in 1980 survey to 32.9% in the 2004.

There were also increases in overweight among children and teens. For children aged 2–5 years, the prevalence of overweight increased from 5.0% to 13.9%; for those aged 6–11 years, prevalence increased from 6.5% to 18.8%; and for those aged 12–19 years, prevalence increased from 5.0% to 17.4%.

Government reports indicate that an estimated 17 percent of children and adolescents aged 2–19 are obese. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, African American and Mexican American adolescents ages 12–19 are more likely to be overweight, at 21 percent and 23 percent respectively, than non-Hispanic white adolescents who are 14 percent overweight. In children 6–11 years old, 22 percent of Mexican American children are overweight, compared to 20 percent of African American children and 14 percent of non-Hispanic white children.

IMPACT OF OBESITY ON HOUSTON, TEXAS

The obesity epidemic has also heavily impacted my district in the city of Houston. In 2005, Men's Fitness Magazine ranked Houston the Fattest City in the Nation. In 2006, Houston ranked as number five and in 2007, it was ranked the sixth fattest city in the Nation.

These statistics underscore why we must continue to vigorously identify ways to address the childhood obesity crisis, by starting with programs such as WIC, that provides proper nutrition to low income families.

As the debate over how to address the rising childhood obesity epidemic continues, it is important to continue to target and aid children who are nutritionally at risk.

H.R. 2112 CUTS MORE THAN $650 MILLION FROM THE WIC PROGRAM

Since this bill seeks to cut more than $650 million from the WIC program, countless scores of women, children, and infants will also no longer have the same access to healthy food. According to the National WIC Association between 200,000–350,000 people will be cut from the program. That is hundreds of thousands of women, infants, and children who will not get the assistance they need. This is not simply about adding and subtracting numbers on a page this is a family tragedy. We cannot ignore the nutritional needs of our children; we should not starve low income families. As our economy awakens from this long, cold, slumber we must ensure that our nation's children are fed. This is a moral question.

As financial hardships continue to impact millions of families, now is not the time for us to turn our backs on them. This is the time to show our compassion. I urge the full funding of WIC, because it will impact hundreds of thousands of people nationally, but also because it will end up costing billions more in the long run if we will have a nation of unhealthy families. Consider the consequences of children who lack the necessary nutrition as they grow into adults who have high health costs.

THE WIC PROGRAM HELPS FAMILIES

The WIC program has been beneficial in helping some of the most vulnerable members of our country.

Among the WIC's goals is to improve health care access for low and moderate income women and children at risk of developing health problems which include obesity and type 2 diabetes.

WIC served 9.2 million through 10,000 clinics. Among this group were 4.9 million children, 2.1 million infants, and 1 million women.

WIC works with pregnant mothers to help reduce costs of prenatal care. Preterm births cost the U.S. over $26 billion a year. As a result of pregnant women getting the services they need, the National WIC Association states that Medicaid costs are reduced on average between $12,000 and $15,000 for every low birth-weight incident prevented. It is also estimated that $3.6 billion would be saved if current U.S. exclusive breastfeeding rates increased to at least 50% at 6 months.

FACTS ON WIC CUTS

If WIC funds are not fully restored the impact on low income families will be devastating. An estimated 200,000 to 350,000 will be cut from the WIC program. That's 200,000 to 350,000 low income Americans who will be denied access to nutrition.

The cuts in the WIC program touches every state in this country. In my State of Texas between 23,000 and 40,000 people will be left out in the cold. We should be able to provide food to the young children of our country.

Of the top 40 districts with the highest national food hardship rates, Texas has 3 of them. In the 18th Congressional district there are 159,000 food insecure people. The food insecurity rate is 23% and ranks 32d nationally.

In 2005, in Harris County, there were 62 pregnant women who had prenatal care in the first trimester. In the State of Texas there were 64 women. Without the WIC program, many of these women might not have been able to get the services they needed.

WIC children in Texas are less likely to eat fast food over non-WIC children. WIC children are also more likely to eat home cooked meals compared to non-WIC children. Children who eat less fast food drastically lower their chances of developing heart problems, diabetes, and obesity which could end up saving billions of dollars in the health care system.

As financial hardships continue to impact millions of families, now is not the time for us to turn our backs on them. Now is the time to show them that we care. I urge opposition to

this bill, not only because it will negatively impact hundreds of thousands of people nationally, but also because it will end up costing billions more in the long run. The American people are wondering when their bailout will come years after we saved Wall Street from the brink of destruction. This bill sends them a message that that day is not a priority of the Federal Government.

We must continue to fight for pregnant mothers and low-income families and so I urge for full funding to be restored to the WIC program.

I yield back the balance of my time.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I insist on my point of order.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for that purpose.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, the amendment may not be considered en bloc under clause 2(f) of rule XXI because the amendment proposes to increase the level of funding and outlays in the bill, and outlays in budget authority have to be equal.

I ask for a ruling from the Chair.

The Acting CHAIR. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the gentleman's point of order?

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I would, Madam Chairman.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Texas is recognized.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Well, outlays have to do with the evenhandedness of spending at the same time, which section you take the monies out and which section you put them in.

Again, the point that I want to make to this body is that my focus is on keeping our children in this country from being malnourished and pregnant mothers from not having the access to good healthy food that they need to give birth to a healthy child.

And I've asked the question before, in the instance of speaking for our children and saving our children, a procedural waiver is in order. This is a procedural question. I have actually taken money from a legitimate account, and that is the Agriculture Research Service that my own friend and colleague had said is funded quite well. Now we've added another $2 million to the research program. $902 million.

And I'm simply asking for a measure of that amount to help provide care and nourishment for our children. I believe it is appropriate to eliminate a procedural, if you will, flaw that only speaks to the timing of spending to be able to provide for the children of America. That's what agriculture is all about: our farmers, our families who need to eat good food, our undernourished and impoverished communities which are aplenty.

As I spoke earlier today, those communities that are experiencing disasters and those mothers who are now pregnant and who need access to good food, we need to be able to not cut off in the State of Texas, in my district, 40,000 or so individuals that will not be able to be part of the WIC program because we're talking about a procedural flaw.

And so, Madam Chairperson, I am suggesting that this amendment is in order, and I'd ask my colleagues to consider a waiver. But I'm also asking the Chairwoman to rule in my favor so that the people of America most vulnerable will have access to quality food and a healthy life.

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair is prepared to rule on the gentleman from Georgia's point of order.

To be considered en bloc pursuant to clause 2(f) of rule XXI, an amendment must not propose to increase the levels of budget authority or outlays in the bill. Because the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas proposes a net increase in the level of outlays in the bill, as argued by the chairman of the Subcommittee on Appropriations, it may not avail itself of clause 2(f) to address portions of the bill not yet read.

The point of order is sustained.

The amendment is not in order.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

For payments to agricultural experiment stations, for cooperative forestry and other research, for facilities, and for other expenses, $600,800,000, as follows: to carry out the provisions of the Hatch Act of 1887 (7 U.S.C. 361a–i), $208,000,000; for grants for cooperative forestry research (16 U.S.C. 582a through a–7), $30,000,000; for payments to eligible institutions (7 U.S.C. 3222), $48,000,000, provided that each institution receives no less than $1,000,000; for special grants (7 U.S.C. 450i(c)), $1,250,000; for competitive grants for Integrated Pest Management and Biological Control (7 U.S.C. 450i(c)), $14,000,000; for competitive grants (7 U.S.C. 450i(b)), $229,500,000, to remain available until expended; for the support of animal health and disease programs (7 U.S.C. 3195), $4,000,000; for a program pursuant to section 1415A of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3151a), $4,200,000, to remain available until expended; for a higher education multicultural scholars program (7 U.S.C. 3152(b)(5)), $1,000,000, to remain available until expended (7 U.S.C. 2209b); for an education grants program for Hispanic–serving Institutions (7 U.S.C. 3241), $7,800,000; for competitive grants for the purpose of carrying out all provisions of 7 U.S.C. 3156 to individual eligible institutions or consortia of eligible institutions in Alaska and in Hawaii, with funds awarded equally to each of the States of Alaska and Hawaii, $2,700,000; for secondary education, 2-year post-secondary education, and agriculture in the K-12 classroom (7 U.S.C. 3152(j)), $900,000; for aquaculture grants (7 U.S.C. 3322), $3,300,000; for sustainable agriculture research and education (7 U.S.C. 5811), $12,300,000; for a program of capacity building grants (7 U.S.C. 3152(b)(4)) to institutions eligible to receive funds under 7 U.S.C. 3221 and 3222, $16,400,000, to remain available until expended (7 U.S.C. 2209b); for payments to the 1994 Institutions pursuant to section 534(a)(1) of Public Law 103–382, $2,800,000; for resident instruction grants for insular areas under section 1491 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3363), $900,000; for distance education grants for insular areas under section 1490 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3362), $750,000; for competitive grants for policy research (7 U.S.C. 3155), $3,000,000; and for necessary expenses of Research and Education Activities, $10,000,000, of which $2,500,000 for the Research, Education, and Economics Information System and $2,000,000 for the Electronic Grants Information System, are to remain available until expended.

NATIVE AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS ENDOWMENT FUND

For the Native American Institutions Endowment Fund authorized by Public Law 103–382 (7 U.S.C. 301 note), $11,880,000, to remain available until expended.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

For payments to States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, Micronesia, the Northern Marianas, and American Samoa, $411,200,000, as follows: payments for cooperative extension work under the Smith–Lever Act, to be distributed under sections 3(b) and 3(c) of said Act, and under section 208(c) of Public Law 93–471, for retirement and employees' compensation costs for extension agents, $259,200,000; payments for extension work at the 1994 Institutions under the Smith–Lever Act (7 U.S.C. 343(b)(3)), $3,600,000; payments for the nutrition and family education program for low-income areas under section 3(d) of the Act, $58,000,000; payments for the pest management program under section 3(d) of the Act, $8,400,000; payments for New Technologies for Agriculture Extension under section 3(d) of the Act, $1,400,000; payments to upgrade research, extension, and teaching facilities at institutions eligible to receive funds under 7 U.S.C. 3221 and 3222, $16,700,000, to remain available until expended; payments for youth-at-risk programs under section 3(d) of the Smith–Lever Act, $7,100,000; payments for carrying out the provisions of the Renewable Resources Extension Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 1671 et seq.), $3,400,000; payments for the federally-recognized Tribes Extension Program under section 3(d) of the Smith–Lever Act, $2,600,000; payments for sustainable agriculture programs under section 3(d) of the Act, $4,000,000; payments for rural health and safety education as authorized by section 502(i) of Public Law 92–419 (7 U.S.C. 2662(i)), $1,500,000; payments for cooperative extension work by eligible institutions (7 U.S.C. 3221), $36,000,000, provided that each institution receives no less than $1,000,000; for grants to youth organizations pursuant to 7 U.S.C. 7630, $1,500,000; for payments to carry out the food animal residue avoidance database program as authorized by 7 U.S.C. 7642, $1,000,000; and for necessary expenses of Extension Activities, $6,800,000.

INTEGRATED ACTIVITIES

For the integrated research, education, and extension grants program authorized under section 406 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7626), including necessary administrative expenses, $8,000,000, as follows: for a competitive organic transition program, $4,000,000; and for the regional pest management centers program $4,000,000.

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR MARKETING AND REGULATORY PROGRAMS

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs, $760,000.

ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, including

up to $30,000 for representation allowances and for expenses pursuant to the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4085), $790,000,000, of which $2,000,000, to be available until expended, shall be available for the control of outbreaks of insects, plant diseases, animal diseases and for control of pest animals and birds (''contingency fund'') to the extent necessary to meet emergency conditions; of which $16,000,000, to remain available until expended, shall be used for the cotton pests program for cost share purposes or for debt retirement for active eradication zones; of which $32,500,000, to remain available until expended, shall be for Animal Health Technical Services; of which $54,000,000, to remain available until expended, shall be used to support avian health; of which $4,200,000, to remain available until expended, shall be for information technology infrastructure; of which $147,000,000, to remain available until expended, shall be for specialty crop pests; of which, $9,000,000, to remain available until expended, shall be for field crop and rangeland ecosystem pests; of which $52,000,000, to remain available until expended, shall be for tree and wood pests; of which $2,300,000, to remain available until expended, shall be for the National Veterinary Stockpile; of which up to $1,500,000, to remain available until expended, shall be for the scrapie program for indemnities; of which $1,000,000, to remain available until expended, shall be for wildlife services methods development; of which $1,500,000, to remain available until expended, shall be for the wildlife damage management program for aviation safety; and up to 25 percent of the screwworm program shall remain available until expended: *Provided*, That no funds shall be used to formulate or administer a brucellosis eradication program for the current fiscal year that does not require minimum matching by the States of at least 40 percent: *Provided further*, That this appropriation shall be available for the operation and maintenance of aircraft and the purchase of not to exceed four, of which two shall be for replacement only: *Provided further*, That, in addition, in emergencies which threaten any segment of the agricultural production industry of this country, the Secretary may transfer from other appropriations or funds available to the agencies or corporations of the Department such sums as may be deemed necessary, to be available only in such emergencies for the arrest and eradication of contagious or infectious disease or pests of animals, poultry, or plants, and for expenses in accordance with sections 10411 and 10417 of the Animal Health Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 8310 and 8316) and sections 431 and 442 of the Plant Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 7751 and 7772), and any unexpended balances of funds transferred for such emergency purposes in the preceding fiscal year shall be merged with such transferred amounts: *Provided further*, That appropriations hereunder shall be available pursuant to law (7 U.S.C. 2250) for the repair and alteration of leased buildings and improvements, but unless otherwise provided the cost of altering any one building during the fiscal year shall not exceed 10 percent of the current replacement value of the building.

In fiscal year 2012, the agency is authorized to collect fees to cover the total costs of providing technical assistance, goods, or services requested by States, other political subdivisions, domestic and international organizations, foreign governments, or individuals, provided that such fees are structured such that any entity's liability for such fees is reasonably based on the technical assistance, goods, or services provided to the entity by the agency, and such fees shall be reimbursed to this account, to remain available until expended, without further appropriation, for providing such assistance, goods, or services.

BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

For plans, construction, repair, preventive maintenance, environmental support, improvement, extension, alteration, and purchase of fixed equipment or facilities, as authorized by 7 U.S.C. 2250, and acquisition of land as authorized by 7 U.S.C. 428a, $3,200,000, to remain available until expended.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. CLARKE OF MICHIGAN

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 17, line 20, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(reduced by $1,000,000)''.

Page 17, line 25, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(increased by $1,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Michigan is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Madam Chair, this amendment would restore $1 million to the Microbiological Data Program. Now, this is a USDA program that collects and tests fruits and vegetables, domestic and imported fruits and vegetables for bacteria that could cause illness and even death. Recent tests have discovered salmonella and strains of E. coli similar to that found in the German food supply that resulted in the deaths of 24 people and which infected over 2,400. So this amendment is important in order to protect the public from food-borne pathogens that could make the public sick or that could put innocent lives at risk.

I do urge your support.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. I move to strike the last word and oppose the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I'm continuing to study this. And you know, fortunately, one of the great things about the open rule that we've had is we've had a lot of good debate tonight, had a lot of speakers. I think we broke the record tonight on the speech contest about WIC. I'm not sure who Mr. FARR will be awarding, giving that award to, but we had a lot of good contenders.

Mr. CLARKE, unfortunately, I just, within the last minute, have seen this, and I'm not sure that it will do what you're saying or what your intention is, and so I'm going to oppose the amendment.

I will promise to work with you. It's a million dollar transfer, and don't know that it accomplishes what you want. I don't know that it doesn't accomplish what you want. And I don't necessarily think it causes a big disruption in the bill either. But for right now, I'm going to have to oppose it. And let me continue to research it, and maybe as the process goes through we can see what we can do to work with you and Mr. FARR on it.

□ 2310

We are very concerned about food safety and the pathogens and the situation in Europe, and we want to make sure that we're studying this stuff very closely ourselves. So I reluctantly oppose it for the time being.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Wyoming is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Madam Chairman, I rise to oppose the amendment not because it is unworthy, but because I believe that there are funds elsewhere in the bill that could be used to cover the services and research that the gentleman requests. I refer the gentleman to page 10, the National Institute of Food and Agricultural Research and Education Activities. Those activities include: for ag experiment stations, $600,800,000; for grants payable to eligible institutions, $48 million, provided that each institution receives no less than $1 million; for special grants, $1.2 million; for competitive grants for integrated pest management and biological control, $14 million; for competitive grants, $229.5 million to remain available until expended.

This is sloshing with research dollars, sloshing. I think there's plenty in this bill to cover the worthy research that the gentleman has requested, so I urge my colleagues to defeat the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Madam Chair, the funding source that I'm using to offset the cost of this amendment I believe won't undercut the vital mission of this agency, unlike the other sources that have been mentioned. However, I am willing to work with the majority on negotiating a proper funding source. All I care, the bottom line, is that the public is safe and that we are diligent and do the best that we can to identify these bacteria sources that could make the public sick.

Mr. KINGSTON. Will the gentleman from California yield?

Mr. FARR. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. I want to say that the concern that I have—again, not having the advantage of being able to research things thoroughly, but we're taking $1 million out of a $3 million account and putting it into a $77 million account, and it just seems disproportional at this point.

I'm wondering if during the process there might be an opportunity to emphasize that we want the Ag Marketing

Service to really be sure that they're following the E. coli situation. That would be helpful. I certainly would be interested in doing that and working with him, but I want to continue to oppose the amendment at this point.

Mr. FARR. I share your concerns, but I'd certainly like to see what we can do to accommodate my colleague.

Madam Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CLARKE).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

MARKETING SERVICES

For necessary expenses of the Agricultural Marketing Service, $77,500,000: *Provided*, That this appropriation shall be available pursuant to law (7 U.S.C. 2250) for the alteration and repair of buildings and improvements, but the cost of altering any one building during the fiscal year shall not exceed 10 percent of the current replacement value of the building. Fees may be collected for the cost of standardization activities, as established by regulation pursuant to law (31 U.S.C. 9701).

AMENDMENT NO. 9 OFFERED BY MR. BROUN OF GEORGIA

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 17, line 25, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $7,750,000)''.

Page 80, line 2, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $7,750,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Madam Chair, I rise to offer my amendment, which is simply a 10 percent cut in the Agricultural Marketing Service at the USDA.

This year, the Agricultural Marketing Service will be allocated $77.5 million for, as they state in their own Web site, ''administering programs that facilitate the efficient, fair marketing of U.S. agricultural products, including food, fiber, and specialty crops.''

Madam Chair, since I've been a Member of Congress, I have stated that the marketplace, unencumbered, is the best way to control quality, quantity, and cost of all goods and services. So we need to get the encumbrances of the Federal Government off the marketplace, and this will just take 10 percent. Our Nation's crops are no exception to this rule.

Madam Chair, I think the USDA is not giving American farmers enough credit. Our farmers are intelligent, resourceful men and women who know the best ways to market their products here and abroad. Madam Chair, when I was farming, I could market my products very well. I used to farm—I wish I could get back to it, actually. Allow these farmers to market their products without the government interference and use these funds to reduce spending.

It's absolutely critical, Madam Chair, that we reduce the outrageous spending that Congresses, both Republican and Democrat, have put in place. As Admiral Mullen, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, recently said, the greatest threat to our security is this huge debt. We absolutely have to cut spending, and this simple amendment would cut 10 percent out of this program and put it in the deficit reduction package that is part of this bill.

So I encourage my colleagues to support this simple amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Madam Chair, this amendment would really undercut the whole purpose that I was offering an additional $1 million: to help protect the American people from food-borne bacteria.

Over 2,400 people were infected in Germany by a strain of E. coli; 24 of them died. We don't want this to happen here in this country.

The gracious chairman, the gentleman from Georgia, and I agreed to work something out to better protect the public. I'm just asking if maybe you could withdraw this amendment to give us a chance to work out something here.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, I oppose this amendment.

This is a big cut out of a very important program, just indicated by Congressman CLARKE from Michigan. For all the reasons he was trying to increase the program, this amendment goes just the opposite way. It knocks 10 percent of the money that's in the program out. There will be no way that he can increase it with this and work out a deal. And for all the reasons he indicated on food safety and issues like that that are very, very important, we ought not risk the ability to respond to those needs.

□ 2320

So I think this amendment does harm, and it does more harm than the good that it intends to do. That is the reason I oppose it, and would ask for a ''no'' vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. I oppose the amendment.

I want to go back to the earlier theme I brought up when we were discussing both WIC and the Chaffetz amendment earlier tonight. With regard to what Dr. BROUN is doing, I think there is 10 percent with which you can make that argument there.

What we've been trying to do is to stack a card house on the Ryan budget. That is the only budget that has passed one House. I will point out again that the budget of the President of the United States failed in the Senate 97–0. Similarly, three other budgets failed in the Senate, and four other budgets failed in the House. There was a budget that was offered that was further cut by the Republican Study Committee, and then there were others that were less cut, the Progressive Caucus', for example.

So one of the balancing acts that this committee is trying to accomplish with this bill tonight is to reduce spending but also to get 218 votes to pass the bill so that we can continue this with the U.S. Senate, which right now has not been able to pass one single appropriations bill. They have been very remiss in their duty, so I find myself having to balance some things that, if I were a free agent, I would probably be voting for and some things I would be voting against as I just told Mr. CLARKE from Detroit in rejecting a $1 million transfer of account because I didn't know exactly what it did. I want to keep that balance there.

So, with this, I am going to oppose the 10 percent reduction offered by my friend and Georgia colleague, Dr. BROUN.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Wyoming is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LUMMIS. It appears from the text of this program, the Ag Marketing Service, that the $77.5 million appropriated may be derived from fees that are collected for the cost of standardization activities as established by regulation, because, if you look on page 18, line 9, it reads: not to exceed $61 million from fees collected shall be obligated during the current fiscal year for administrative expenses.

My question then is: Is this a fee-for-service program rather than a generally funded, taxpayer-funded program?

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. LUMMIS. Madam Chair, I ask unanimous consent to reclaim my time.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Wyoming?

There was no objection.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. The Ag Marketing Service actually gets that $77.5 million in appropriation, and in addition, has the ability to collect up to $61 million in fees. If you think about it, that's not unusual in this account. The FDA actually does the same thing. I think they get over $1 billion in fees. So some of these accounts do get an appropriation, and then they on their own can go out and get some fees, not just to supplement them, but in some cases to almost match them as the AMS has done.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BROUN).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

Not to exceed $61,000,000 (from fees collected) shall be obligated during the current fiscal year for administrative expenses: *Provided*, That if crop size is understated and/or other uncontrollable events occur, the agency may exceed this limitation by up to 10 percent with notification to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress.

FUNDS FOR STRENGTHENING MARKETS, INCOME, AND SUPPLY (SECTION 32)

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

Funds available under section 32 of the Act of August 24, 1935 (7 U.S.C. 612c), shall be used only for commodity program expenses as authorized therein, and other related operating expenses, except for: (1) transfers to the Department of Commerce as authorized by the Fish and Wildlife Act of August 8, 1956; (2) transfers otherwise provided in this Act; and (3) not more than $20,056,000 for formulation and administration of marketing agreements and orders pursuant to the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937 and the Agricultural Act of 1961.

PAYMENTS TO STATES AND POSSESSIONS

For payments to State departments of agriculture, bureaus and departments of markets, and similar agencies for marketing activities under section 204(b) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1623(b)), $1,331,000.

GRAIN INSPECTION, PACKERS AND STOCKYARDS ADMINISTRATION

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses of the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration, $37,000,000: *Provided*, That this appropriation shall be available pursuant to law (7 U.S.C. 2250) for the alteration and repair of buildings and improvements, but the cost of altering any one building during the fiscal year shall not exceed 10 percent of the current replacement value of the building.

LIMITATION ON INSPECTION AND WEIGHING SERVICES EXPENSES

Not to exceed $47,500,000 (from fees collected) shall be obligated during the current fiscal year for inspection and weighing services: *Provided*, That if grain export activities require additional supervision and oversight, or other uncontrollable factors occur, this limitation may be exceeded by up to 10 percent with notification to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress.

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOOD SAFETY

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Under Secretary for Food Safety, $689,000.

FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE

For necessary expenses to carry out services authorized by the Federal Meat Inspection Act, the Poultry Products Inspection Act, and the Egg Products Inspection Act, including not to exceed $50,000 for representation allowances and for expenses pursuant to section 8 of the Act approved August 3, 1956 (7 U.S.C. 1766), $972,028,000; and in addition, $1,000,000 may be credited to this account from fees collected for the cost of laboratory accreditation as authorized by section 1327 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 138f): *Provided*, That funds provided for the Public Health Data Communication Infrastructure system shall remain available until expended: *Provided further*, That this appropriation shall be available pursuant to law (7 U.S.C. 2250) for the alteration and repair of buildings and improvements, but the cost of altering any one building during the fiscal year shall not exceed 10 percent of the current replacement value of the building.

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FARM AND FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICES

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services, $760,000.

FARM SERVICE AGENCY

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses of the Farm Service Agency, $1,176,500,000: *Provided*, That the Secretary is authorized to use the services, facilities, and authorities (but not the funds) of the Commodity Credit Corporation to make program payments for all programs administered by the Agency: *Provided further*, That other funds made available to the Agency for authorized activities may be advanced to and merged with this account: *Provided further*, That funds made available to county committees shall remain available until expended.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. RICHARDSON

Ms. RICHARDSON. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 21, line 12, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $10,000,000'').

Page 46, line 22, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $10,000,000'').

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Madam Chairwoman, the Richardson amendment adds $10 million to the Commodity Assistance Program by reducing by the same amount from the Salaries and Expenses section of the Farm Service Agency, which will provide additional funding for the Commodities Supplemental Food Program, which provides assistance to seniors who have incomes at or below $14,157. Ninety-seven percent of all Commodities Supplemental Food Program recipients are seniors who often receive these as the only fresh food packages that might come to their homes. Many of these seniors have no means of transportation to obtain these products. These seniors also have very limited resources with which to purchase the food that they need.

Madam Chairwoman, I don't understand why those in the majority would believe that our seniors have caused our budget problems or, worse yet, are able to fix our budget problems.

The Ryan budget proposes to make seniors pay an additional $6,000 out-of-pocket for their health care needs. Second, they increase the prescription drug costs for our seniors by proposing to reopen the Medicare prescription drug doughnut hole, which Democrats closed in the last Congress. These are heartless legislative proposals that could force 136,000 seniors in the Los Angeles area to pay an additional $1.3 billion for their prescription drugs over the next decade.

Now Food for Low-Income Seniors is under attack as well. Our seniors deserve our support. They've earned it. Many of our seniors have served our country overseas during World War II, Korea and Vietnam. Their bravery and their sacrifices have made America the great country that it is. Our seniors have worked hard all of their lives to provide for their families. It is now our responsibility to help assist them.

Madam Chairwoman, the Commodities Supplemental Food Program was cut by $37 million over fiscal year 2011 levels. This cut means nearly 81,000 low-income seniors will lose their monthly food assistance. There are 6 million seniors who face the threat of hunger in this country, and with 12,000 baby boomers turning 60 every day by 2025, that number is expected to reach nearly the 10 million mark. There are 52,000 senior citizens in my district, the 37th Congressional District in California, and between 10 and 20 percent of them depend on these very programs.

The Richardson amendment restores $10 million in funding to the Commodity Assistance Program, which will help to ensure that more of our seniors will continue to receive food. We are talking about something as basic as that—food—that our seniors would be able to eat.

□ 2330

I urge my colleagues to support the Richardson amendment and support our seniors.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I oppose the amendment and move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. I want to point out that FSA, the Farm Service Agency, is already $181 million below the President's request and $32 million below 2011. It has been trimmed a great deal. But also I wanted to point out that we just accepted an amendment that increases the Commodity Supplemental

Food Program by $5 million. The gentlewoman may not be aware of that—I don't know if you were on the floor at the time. I know that doesn't mean that you wouldn't offer your amendment anyway, but I just wanted to point out that we did just increase it.

More importantly though, I have been in a mode of rejecting a lot of amendments in the last couple of hours because this budget, this bill, our 302(b) allocation is a reflection of the Ryan budget, which is the only budget that has passed either body in its entirety. There were budgets offered in the House that would have cut more, at least one. There were other budgets that would have cut less or cut in different directions. Yet the Ryan budget in the House or the Senate is the only budget that has passed, and it is a card house. I know, as you know, if we add to it we lose votes, and if we take from it we lose votes. For that reason, I do oppose your amendment. But I understand your concern here.

I want to point out, and I am sure the gentlewoman knows this, but a senior who is 65 years or older is actually eligible for six different Federal food programs, and it would certainly not be our intention to have anybody fall through the cracks. I think there is a lot to be said and some savings in combining the Commodity Supplemental Food Program and the SNAP program, and maybe cut out some of the administrative costs in order to increase the amount available.

Ms. RICHARDSON. If the gentleman would yield, might I point out that, first of all, we would not be able to legislate on the floor having to deal with this appropriation bill before us.

Mr. KINGSTON. Reclaiming my time, don't we know full well on this committee, because we have been champing at the bit to do a little bit of authorizing, but the authorizing committees keep a pretty strong eye on us. I certainly agree with that point.

Ms. RICHARDSON. I just want you to know I am watching and paying attention carefully, sir. The other point I wanted to point out, as I stated in my comments, $37 million has been cut over the fiscal year 2011, and given the $5 million that you did earlier accept, and I am suggesting $10 million, we would still be suggesting only restoring less than 50 percent from that level.

I would just urge you, sir, in these tough times, I understand in future times, but in these tough times, not all other mechanisms could help our seniors, again who are only making at or below $14,000, and this would be a dire need, and I would strongly urge, please, your reconsideration.

Mr. KINGSTON. Reclaiming my time, I do want to point out, and I am sure the gentlewoman knows, that this bill actually does increase SNAP $5.6 billion. Therefore, I think sometimes we do need to, even though that is an authorizing issue, I think as a practical issue that is something we need to explore and thrash about and make sure that we are not under-serving somebody because of two programs that could be so close that I don't know why we don't combine them. Again, I realize that would be farm bill authority to do that. But SNAP did go up $5.6 billion because of the mandatory spending side of it.

I need to continue to oppose your amendment, but I would not slam the door on looking at it as the process continues in the months ahead. Hopefully, the Senate might start doing their job and passing appropriations bills, and then we can get to conference without it being part of an omnibus, because I think in a conference we are going to do a lot better if it is just limited to agriculture and these accounts.

Madam Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. RICHARDSON).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. RICHARDSON. I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

STATE MEDIATION GRANTS

For grants pursuant to section 502(b) of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1987, as amended (7 U.S.C. 5101–5106), $3,550,000.

GRASSROOTS SOURCE WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM

For necessary expenses to carry out wellhead or groundwater protection activities under section 1240O of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb–2), $3,605,000, to remain available until expended.

DAIRY INDEMNITY PROGRAM

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses involved in making indemnity payments to dairy farmers and manufacturers of dairy products under a dairy indemnity program, such sums as may be necessary, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such program is carried out by the Secretary in the same manner as the dairy indemnity program described in the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001 (Public Law 106–387, 114 Stat. 1549A–12).

AGRICULTURAL CREDIT INSURANCE FUND PROGRAM ACCOUNT

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For gross obligations for the principal amount of direct and guaranteed farm ownership (7 U.S.C. 1922 et seq.) and operating (7 U.S.C. 1941 et seq.) loans, Indian tribe land acquisition loans (25 U.S.C. 488), boll weevil loans (7 U.S.C. 1989), guaranteed conservation loans (7 U.S.C. 1924 et seq.), and Indian highly fractionated land loans (25 U.S.C. 488) to be available from funds in the Agricultural Credit Insurance Fund, as follows: $1,500,000,000 for unsubsidized guaranteed farm ownership loans and $475,000,000 for farm ownership direct loans; $1,500,000,000 for unsubsidized guaranteed operating loans and $1,050,090,000 for direct operating loans; Indian tribe land acquisition loans, $2,000,000; guaranteed conservation loans, $150,000,000; Indian highly fractionated land loans, $10,000,000; and for boll weevil eradication program loans, $100,000,000: *Provided*, That the Secretary shall deem the pink bollworm to be a boll weevil for the purpose of boll weevil eradication program loans.

For the cost of direct and guaranteed loans and grants, including the cost of modifying loans as defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, as follows: farm ownership, $22,800,000 for direct loans; farm operating loans, $26,100,000 for unsubsidized guaranteed operating loans, $59,120,000 for direct operating loans; and Indian highly fractionated land loans, $193,000.

In addition, for administrative expenses necessary to carry out the direct and guaranteed loan programs, $268,634,000, of which $260,730,000 shall be paid to the appropriation for ''Farm Service Agency, Salaries and Expenses''.

Funds appropriated by this Act to the Agricultural Credit Insurance Program Account for farm ownership, operating and conservation direct loans and guaranteed loans may be transferred among these programs: *Provided*, That the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress are notified at least 15 days in advance of any transfer.

RISK MANAGEMENT AGENCY

For necessary expenses of the Risk Management Agency, $68,016,000: *Provided*, That the funds made available under section 522(e) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1522(e)) may be used for the Common Information Management System: *Provided further*, That not to exceed $1,000 shall be available for official reception and representation expenses, as authorized by 7 U.S.C. 1506(i).

CORPORATIONS

The following corporations and agencies are hereby authorized to make expenditures, within the limits of funds and borrowing authority available to each such corporation or agency and in accord with law, and to make contracts and commitments without regard to fiscal year limitations as provided by section 104 of the Government Corporation Control Act as may be necessary in carrying out the programs set forth in the budget for the current fiscal year for such corporation or agency, except as hereinafter provided.

FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE CORPORATION FUND

For payments as authorized by section 516 of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1516), such sums as may be necessary, to remain available until expended.

COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION FUND

REIMBURSEMENT FOR NET REALIZED LOSSES

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For the current fiscal year, such sums as may be necessary to reimburse the Commodity Credit Corporation for net realized losses sustained, but not previously reimbursed, pursuant to section 2 of the Act of August 17, 1961 (15 U.S.C. 713a–11): *Provided*, That of the funds available to the Commodity Credit Corporation under section 11 of the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (15 U.S.C. 714i) for the conduct of its business with the Foreign Agricultural Service, up to $5,000,000 may be transferred to and used by the Foreign Agricultural Service for information resource management activities of the Foreign Agricultural Service that are not related to Commodity Credit Corporation business.

HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT

(LIMITATION ON EXPENSES)

For the current fiscal year, the Commodity Credit Corporation shall not expend more than $5,000,000 for site investigation and cleanup expenses, and operations and maintenance expenses to comply with the requirement of section 107(g) of the Comprehensive

Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (42 U.S.C. 9607(g)), and section 6001 of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (42 U.S.C. 6961).

TITLE II

CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, $760,000.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BROUN of Georgia) having assumed the chair, Ms. FOXX, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2112) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE BRAD SHERMAN, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable BRAD SHERMAN, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, June 10, 2011.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives that I have been served with a subpoena, issued by the Superior Court of California, for testimony and documents.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined under Rule VIII that the subpoena is not ''a proper exercise of jurisdiction by the court.'' The Superior Court itself has quashed the subpoena (see attached docket summary).

Sincerely,

BRAD SHERMAN,
Member of Congress.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. ESHOO (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for the week of June 13 on account of recovery from surgery.

Mr. STIVERS (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for June 13 through June 24 on account of military service in the Ohio Army National Guard.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 39 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, June 15, 2011, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

1903. A letter from the Chief, Planning and Regulatory Affairs, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Geographic Preference Option for the Procurement of Unprocessed Agricultural Products in Child Nutrition Programs (RIN: 0584-AE03) received May 24, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1904. A letter from the Regulatory Contact, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Export Inspection and Weighing Waiver for High Quality Speciality Grains Transported in Containers [Docket #: GIPSA-2010-FGIS-0002] (RIN: 0580-AB18) received May 5, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1905. A letter from the Deputy Director, Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia, transmitting a report of a violation of the Antideficiency Act, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1517(b); to the Committee on Appropriations.

1906. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Evaluation of the TRICARE Program Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 Report to Congress, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1073 note Public Law 104-106; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1907. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's report on the amount of purchases from foreign entities in Fiscal Year 2010. The report separately identifies the dollar value of items for which the Buy American Act was waived, pursuant to Public Law 104-201, section 827 (110 Stat. 2611); to the Committee on Armed Services.

1908. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting modernization priority assessments for the National Guard and Reserve equipment for Fiscal Year 2011; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1909. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulations Supplement; Fire-Resistant Fiber for Production of Military Uniforms (DFARS Case 2011-D021) (RIN: 0750-AH22) received May 24, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

1910. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the annual report on operations of the National Defense Stockpile (NDS) in accordance with section 11(a) of the Strategic and Critical Materials Stock Piling Act as amended (50 U.S.C. 98 et seq.) detailing NDS operations during FY 2010; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1911. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Admiral Eric T. Olson, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of admiral on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1912. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the Board's final rule — Conformance Period for Entities Engaged in Prohibited Proprietary Trading or Private Equity Fund or Hedge Fund Activities [Regulation Y; Docket No. R-1397] (RIN: 7100-AD58) received May 23, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

1913. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to Mexico pursuant to Section 2(b)(3) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945, as amended; to the Committee on Financial Services.

1914. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to Singapore pursuant to Section 2(b)(3) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945, as amended; to the Committee on Financial Services.

1915. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting proposed legislation to authorize the Export-Import Bank for the period of October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2015; to the Committee on Financial Services.

1916. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Reserve System, transmitting the System's 97th Annual Report covering operations for calendar year 2010; to the Committee on Financial Services.

1917. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Joint Board for the Enrollment of Actuaries, transmitting the Board's final rule — Regulations Governing the Performance of Actuarial Services Under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 [TD 9517] (RIN: 1545-BC82) received May 11, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

1918. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting written notification of the determination that a public health emergency exists and has existed in the state of Missouri since May 22, 2011, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 247d(a) Public Law 107-188, section 144(a); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1919. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's final rule — Procedures for Submitting to the Department of Energy Trade Secrets and Commercial or Financial Information That Is Privileged or Confidential (RIN: 1990-AA36) received May 10, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1920. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Listing of Color Additives Exempt From Certification; Reactive Blue 69 [Docket No.: FDA-2009-C-0543] received May 24, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1921. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants From the Portland Cement Manufacturing Industry and Standards of Performance for Portland Cement Plants [EPA-HQ-OAR-2002-0051; EPA-HQ-OAR-2007-0887; FRL-9306-7] (RIN: 2060-AQ93) received May 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1922. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — An Approach for Plant-Specific, Risk-Informed Decisionmaking: Technical Specifications, Regulatory Guide 1.177, Revision 1 received May 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1923. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — An Approach for Using Probabilistic Risk Assessment In Risk-Informed

Decisions On Plant-Specific Changes to the Licensing Basis, Regulatory Guide 1.174, Revision 2, received May 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1924. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Protection of Safeguards Information, Regulatory Guide 5.79, received April 15, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1925. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting notification that effective May 8, 2011, the danger pay allowance for Libya has been established, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 5928; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1926. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting as required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), and pursuant to Executive Order 13313 of July 31, 2003, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the risk of nuclear proliferation created by the accumulation of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation that was declared in Executive Order 13159 of June 21, 2000; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1927. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting as required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Belarus that was declared in Executive Order 13405 of June 16, 2006; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1928. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's strategic plan; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1929. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's Buy American Act Report for FY 2010; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1930. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1931. A letter from the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's semiannual report from the Office of the Inspector General during the 6-month period ending March 31, 2011; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1932. A letter from the Chairman, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the Administration's semi-annual report on the activities of the Inspector General for October 1, 2010 through March 31, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act), section 5(b); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1933. A letter from the Chairman, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the Administration's semiannual report from the office of the Inspector General for the period October 1, 2010 through March 31, 2011; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1934. A letter from the Director, Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, National Labor Relations Board, transmitting the Board's annual report for FY 2010 prepared in accordance with the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1935. A letter from the Sr. VP and Chief Financial Officer, Potomac Electric Power Company, transmitting the Balance Sheet of Potomac Electric Power Company as of December 31, 2010, pursuant to D.C. Code Ann. 34-1113 (2001); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1936. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Chesapeake Bay Office Beinnial report for fiscal years 2009 and 2010; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1937. A letter from the Regional Director, Department of the Interior, transmitting notification of the Fish and Wildlife Service's Midwest Region office move; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1938. A letter from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — High Seas Driftnet Fishing Moratorium Protection Act; Identification and Certification Procedures To Address Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing Activities and Bycatch of Protected Living Marine Resources [Docket No.: 070514119-0452-03] (RIN: 0648-AV51) received April 15, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1939. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's quarterly report from the Office of Privacy and Civil Liberties for the third quarter of fiscal year 2010, pursuant to Public Law 110-53, section 803 (121 Stat. 266, 360); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

1940. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; M/V DAVY CROCKETT, Columbia River [Docket No.: USCG-2010-0939] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received May 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1941. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Pensacola Bay; Pensacola, FL [Docket No.: USCG-2011-0212] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received May 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1942. A letter from the Attorney, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Texas International Boat Show Power Boat Races; Corpus Christi Marina, Corpus Christi, TX [Docket No. USCG-2011-0140] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received May 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1943. A letter from the Attorney, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Naval Air Station Corpus Christi Air Show, Oso Bay, Corpus Christi, TX [Docket No.: USCG-2011-0139] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received May 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1944. A letter from the Regulatory Ombudsman, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Hours of Service Exemption for Railroad Signal Employees [Docket ID: FMCSA-2010-0032] (RIN: 2126-AB36) received May 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1945. A letter from the Assistant Chief Counsel for Pipeline Safety, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Applying Safety Regulations to All Rural Onshore Hazardous Liquid Low-Stress Lines [Docket: PHMSA-2008-0186; Amdt. 195-96] (RIN: 2137-AE36) received May 9, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1946. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Point Lookout, MO [Docket No.: FAA-2010-1172; Airspace Docket No. 10-ACE-14] received May 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1947. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Kokomo, IN [Docket No.: FAA-2010-0605; Airspace Docket No. 10-AGL-10] received May 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1948. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Carizzo Springs, Glass Ranch Airport, TX [Docket No.: FAA-2010-0877; Airspace Docket No. 10-ASW-13] received May 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1949. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Cable Union, WI [Docket No.: FAA-2010-1169; Airspace Docket No. 10-AGL-24] received May 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1950. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Bedford, IN [Docket No.: FAA-2010-1026; Airspace Docket No. 10-AGL-14] received May 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1951. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Applicable Federal Rates — June 2011 (Rev. Rul. 3011-13) received May 25, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

1952. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Branded Prescription Drug Sales — Dispute Resolution Process for 2011 Preliminary Fee Calculation (Rev. Proc. 2011-24) received May 11, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

1953. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Modifications to Treatment of Aircraft and Vessel Leasing Income [TD 9525] (RIN: 1545-BG98) received May 11, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

1954. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Announcemnt and Report Concerning Advance Pricing Agreements Announcement 2011-22 received May 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

1955. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — The 100-percent bonus depreciation under section 168(k)(5) of the Internal Revenue Code (Rev. Proc. 2011-26) received May 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

1956. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue

Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Extension of Withholding to Certain Payments Made by Government Entities [TD 9524] (RIN: 1545-BG45) received May 11, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

1957. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Specified Tax Return Preparers Required to File Individual Income Tax Returns Using Magnetic Media [TD 9518] (RIN: 1545-BJ52) received May 11, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

1958. A letter from the Under Secretary and Deputy Secretary, Department of Defense, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting Activities of Center of Excellence in Mitigation, Treatment and Rehabilitation of Traumatic Extremity Injuries and Amputations for Fiscal Year 2009; jointly to the Committees on Armed Services and Veterans' Affairs.

1959. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a joint report that describes activities related to the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) Budget Plan and Review for FY 2012-2014; jointly to the Committees on Foreign Affairs and Armed Services.

1960. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a letter regarding a ''debt issuance suspension period''; jointly to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform and Ways and Means.

1961. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting additional Legislative proposals that the Department requests to be enacted during the first session of the 112th Congress; jointly to the Committees on Armed Services, Oversight and Government Reform, Foreign Affairs, and Science, Space, and Technology.

1962. A letter from the Fiscal Assistant Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the annual reports that appear on pages 120-147 of the March 2011 ''Treasury Bulletin'', pursuant to 26 U.S.C. 9602(a); jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means, Transportation and Infrastructure, Natural Resources, Agriculture, Education and the Workforce, and Energy and Commerce.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky: Committee on Appropriations. Report on the Revised Suballocation of Budget Allocations for Fiscal Year 2012 (Rept. 112–104). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California: Committee on House Administration. H.R. 1934. A bill to improve certain administrative operations of the Library of Congress, and for other purposes (Rept. 112–105). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. KLINE: Committee on Education and the Workforce. H.R. 1891. A bill to repeal ineffective or unnecessary education programs in order to restore the focus of Federal programs on quality elementary and secondary education programs for disadvantaged students; with an amendment (Rept. 112–106). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. TOWNS (for himself, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. RICHARDSON, Mr. GERLACH, Ms. MOORE, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. NORTON, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. LEE, Mr. ISRAEL, and Mr. KING of New York):

H.R. 2159. A bill to reduce disparities and improve access to effective and cost efficient diagnosis and treatment of prostate cancer through advances in testing, research, and education, including through telehealth, comparative effectiveness research, and identification of best practices in patient education and outreach particularly with respect to underserved racial, ethnic and rural populations and men with a family history of prostate cancer, to establish a directive on what constitutes clinically appropriate prostate cancer imaging, and to create a prostate cancer scientific advisory board for the Office of the Chief Scientist at the Food and Drug Administration to accelerate real-time sharing of the latest research and accelerate movement of new medicines to patients; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs, and Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. RICHARDSON (for herself and Mr. FILNER):

H.R. 2160. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to reauthorize and modify the surface transportation project delivery pilot program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California (for herself, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. CHU, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. HONDA, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. POLIS, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. SCHIFF, and Mr. RUSH):

H.R. 2161. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to promote innovation, investment, and research in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DOLD (for himself, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. SCHILLING, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. WALSH of Illinois, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. SCHOCK, and Mr. SHIMKUS):

H.R. 2162. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to deny retirement benefits accrued by an individual as a Member of Congress if such individual is convicted of certain offenses; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. MATSUI:

H.R. 2163. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to establish a Lifeline Assistance Program for universal broadband adoption, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SMITH of Texas (for himself, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. GALLEGLY, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. BILBRAY, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. CARTER, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, and Mr. GOODLATTE):

H.R. 2164. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to make mandatory and permanent requirements relating to use of an electronic employment eligibility verification system, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Education and the Workforce, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ROSS of Florida:

H.R. 2165. A bill to repeal the trade adjustment assistance programs under the Trade Act of 1974; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 2166. A bill to increase transparency regarding debt instruments of the United States held by foreign governments, to assess the risks to the United States of such holdings, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SCHWEIKERT (for himself, Mr. HIMES, Mr. CANSECO, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. JONES, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mrs. BIGGERT, and Mr. ISSA):

H.R. 2167. A bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to change the threshold number of shareholders for required registration under that Act; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. CHAFFETZ (for himself and Mr. GOODLATTE):

H.R. 2168. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to specify the circumstances in which a person may acquire geolocation information and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select), for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. CHU (for herself and Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California):

H.R. 2169. A bill to protect victims of crime or serious labor violations from deportation during Department of Homeland Security enforcement actions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HASTINGS of Washington (for himself, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, and Mr. WITTMAN):

H.R. 2170. A bill streamlining Federal review to facilitate renewable energy projects; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. LABRADOR (for himself, Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, and Mr. WITTMAN):

H.R. 2171. A bill to promote timely exploration for geothermal resources under existing geothermal leases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mrs. NOEM (for herself, Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, and Mr. WITTMAN):

H.R. 2172. A bill to facilitate the development of wind energy resources on Federal

lands; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. WITTMAN (for himself, Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, and Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee):

H.R. 2173. A bill to facilitate the development of offshore wind energy resources; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. DELAURO (for herself, Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. COURTNEY, and Mr. HIMES):

H.R. 2174. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to carry out a study regarding the suitability and feasibility of establishing the Naugatuck River Valley National Heritage Area in Connecticut, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. FINCHER:

H.R. 2175. A bill to require certain agencies to submit a cost-benefit analysis to the Congress before implementing proposed regulations; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, and Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HEINRICH (for himself and Mr. MARKEY):

H.R. 2176. A bill to dedicate a portion of the rental fees from wind and solar energy projects on Federal land under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management for the administrative costs of processing applications for new wind and solar projects, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. HIGGINS (for himself and Ms. HOCHUL):

H.R. 2177. A bill to direct the payment of passport fees to the Department of State; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. HIGGINS (for himself and Ms. HOCHUL):

H.R. 2178. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a refundable credit against income tax for the cost of passports and other enhanced identification documents required to comply with the June 1, 2009, implementation of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 2179. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to direct the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security (Transportation Security Administration) to transfer unclaimed money recovered at airport security checkpoints to United Service Organizations, Incorporated, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. MILLER of North Carolina (for himself, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Ms. MOORE, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. HONDA):

H.R. 2180. A bill to authorize assistance for affordable housing and sustainable urban development in developing countries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. PAYNE (for himself and Mr. WOLF):

H.R. 2181. A bill to authorize National Mall Liberty Fund D.C. to establish a memorial on Federal land in the District of Columbia to honor free persons and slaves who fought for independence, liberty, and justice for all during the American Revolution; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. HENSARLING:

H. Res. 303. A resolution electing Members to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives; considered and agreed to. considered and agreed to.

By Mr. DOLD (for himself, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. HOYER, Mr. DREIER, Mr. WOLF, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. BACA, Ms. LEE, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. ACKERMAN, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. GRIMM, Mr. BERMAN, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. COSTA, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. MALONEY, Ms. CHU, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. DENHAM, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. GARRETT, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. RICHARDSON, Mr. NUNES, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, Mr. HIMES, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. VISCLOSKY, Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, Mr. WU, Mr. HOLT, Mr. STARK, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. GALLEGLY, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. MCGOVERN):

H. Res. 304. A resolution calling upon the President to ensure that the foreign policy of the United States reflects appropriate understanding and sensitivity concerning issues related to human rights, ethnic cleansing, and genocide documented in the United States record relating to the Armenian Genocide, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. WATERS:

H. Res. 305. A resolution honoring Jeannie Washington for her 43 years of service in the Los Angeles Unified School District; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. TOWNS:

H.R. 2159.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This Bill is enacted pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, known as the ''General Welfare Clause.'' This provision grants Congress the broad power ''to pay the Debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States.''[1]

[1] Please note, pursuant to Article I, section 8, Congress has the power ''to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.''

By Ms. RICHARDSON:

H.R. 2160.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California:

H.R. 2161.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 4 of the Constitution.

By Mr. DOLD:

H.R. 2162.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 6, which states that, ''Senators and Representatives shall receive a Compensation for their Services, to be ascertained by Law, and paid out of the Treasury of the United States.''

By Ms. MATSUI:

H.R. 2163.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause 3.

By Mr. SMITH of Texas:

H.R. 2164.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 4 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. ROSS of Florida:

H.R. 2165.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 2166.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

''The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 1 (relating to providing for the general welfare of the United States) and clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress), and Article IV, section 3, clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States).''

By Mr. SCHWEIKERT:

H.R. 2167.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article One, Section Eight

By Mr. CHAFFETZ:

H.R. 2168.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This law is enacted pursuant to Article 1, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 3, and the 4th and 14th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution.

By Ms. CHU:

H.R. 2169.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 4, which states that Congress has the power to establish a uniform Rule of Naturalization.

By Mr. HASTINGS of Washington:

H.R. 2170.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to Article IV, Section 3 of the Constitution.

By Mr. LABRADOR:

H.R. 2171.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to Article IV, Section 3 of the Constitution.

By Mrs. NOEM:

H.R. 2172.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to Article IV, Section 3 of the Constitution.

By Mr. WITTMAN:

H.R. 2173.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to Article IV, Section 3 of the Constitution.

By Ms. DELAURO:

H.R. 2174.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. FINCHER:

H.R. 2175.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. HEINRICH:

H.R. 2176.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to Article IV, Section 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. HIGGINS:

H.R. 2177.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitution authority of this legislation lies in the power of congress to regulate commercial activity as described in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3. With further support from Article 1, Section 8, Clause 4.

By Mr. HIGGINS:

H.R. 2178.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of this legislation lies in the power of congress to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises as described in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1. With further support from the Sixteenth Amendment, which provides Congress the power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever sources derived.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 2179.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MILLER of North Carolina:

H.R. 2180.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of Constitution, which includes an implied power for the Congress to regulate the conduct of the United States with respect to foreign affairs.

By Mr. PAYNE:

H.R. 2181.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 1 (relating to the power of Congress to provide for the general welfare of the United States) and clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress), and Article IV, section 3, clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States).

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 32: Mr. HINCHEY.

H.R. 58: Mr. HURT, Mr. DENT, and Ms. BUERKLE.

H.R. 85: Mr. SIRES, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. SABLAN, and Mr. CARNAHAN.

H.R. 157: Mr. HARRIS.

H.R. 218: Mr. DOGGETT.

H.R. 273: Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 358: Mr. ROKITA.

H.R. 401: Mr. RICHMOND.

H.R. 412: Mr. DUFFY.

H.R. 421: Mr. MILLER of Florida.

H.R. 452: Mr. DENHAM, Mr. POMPEO, Mrs. BONO MACK, and Mr. DOLD.

H.R. 466: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Ms. BASS of California, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. DICKS, and Mrs. LOWEY.

H.R. 530: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania and Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 539: Ms. KAPTUR.

H.R. 563: Mr. CARNEY, Mr. DENT, and Mr. DOYLE.

H.R. 607: Mr. KUCINICH.

H.R. 679: Mr. KUCINICH.

H.R. 733: Mr. BARROW, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. SIRES, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia, Mr. KISSELL, Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, Mr. WU, Ms. RICHARDSON, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. PLATTS, Mr. HARPER, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. FARR, Mr. MARINO, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. BARLETTA, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Mr. TERRY, and Mr. ALTMIRE.

H.R. 750: Mr. SESSIONS and Mr. POMPEO.

H.R. 777: Mr. MICHAUD.

H.R. 789: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. RUNYAN, and Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.

H.R. 798: Mr. TIERNEY.

H.R. 816: Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, and Mr. DESJARLAIS.

H.R. 835: Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California and Ms. DEGETTE.

H.R. 838: Mr. CONAWAY.

H.R. 860: Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, Mr. REED, and Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.

H.R. 865: Ms. HIRONO and Mr. LIPINSKI.

H.R. 881: Mr. DENHAM.

H.R. 891: Mr. COHEN and Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey.

H.R. 926: Mr. REICHERT.

H.R. 942: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.

H.R. 959: Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey and Mr. DOLD.

H.R. 965: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.

H.R. 973: Mr. FORTENBERRY and Mr. WOLF.

H.R. 1006: Mr. REHBERG, Mr. GOWDY, and Mr. MILLER of Florida.

H.R. 1025: Mr. HECK.

H.R. 1041: Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Mr. ROSS of Arkansas, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. HIGGINS, and Mr. LANKFORD.

H.R. 1057: Mr. TONKO and Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 1058: Mr. BUCHANAN.

H.R. 1063: Mr. CLAY, Mr. QUIGLEY and Mr. HIGGINS.

H.R. 1112: Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 1116: Mr. BECERRA and Mr. BISHOP of New York.

H.R. 1130: Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia.

H.R. 1148: Mr. BLUMENAUER and Mr. KUCINICH.

H.R. 1171: Mr. HOLT, Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. HANABUSA, and Mr. REICHERT.

H.R. 1173: Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. DESJARLAIS, and Mr. HARPER.

H.R. 1179: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.

H.R. 1181: Mr. REED.

H.R. 1182: Mr. HUELSKAMP.

H.R. 1187: Mr. CARNEY.

H.R. 1193: Ms. BERKLEY and Mr. REHBERG.

H.R. 1195: Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 1204: Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey.

H.R. 1206: Mr. GUINTA and Mr. SCALISE.

H.R. 1240: Mr. KIND and Mr. MICHAUD.

H.R. 1242: Mr. FILNER and Ms. HIRONO.

H.R. 1259: Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. BUCHSHON, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. REHBERG, Mr. TERRY, Mr. RIVERA, and Mr. LUCAS.

H.R. 1269: Mr. RANGEL, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. TONKO, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. CLAY, and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.

H.R. 1283: Mr. ROSS of Arkansas and Mr. REHBERG.

H.R. 1330: Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 1331: Mr. COBLE.

H.R. 1334: Mr. FILNER.

H.R. 1335: Mr. VAN HOLLEN and Mr. GERLACH.

H.R. 1366: Mr. BACA, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. KIND, and Mr. SARBANES.

H.R. 1370: Mr. SCHOCK and Mr. RENACCI.

H.R. 1418: Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 1432: Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 1456: Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey.

H.R. 1479: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.

H.R. 1505: Mr. HERGER, Mr. WOODALL, and Mr. LUETKEMEYER.

H.R. 1513: Mr. CRITZ.

H.R. 1519: Mr. MATHESON.

H.R. 1527: Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois.

H.R. 1537: Mr. HIGGINS and Mr. MARKEY.

H.R. 1543: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HINCHEY, and Mr. WALZ of Minnesota.

H.R. 1547: Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.

H.R. 1551: Mr. LONG.

H.R. 1558: Mrs. ELLMERS, Mr. TERRY, and Mr. CONAWAY.

H.R. 1574: Mrs. BIGGERT, Mr. SIRES, Mr. GALLEGLY, and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1591: Mr. RIGELL.

H.R. 1606: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

H.R. 1609: Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, and Mr. LANKFORD.

H.R. 1612: Mr. RUNYAN.

H.R. 1656: Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey.

H.R. 1675: Mr. ALTMIRE and Mr. REED.

H.R. 1676: Mr. MORAN.

H.R. 1683: Mr. LATTA and Mr. PENCE.

H.R. 1686: Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.

H.R. 1687: Mr. BOSWELL.

H.R. 1700: Mr. HARRIS.

H.R. 1703: Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana and Mr. PETERS.

H.R. 1716: Mr. KUCINICH.

H.R. 1719: Mr. GOSAR.

H.R. 1723: Mr. SOUTHERLAND.

H.R. 1724: Mr. HOLT, Ms. SUTTON, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. CHU, and Mr. OLVER.

H.R. 1744: Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. HECK, Mr. SCALISE, and Mr. PETRI.

H.R. 1749: Mr. CLARKE of Michigan.

H.R. 1755: Mr. LOEBSACK and Mr. PITTS.

H.R. 1756: Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, Mr. CAPUANO, and Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.

H.R. 1764: Mr. GOSAR.

H.R. 1781: Ms. TSONGAS.

H.R. 1802: Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, and Mr. SIRES.

H.R. 1817: Mr. MORAN.

H.R. 1832: Mr. LUETKEMEYER and Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey.

H.R. 1834: Mrs. MYRICK.

H.R. 1842: Mr. ELLISON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Mr. HONDA, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey.

H.R. 1855: Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 1864: Mr. BOREN and Mr. CRENSHAW.

H.R. 1865: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. SCHILLING, Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado, Mr. KINGSTON, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska,

Mr. RAHALL, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. HULTGREN, and Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.

H.R. 1878: Ms. SUTTON.

H.R. 1891: Mr. POE of Texas and Mr. LABRADOR.

H.R. 1897: Mr. COBLE, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. CARNEY, and Mr. HOLDEN.

H.R. 1905: Mr. BARTLETT, Ms. CHU, Mr. COLE, Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. GRIMM, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mr. HIMES, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. ROSKAM, Mrs. SCHMIDT, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. BONNER, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. MCNERNEY, and Mr. MEEHAN.

H.R. 1912: Mr. HINCHEY and Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 1925: Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 1941: Mr. BOREN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. KISSELL, and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 1946: Mrs. ELLMERS.

H.R. 1959: Mr. OLVER.

H.R. 1966: Mr. MEEKS.

H.R. 1974: Mr. ISRAEL.

H.R. 1976: Ms. FOXX, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. CARTER, and Mr. BUCSHON.

H.R. 1978: Mr. CARDOZA, Mr. CARTER, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. SCHOCK, and Mr. CARSON of Indiana.

H.R. 1980: Mr. KLINE and Mr. DENHAM.

H.R. 1987: Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York.

H.R. 1994: Ms. CHU.

H.R. 2000: Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana and Mr. LATHAM.

H.R. 2005: Mr. KING of New York, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. HOLT, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. RIVERA, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. TIBERI, and Ms. WATERS.

H.R. 2011: Mr. DUFFY, Mr. NUNES, and Mr. GARDNER.

H.R. 2016: Mr. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 2019: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.

H.R. 2031: Mr. PALAZZO.

H.R. 2033: Mr. KISSELL.

H.R. 2054: Mr. GUTHRIE and Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 2061: Mr. MORAN, Mr. LONG, and Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 2067: Mr. MILLER of Florida and Mr. WEST.

H.R. 2068: Mr. DOYLE, Mr. LANDRY, and Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut.

H.R. 2074: Mr. FILNER, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. RUNYAN, and Mr. BILIRAKIS.

H.R. 2085: Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. PETERS, and Ms. RICHARDSON.

H.R. 2092: Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 2094: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. COSTELLO, and Mrs. ELLMERS.

H.R. 2096: Mr. WU, Mr. HALL, Mr. SCHOCK, and Mr. LUJÁN.

H.R. 2104: Mr. OLVER and Mr. GERLACH.

H.R. 2108: Mr. KISSELL and Mr. BURGESS.

H.R. 2115: Mr. BERMAN.

H.R. 2117: Mr. HERGER, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. CARTER, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. AUSTRIA, Mr. PLATTS, Mrs. BIGGERT, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. PAUL, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. ROSS of Florida, Mr. HANNA, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. WEST, Mr. BARLETTA, Mrs. ROBY, Mrs. ELLMERS, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. PETRI, Mr. MARCHANT, and Mr. COBLE.

H.R. 2143: Mr. BISHOP of Utah.

H.R. 2145: Mrs. MYRICK and Mr. ROKITA.

H.R. 2152: Mr. MARKEY, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. KILDEE, and Mr. SIRES.

H.R. 2158: Mr. FILNER, Ms. BASS of California, Mr. BECERRA, Mrs. CAPPS, Ms. CHU, Mr. GARAMENDI, and Ms. WATERS.

H.J. Res. 47: Mr. PETERSON and Ms. MOORE.

H. Res. 13: Mr. HOYER.

H. Res. 16: Mr. LAMBORN and Mr. CARTER.

H. Res. 25: Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. HOLDEN, and Mr. SOUTHERLAND.

H. Res. 89: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. FILNER, and Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California.

H. Res. 95: Mr. STEARNS.

H. Res. 111: Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana and Mr. COHEN.

H. Res. 130: Mr. RANGEL.

H. Res. 137: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia and Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.

H. Res. 180: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.

H. Res. 220: Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HINCHEY, and Mr. GUTIERREZ.

H. Res. 256: Mr. WU.

H. Res. 268: Mr. ALTMIRE, Mr. COOPER, Mr. CRAWFORD, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. HARPER, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. LATTA, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. MCCAUL, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. QUAYLE, Mr. ROSS of Florida, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. WALSH of Illinois, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. LANDRY, and Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.

H. Res. 295: Mr. MORAN, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. MARINO, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mr. TERRY.

H. Res. 296: Mr. WALBERG, Mr. KILDEE, and Mr. DOLD.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 1380: Mr. KELLY and Mr. KLINE.

AMENDMENTS

Under clause 8 of rule XVIII, proposed amendments were submitted as follows:

H.R. 2112

OFFERED BY: MR. ROE OF TENNESSEE

AMENDMENT NO. 21: Page 45, line 15, after each dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $3,000,000,000)''.

Page 80, line 2, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $3,000,000,000)''.

H.R. 2112

OFFERED BY: MR. GARRETT

AMENDMENT NO. 22: At the end of the bill, before the short title, insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to promulgate any final rules under paragraphs (13) or (14) of section 2(a) of the Commodity Exchange Act, as added by section 727 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, until 12 months after the promulgation of final swap transaction reporting rules under section 21 of the Commodity Exchange Act.

H.R. 2112

OFFERED BY: MR. GIBSON

AMENDMENT NO. 23: Page 80, after line 2, insert the following:

SEC. _____. For the cost of broadband loans, as authorized by section 601 of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, to remain available until expended, there is hereby appropriated, and the amount otherwise provided by this Act for payments to the General Services Administration for rent under the heading ''Agriculture Buildings and Facilities and Rental Payments'' is hereby reduced by, $6,000,000.

H.R. 2112

OFFERED BY: MR. ROYCE

AMENDMENT NO. 24: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. 7XX. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to provide assistance under title II of the Food for Peace Act (7 U.S.C. 1721 et seq.) to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea).

H.R. 2112

OFFERED BY: MR. KIND

AMENDMENT NO. 25: At the end of the bill (before any short title), insert the following new section:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to provide payments (or to pay the salaries and expenses of personnel to provide payments) to the Brazil Cotton Institute.

H.R. 2112

OFFERED BY: MR. FLORES

AMENDMENT NO. 26: At the end of the bill (before the short title), add the following new section:

SEC. 4 ____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used to enforce section 526 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–140; 42 U.S.C. 17142).

H.R. 2112

OFFERED BY: MS. JACKSON LEE OF TEXAS

AMENDMENT NO. 27: Page 2, line 14, after the dollar figure, insert ''(increased by $25,000,000)''.

Page 5, line 5, after the dollar figure, insert ''(reduced by $25,000,000)''.

H.R. 2112

OFFERED BY: MS. JACKSON LEE OF TEXAS

AMENDMENT NO. 28: Page 80, after line 2, insert the following:

SEC. _____. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used in contravention of section 310B(e) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1932(e)).

H.R. 2112

OFFERED BY: MS. JACKSON LEE OF TEXAS

AMENDMENT NO. 29: Page 80, after line 2, insert the following (and make such technical and conforming changes as may be appropriate):

SEC. 747. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used in contravention of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.).

H.R. 2112

OFFERED BY: MS. JACKSON LEE OF TEXAS

AMENDMENT NO. 30: Page 9, line 5, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $681,750,000'').

Page 44, line 19, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $681,750,000'').

H.R. 2112

OFFERED BY: MR. GOSAR

AMENDMENT NO. 31: Page 32, line 5, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $50,000,000)''.

Page 35, line 13, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $50,000,000)''.

Page 48, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $100,000,000)''.

H.R. 2112

OFFERED BY: MR. GOSAR

AMENDMENT NO. 32: Page 48, line 11, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $75,000,000)''.

Page 80, line 2, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $75,000,000)''.

H.R. 2112

OFFERED BY: MR. NUGENT

AMENDMENT NO. 33: Page 9, line 5, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(increased by $2,000,000)''.

Page 48, line 11, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(reduced by $2,500,000)''.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 112th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 157 WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, JUNE 14, 2011 No. 85

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN, a Senator from the State of New Hampshire.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, who has blessed us abundantly with inner joy and external blessings, enlighten our minds this day so that we can reach beyond guessing to knowing and beyond doubting to certainty. Purify our hearts so that the wrong desires may not only be kept under control but may be destroyed.

Strengthen the wills of our lawmakers so that they may pass beyond resolving to doing and beyond intention to action. Answer for them the questions no human wisdom can answer.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUYE).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, June 14, 2011.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN, a Senator from the State of New Hampshire, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUYE,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. SHAHEEN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Madam President, following any leader remarks, the Senate will be in morning business until 11 a.m. this morning. The majority will control the first half, the Republicans will control the final half. At 11 a.m., the Senate will be in executive session to consider the Cecchi and Salas nominations, with 1 hour of debate. At noon, there will be up to two votes on confirmation of the Cecchi and Salas nominations. Following the votes, the Senate will recess for the weekly caucus meetings until 2:15 p.m. At 2:15 p.m., there will be an additional rollcall vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the Coburn amendment No. 436 regarding ethanol. Finally, following the cloture vote, Senator RUBIO will be recognized to give his maiden speech to the Senate.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that morning business consist of 1 full hour equally divided rather than ending at 11 a.m.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MEDICARE

Mr. REID. Madam President, on this side of the aisle, we Democrats want to protect seniors on Medicare. That is our top priority. I have heard my friend, the ranking member of the Budget Committee, come here and talk for hours, and he keeps talking about things that really have no bearing on what I think is important for the country today.

We know the Republicans have put forward a budget that destroys Medicare. That is what we received. We voted on it over here, and it was turned down. It must be the Republicans' top priority because we have had votes on the Senate floor protecting taxpayer handouts, especially to oil companies. We had a full debate here that suggested we take this money that now goes to these oil companies—and even executives have said that they do not want the money, that they do not need the money—and apply it toward the deficit. Overwhelmingly, the Republicans voted no, so we couldn't get it done. So it appears clear they would rather balance the budget on the backs of seniors and Medicare than end the constant giveaways to oil and gas companies making billions a year in profits. These oil companies have made the largest profits in the history of the world. In the last quarter, they had $36 billion in net profits.

The Republicans' plan to end Medicare as we know it would put insurance company bureaucrats between seniors and their doctors and raise seniors' drug costs, forcing them to pay $6,400 more out-of-pocket costs every year. The American people are overwhelmingly opposed to this plan to end Medicare. A poll released yesterday showed that less than half the Republicans support the Republicans' plan to end Medicare. Overwhelmingly, Independents and Democrats joined with these Republicans who oppose the Republicans' plan to end Medicare.

We believe there is a need to reduce our deficit. That is why we have been working with Vice President BIDEN. Representing the Democrats in the Senate, Senator INOUYE, chairman of the Appropriations Committee, and

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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Senator BAUCUS, chairman of the Finance Committee, are meeting with Vice President BIDEN, and progress is being made.

There is no question we should be closing tax loopholes and targeting wasteful giveaways to oil companies. I am sure Vice President BIDEN is leading the Senators and House Members toward that end. Closing these tax loopholes and targeting wasteful giveaways to the oil companies making these record profits while charging—Madam President, here in the Washington, DC, area, as I do my morning exercise, I walk past a station right off the waterfront where gasoline is $5 a gallon. I haven't looked at it since this past week, but that is what it is. It is over $4 a gallon all over the United States, in many, many different places. We should be focusing on that instead of ending Medicare.

So I tell my friend, the ranking member of the Budget Committee, come and talk about the Republican plan to end Medicare as we know it. And what about the subsidies for these oil companies. Shouldn't we get rid of them? It is time the Republicans abandoned their ideological plan to end Medicare and work with us to strengthen and preserve our promise to seniors instead.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

WAR ON TERROR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, since the attacks on 9/11 and the very beginning of the war on terror in 2001, most Americans have understood that we could no longer kind of passively wait for the next enemy attack. In order to defeat, dismantle, and disrupt al-Qaida, our intelligence, military, and law enforcement officials would have to work together to defeat terrorist cells, whether they are in the tribal areas of Pakistan or, frankly, here in our own backyard. Yet, if some had begun to think, after the killing of Osama bin Laden, that we could now sit back and relax a little, the recent arrest in my State, in the hometown of my colleague, Senator PAUL, of two foreign fighters who have openly admitted to conducting attacks against U.S. soldiers and marines in Iraq shows how mistaken a notion that is.

Let's look at that again. Here are two Iraqi terrorists arrested in Bowling Green, KY, within the last couple of weeks. And the Director of Central Intelligence stated in an open hearing on Capitol Hill last week that about 1,000 members of al-Qaida in Iraq continue to fight us over in Iraq. Now we know that at least two of them—at least two of them—have left the battlefield over there to live right here in the United States.

The case of Waad Ramadan Alwan and Mohanad Shareef Hammadi shows us that terrorists continue to pose an imminent threat. We owe a debt of gratitude to the men and women who made sure they couldn't inflict more harm on Americans here or abroad once they arrived here. Anyone who has read about the investigation into their activities can only be impressed with the courage, the skill, and the professionalism of those who were involved in this effort.

Specifically, I wish to thank the men and women from the FBI's Louisville Division, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Kentucky, the Louisville Joint Terrorism Task Force, and the Justice Department's National Security Division. Every one of those folks involved clearly did their job, and they did it very well.

That having been said, I think it is safe to say that a lot of Kentuckians, including me, would like to know why two men who either killed or plotted to kill U.S. soldiers and marines over in Iraq aren't sitting in a jail cell in Guantanamo right now. When it comes to enemy combatants, our top priority, as I have said repeatedly, should be to capture, detain, and interrogate. That wasn't done here. These men are foreign fighters—unlawful enemy combatants—who should be treated as such.

Alwan is on tape admitting to having procured explosives and missiles in Iraq and to using them daily—daily—to conduct strikes.

He said he had personally used improvised explosive devices, or IEDs, hundreds of times over a period of several years. He has talked about using them against U.S. troops and the damage he has done to U.S. military vehicles such as Humvees. He told undercover agents he was "very good with a sniper rifle end." In a reference to attacks on U.S. troops, he said his lunch and dinner would be "an American." He admitted that he "collected everything," TNT, electronic detonators, tank explosive detonators, IED detonators, mortar shells, and rocket-propelled grenades. He also said that he often placed IEDs after the curfew, and it was this activity that led to his being asked to join the mujahedin.

He even tried to demonstrate his expertise as a foreign fighter by drawing diagrams of four types of IEDs, explaining how to build them and discussing various occasions in which he used these devices against U.S. troops in Iraq. In describing one particular type of IED, Alwan said, "Anything lethal could be stuffed into it, such as ball bearings, nails, gravel, and whatever item that kills." Alwan's fingerprints have also allegedly been found on IEDs over in Iraq in an area in which he is known to have lived.

Once Alwan made his way to the United States, he is alleged to have recruited Hammadi to continue his fight against Americans over in Iraq by burrowing himself into a community where he thought he would go undetected. Like Alwan, Hammadi was an experienced insurgent fighter in Iraq. He too had participated in IED attacks and was part of an insurgent group that had 11 surface-to-air missiles.

Together, these two men organized shipments of money and weapons, including rocket grenade launchers, Stinger missiles, and C4 explosives that they thought they were sending back to the war zone in Iraq.

Anyone who has taken up arms against U.S. forces in the field of battle is an enemy combatant, pure and simple, and should be treated like one. They should be hunted and captured, detained and interrogated, and tried away from civilian populations according to the laws of war.

Unfortunately, since the earliest days of this administration when the President signed a series of Executive orders which directed the closing of the military detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, and limited the ability of the military and intelligence community to detain and interrogate prisoners, a higher priority has been placed upon prosecution than on executing the war on terror.

But I can say with certainty that Kentuckians don't want foreign fighters who have bragged about killing and maiming U.S. soldiers in a combat theater treated like common criminals in their own backyards. They don't want foreign fighters to be afforded all of the legal rights and privileges of U.S. citizens. They don't want foreign fighters to have their interrogations curtailed. And they don't want their fellow citizens in Kentucky subjected to the risk of reprisal that is associated with these kinds of cases, reprisals against civilian judges, reprisals against civilian jurors, and the broader community in which civilian trials are held. That was one of the many reasons that residents and lawmakers in New York City rebelled against the administration's equally foolhardy plan to try Khalid Sheikh Mohammed in a courtroom in New York. That is to say nothing of the security costs and the disruption that civilian trials for terrorists create for any American community. We have firsthand experience of this from the 2006 murder trial of Zacarias Moussaoui in Alexandria, VA.

Despite all of this, however, the administration seems fixated on the idea that once we have caught terrorists, the goal isn't to get as much intelligence out of them as quickly as possible to prevent further attacks on soldiers and citizens but to prove that we can treat them the same way we treat everybody else.

My response to that is, maybe we could. Maybe we can do that. And you can put them in a U.S. court, but why in the world would you want to? You could, but should you?

The administration likes to tout its confidence in the U.S. legal system. Well, I don't believe the American people need to try any enemy combatants in our own hometowns and cities to prove that our court system works. We know it works. We are American citizens.

Prosecution is certainly important. But let's be clear, prosecution is not our ultimate goal in this war. Our goal is to capture or kill those who want to kill us, here and abroad, and who are plotting even now, as this case clearly proves, to wreak havoc on our troops overseas.

This is quite simple: Those whom we capture should be interrogated and, if necessary, indefinitely detained and tried in a military setting. Through these interrogations additional intelligence can be derived that leads to additional targets, thereby weakening al Qaeda and other associated terror groups at a moment when they are vulnerable.

The good news is we already have the perfect solution for a case such as the one I have been discussing in Kentucky. These men don't belong in a courtroom in Kentucky. They belong in a secured detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, far away from U.S. civilians. Sending them to Gitmo is the only way to ensure they will not enjoy all the rights and privileges of U.S. citizens. Sending them to Gitmo is the only way we can be certain there won't be retaliatory attacks in Kentucky. How would you like to be the judge in this case? How would you like to be the jurors in this case? Do they run the risk of being targets for the rest of their lives? Are they in sort of witness protection programs indefinitely? Why should we subject U.S. citizens to this kind of risk?

Sending them to Gitmo is the only way we can prevent Kentuckians from having to cover the cost and having to deal with the disturbance and disruptions that would come with a civilian trial, and sending them to Gitmo is the best way to ensure they get what they deserve.

Today I am calling on the administration to change course. Get these men out of Kentucky. Send them to Guantanamo where they belong. Get these terrorists out of the civilian system, get them out of our backyards, and give them the justice they deserve.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11 a.m. for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders and their designees, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half.

The Senator from California.

ETHANOL

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I rise today in support of the Ethanol Subsidy and Tariff Repeal Act, which Senator COBURN has offered and I have cosponsored, along with Senators BURR, CARDIN, COLLINS, CORKER, LIEBERMAN, RISCH, SHAHEEN, TOOMEY, and WEBB.

I know the fact that this amendment is on the floor scheduled to be voted on at 2:15 this afternoon has caused some deep consternation on my side of the aisle. There is objection to the procedures used. I am not going to get into that. I am going to say a vote is a vote, and we are facing a vote at 2:15 unless something changes.

To be candid, if there were an offer to bring this to the floor next week or the week after for a time specific and a commitment specific, I believe the author and myself and our cosponsors would certainly agree to that. But in the absence of that offer, it is important that the Senate take a position on a program that has become both gross and egregious, and I want to explain why I feel that way.

No other product I know of has the triple crown of government support that corn ethanol enjoys in this country. Its use is mandated by law. Oil companies are paid by the Federal Government to use it, so there is a subsidy, and corn ethanol is protected by a rather high tariff. Consequently, it has been very profitable for farmers. This amounts to almost $6 billion a year of taxpayers' money that goes to support the corn ethanol industry in this country.

Put another way, that is $15 million each and every day spent on this subsidy at a time when, candidly, we simply can't afford it.

They say there are very few privileges left out there. This is one that is enormous, and I think we have to take a look at it. I think if this amendment passes, nearly $3 billion is saved between July 1 and the end of the year. That is not insignificant. It goes into the general fund and it helps abate the deficit.

Since 2005, we have spent $22.6 billion on this subsidy, and it gets more expensive every year. In 2011, the government will spend $5.7 billion; in 2012, $5.9 billion; in 2013, $6.2 billion. And you can see, since the program came into being in 2005—and I voted against it then—it was at $1.5 billion; the next year, $2.6 billion; the next year, $3.3 billion; the next year $4.4 billion, the next year, $5.2 billion; and 2010, $5.7 billion of a trifecta of triple-crown subsidies to go to recompense people for using corn ethanol. It is wrong.

On top of this subsidy, we have imposed a 54-cent-per-gallon tariff on ethanol products from Brazil, India, and Australia and others that could import it more cheaply than it is grown here. This then contributes to making the United States more dependent on oil imports from OPEC.

Our amendment is simple. Beginning July 1, we would repeal the 45-cent-per-gallon ethanol subsidy, which goes overwhelmingly to large oil companies, and it would eliminate the 54-cent-per-gallon tariff on imported ethanol.

I believe very strongly that we need to act to repeal these subsidies and these tariffs before another $2.7 billion in taxpayer money, which is $15 million a day, is wasted over the remaining 6 months of this year.

Let me describe the real-world impact of these unwise subsidies and tariffs to our economy.

Last week, I was in the Central Valley at an event and I would say anywhere from six to eight farmers came up to me and said, ''Thank you for trying to end the ethanol business. I can no longer afford feed.'' I began to think, and so we took a look at what the situation is. The fact is this ethanol policy is inflating the price of corn and impacting other sectors of the economy.

Today, approximately 39 percent of our corn crop is now used to produce ethanol in this country. Here is where it has gone: The percent of corn for 2000, 7 percent; 2005, 14 percent; and 2010, 39 percent of the entire corn crop goes to produce ethanol. Corn futures reached a record $7.99 a bushel on the Chicago Board of Trade last week. Prices are up 140 percent in the past 12 months and continue to rise. In 2006, prices were $2 a bushel. Today they are $7.99 a bushel.

This has been a real spike in the price of feed. If it continues one can expect major price increases in grain and food as well. The average price of corn has risen 225 percent since 2006.

Here it is, here it goes on this chart. It goes down slightly and then it has gone up.

In California, the annual feed costs for Foster Farms—this is the largest poultry producer on the west coast—has tripled over the past year, increasing Foster Farms' cost for feed by more than $2 million. This is more than the largest profit the company has ever made.

I hear similar stories from small producers, from co-ops, from dairymen and cattlemen throughout California. The price of feed is rising to such an extent that experts are predicting a mass slaughter of hogs and dairy cows this summer. In other words, it is becoming cheaper to slaughter the animals rather than to feed them. That is wrong.

Paul Cameroon of Imperial County, CA, recently wrote to me:

As a cattle producer who has never asked for a subsidy of any kind, I only ask that

ethanol production stand on its own and allow true supply and demand to dictate the real price of corn.

It seems to me he is spot on. It seems to me when we look at charts like this on grain prices, on the huge subsidy that oil companies get, on the protective tariff, we have to say enough is enough. The USDA predicts that continued demand from the livestock, ethanol, and food industry will reduce corn reserves to the lowest level since the mid-1990s. These low grain reserves will have repercussions globally. We know rising food prices exacerbate global poverty and could intensify political unrest in some parts of the world. But the bottom line is, diverting 39 percent of our crop toward ethanol is artificially driving up corn prices, which in turn is straining people and industries that depend on affordable corn.

In addition to impacting the price of corn, the $6 billion annual ethanol subsidy is fiscally irresponsible. If the current subsidy were to exist through 2014, as the industry has proposed, the Treasury would pay oil companies at least $31 billion to use 69 billion gallons of corn ethanol that the Federal renewable fuels standard already requires them to use under the Clean Air Act. The biggest recipient receiving money is BP. According to reports, it receives $55 million. We cannot afford and should not pay oil companies such as ExxonMobil and BP to follow the law to the tune of $6 billion a year. As the GAO has found, the mandate for the use ''is duplicative in stimulating domestic production and use of ethanol, and can''—and is—''resulting in substantial loss of revenue to the Treasury.''

Let me just say one thing about the tariff. The tariff on low-carbon sugarcane ethanol, which I proposed repealing in 2006, makes our Nation more dependent on foreign oil. How? The combined tariffs on ethanol are 60 cents per gallon, at least 15 cents per gallon higher than the ethanol subsidies they supposedly offset. So this is essentially a major trade barrier.

We have a real problem with this triple crown: We mandate its use, we pay people to use it, and then we set a large tariff barrier to prevent anybody from importing any ethanol, whether it is corn or sugar, that is cheaper. This is expensive, $15 million a day, $6 billion, as I said, a year.

I know many of my colleagues agree with the substance of this legislation, and I appreciate very much that the amendment is being considered under somewhat unusual circumstances and procedures. I hope we can have a fair vote. I hope Members will not disregard the import of what we are doing. We are essentially saving the government nearly $6 billion a year by simply repealing the subsidy, repealing the mandate, and repealing the tariff. I believe the time has come.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Mexico.

LIBYA

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam President, I rise today because I believe the United States is headed down a slippery path toward an escalation of military force in Libya. I also believe if the U.S. military is to be involved in such an escalation, then the Congress must exercise its constitutional authority and approve or disapprove the President's proposal.

I supported President Obama's initial decision to engage in a limited military operation to prevent an imminent humanitarian catastrophe. President Obama and the international community were clear that targeting of civilians by Muammar Qadhafi would not be tolerated. It has been over 60 days since the President notified the Congress that he intended to use military force in Libya. We are adrift. We are without direction. We are in danger of fighting an expanded war, a war that was originally justified as a limited military operation, a no-fly zone, to prevent civilian casualties and imminent catastrophe. This war has now been slowly expanded for one that is pushing for regime change.

We have been down this path before. Let's not go there. In Libya we are now receiving reports that helicopter gunships are being used to target ground forces—something that was never originally intended under the premise of a no-fly zone. In fact, it seems that the no-fly zone has slowly evolved into what some have called a no-drive zone. Congress has not approved this action.

I do not believe the U.N. Security Council approved such an action in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1973.

We also hear it is now the policy to support regime change and that there are some plans to arm rebel groups. Some outside groups and Members of Congress are clamoring to escalate the war in Libya. They believe air power will never dislodge Muammar Qadhafi and his family. The Congress has not approved the use of military force to achieve regime change. Flooding the region with small arms is also being proposed. This would be a major mistake and could lead to a host of unintended consequences.

We do not know enough about the rebels fighting Qadhafi, but we do know there are plenty of mercenaries, as well as members of al-Qaida, waiting to exploit any chaos. If arms are flooded into the region, there is no guarantee they will be able to account for those arms. In my opinion, there is a high likelihood those arms could end up in the hands of some very unsavory and dangerous individuals.

The bottom line is this: Congress has not had the opportunity to weigh in. Like my colleagues, I deplore Muammar Qadhafi. I support a democratic transition and his departure from power, but the military goals should be defined and limited as a matter of policy. It should not include regime change. This would be a dangerous escalation.

As many of you know, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was planning a markup for last Thursday of S. Res. 194, titled ''Expressing the Sense of the Senate on the United States Military Operations in Libya.'' I had strong concerns about the resolution we were scheduled to consider. A sense of the Senate is clearly not an authorization for use of military force. A sense of the Senate does not meet the requirements of the War Powers Act. And a sense of the Senate falls short of meeting our constitutional obligation to declare war.

I drafted an amendment to S. Res. 194. I ask unanimous consent the text of this amendment be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(See exhibit 1.)

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. My amendment stated:

> The President is not authorized to deploy ground forces, including special operations forces, in pursuance of any goals related to United States policy in Libya, unless expressly authorized by Congress or as determined necessary by the President to protect a member of the United States Armed Forces currently deployed in the region.

I believe any authorization of military force should contain similar language. I understand Senator WEBB and Senator CORKER have introduced a resolution with these prohibitions and exceptions to protect our troops and I support these efforts to limit the mission in Libya. It is important that we do not escalate military actions in Libya. An escalation would be a dangerous course, and it would be costly to the region and our country.

While the markup has been postponed, it is my understanding that Senator KERRY and others are working on language that would fulfill our constitutional obligations and comply with the War Powers Act. I look forward to consideration of a resolution of this kind in the Foreign Relations Committee and strongly believe it should include language similar to the amendment I was going to offer.

I have been proud to serve in the Congress for more than a decade. We have fought two lengthy wars during this period of time. I have seen the impact on our military, on their families, on our national deficit. Before the United States escalates its involvement in another overseas conflict, Congress must weigh in. It is our constitutional duty.

EXHIBIT 1

DRAFT AMENDMENT TO S. RES. 194

> That the President is not authorized to deploy ground forces, including special operations forces, in pursuance of any goals related to United States policy in Libya, unless expressly authorized by Congress or as determined necessary by the President to protect a member of the United States Armed Forces currently deployed in the region.

Mr. DURBIN. Will the Senator from New Mexico yield for a question?

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. I will be happy to yield.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I thank the Senator from New Mexico, my colleague on the Senate Foreign Relations committee, for his statement on the floor this morning. It reflects my sentiments completely. I have believed since I was first elected to the House of Representatives and my time in the Senate that we have an awesome responsibility under the Constitution to speak for the American people when the United States of America makes a decision to engage in conduct that relates to our military—particularly when it comes to a declaration of war.

It is clearly understood that if American citizens are under attack or American soil is under threat of attack, the President has the power to move, and move quickly, as Commander in Chief to protect us. In this instance, the War Powers Act suggests that it is now, after 60 days, at that point the responsibility of Congress to step forward, to speak for the American people, and to make a decision as to whether we go forward with a military commitment.

What the Senator from New Mexico has suggested I believe goes right to the heart of our constitutional responsibility. It is a responsibility which we swore to uphold. It is also a responsibility which politically we try to avoid. It is a hard debate and a hard decision.

I am sure the Senator from New Mexico believes, as I do, that some of the toughest votes we have ever had to face as Members of Congress relate to this decision because if the decision is made to go to war, we know the lives of Americans are at risk.

That is why I believe what the Senator from New Mexico said on the Senate floor this morning is so critically important. I am going to work with him and with the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to move forward on a resolution which is consistent with the War Powers Act which expressly states the feelings of the American people through their Representatives in Congress about this decision and our constitutional responsibility.

I sincerely hope we can resolve this before we end this work period, which will be about July 1. If we can bring an issue forward on the floor for that purpose, I believe it is in the best interests of our senatorial responsibility.

I might say, because I have discussed this with the Senator from New Mexico, we know one of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle wants to expressly authorize the use of ground forces in Libya. Let me make it clear, the President has not asked for that. He is not engaged with ground forces, land forces in Libya. At this time I would not only reject it, I would fight it. I think it is a bad decision. I think to engage the United States in a third theater of war with ground forces is way too much at this moment in our history.

So I thank the Senator from New Mexico for not letting this issue disappear amidst the hubbub of all the agendas we face on the floor of the Senate but coming to the floor and reminding us of our constitutional responsibility.

I will close by thanking Senator CARDIN of Maryland as well, who has been a lead sponsor in our efforts. I will be working with him and the Senator from New Mexico and other like-minded Senators.

I thank the Senator for coming to the floor.

I know that wasn't in the nature of a question, but I ask the Senator, does he agree?

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. I thank the Senator for his statement. I believe with all of us working together—our chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator CARDIN, and others, as well as the Presiding Officer, who is also on the Foreign Relations Committee with us—we can come to a resolution which complies with what the President has stated.

The President says he has no intention of sending ground forces into Libya. But it is important at this point in time, as the Senator from Illinois pointed out and as the Constitution mandates, that we step in and express the will of the American people on this issue. That is the whole purpose of what I am on the floor for today, and I look forward to working very closely with the Senator from Illinois.

With that, I note the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. COATS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COATS. Madam President, I know the Democratic side has not used its full allotment of time, but because another speaker is not here, I will go ahead, and hopefully we will be able to yield time if someone else does come forward.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. COATS. Madam President, I have been on the Senate floor several times now during the last few weeks to discuss our grave economic condition, the need to reduce Washington's out-of-control spending, and, most importantly, the urgent need to start taking action before time runs out.

If there is any remaining doubt in anyone's mind that the U.S. economy is facing a historic and unprecedented fiscal crisis, consider a few of the recent news reports since I last spoke on the floor, which was not that many days ago. Reports came out saying that the national unemployment rate increased to 9.1 percent, with over 22 million Americans unemployed or underemployed. This is not how we rebound from a recession, historically. There is something more going on here than the normal downturns and upturns of the economic cycle. This is something of historic proportion.

Since I last spoke on this floor, two more rating agencies—Moody's and Fitch—have issued serious warnings that they may downgrade America's AAA debt rating. This comes after S&P already lowered its outlook of the U.S. economy to negative.

Just last week, on its cover, USA TODAY published the frightening headline ''U.S. owes $62 trillion; unfunded obligations amount to $534,000 per household.'' Those are unfunded obligations. We have funded obligations we currently owe in addition to that, and some put those even higher.

There was an interview yesterday with Bill Gross, who heads up PIMCO, the largest bondholder in the country—in the world, actually. Bill Gross indicated in this interview that the money owed to cover future liabilities in entitlement programs in the United States is actually in worse financial shape than Greece and other debt-laden European countries. Much of the attention, of course, is focused on our public debt, which is running at $14.3 trillion, but what hasn't been focused on as much are the unfunded liabilities that will come due, the obligations and promises already made that will have to be paid for, that will be in addition to the $14.3 trillion already on the books. Taken together, Gross said this is going to equal nearly $100 trillion. It is a number beyond anyone's comprehension, it is hard to fathom what $100 trillion means to the American taxpayer, to America's abilities, obligations and financial responsibilities. Now, maybe $100 trillion is a little high. It doesn't matter whether it is $80 trillion or $90 trillion or $100 trillion; it is certainly going to put our country in a very, very difficult position.

I wish to read one more piece from the CNBC interview with Bill Gross:

> We've always wondered who will buy Treasurys after the Federal Reserve purchases the last of its $600 billion to end the second leg of its quantitative easing program later this month. It's certainly not Pimco and it's probably not the bond funds of the world.

I quoted Erskine Bowles, who is a Democrat, was Chief of Staff for President Clinton and was one of the co-authors of the fiscal commission report presented at the request of the President laying out the dire crisis we face and recommendations on how to address it. Erskine Bowles, co-chair of the President's fiscal reform commission, said that the growing national debt and Federal deficits are ''a cancer and they are truly going to destroy this country from within, unless we have the common sense to do something about it.''

This is the challenge before us—each Member of the House of Representatives and each Member of the Senate

and the President of the United States. This dwarfs all other matters before this Congress. With all due respect, the Senate spending several weeks on the Small Business Innovation Research Act, the Federal Aviation Administration's bill, and now the Economic Development Revitalization Act has left little time for the debate that ought to be undertaken on this floor in continuous fashion to address this fiscal situation. The crisis has implications for the future of our country, the future of this Nation.

The rapid escalation of the deficit and debt requires our full engagement—not later but now. The growing consensus among those who have given serious analysis to our fiscal plight calls for an all-of-the-above approach in addressing the problem, including—dare I say it—entitlement spending, which essentially is Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare.

If Congress and the White House are serious about preventing the destruction of our economy, it is time we get serious about talking about entitlements, including Medicare, because the hard truth is that if Medicare is not included in the debate, any effort to put together any kind of a credible plan necessary to bring about fiscal stability will be defeated.

Medicare has proven to be the greatest fiscal challenge facing this country. It alone last year took in $1.8 trillion of new liabilities, which is more than we spend on all nondefense discretionary spending. Nondefense discretionary spending is that spending which goes to every other function of the Federal Government other than interest on our national debt and mandatory spending.

The Medicare trustees recently sounded alarm bells in a report announcing that the program's total of unfunded future obligations is a staggering $38.4 trillion. They cautioned that the hospital trust fund, known as Medicare Part A, will be exhausted by 2024. This is 5 years earlier than what they had predicted just a year earlier. So 1 year has passed, and the trustees are now so alarmed they are saying we are going to run out of money 5 years earlier than we thought. What are they going to say next year? They will probably shorten that time even more.

Economists and policy experts on both sides of the aisle—Republican, Democratic, conservative, liberal—have been warning about the dangers of Medicare spending and the impact on our national debt for years. Yet Congress has punted its responsibilities, saying ''we will take care of it after the next election.''

Back in 2006, Chairman of the Federal Reserve Alan Greenspan warned lawmakers, saying that Medicare spending is unsustainable and could one day drive debt and government interest rates substantially higher. I suggest that date is here, and this crisis is knocking on our door.

Michael Cannon, director of health policy studies at the Cato Institute, said: Nothing presents as great a threat to the Federal budget—and therefore to economic growth—as the persistent and rapid growth of Medicare spending.

At a White House summit last year, President Obama recognized the unsustainability of entitlement spending. This is a quote from our President:

> Almost all of the long-term deficit and debt that we face relates to the exploding costs of Medicare and Medicaid. Almost all of it. That is the single biggest driver of our federal debt. And if we don't get control over that, we can't get control over our federal budget.

I am quoting the words of the President of the United States, who now has taken the position that we shouldn't address the Medicare problem. Yet, as President, he has said that almost all of the deficit and debt we face relates to the exploding costs of these two programs, Medicare and Medicaid. He repeats it by saying ''almost all of it'' and ''the single biggest driver of our Federal debt.''

Alice Rivlin, who served as budget director under President Bill Clinton, said it best: ''There's no mystery about what we ought to do, we just need to get on with it.''

Madam President, we just need to get on with it. But that hasn't happened. Despite the President's own recognition of the single biggest driver of our Federal debt and despite the warning sirens from economists and even the Medicare trustees, the President has yet to submit a single proposal to address this urgent problem.

Others in positions of leadership have also decided to ignore these critical warnings about Medicare and its looming insolvency and threat to our fiscal house. They have rejected any proposals for changing Medicare as we know it. Well, the category for these people are the ''do-nothings.''

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator has used 10 minutes.

Mr. COATS. I ask unanimous consent for 2 more minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COATS. Let me skip forward here.

Despite the President's own recognition of this problem, we have not taken this plan forward. There are do-nothings who think that if we do not act, Medicare will be secure. Actually, the do-nothings are the ones who are making Medicare's future unstable. It is those who have taken the responsibility to stand up and recognize this problem and be free and open in debate and honest with the American people who are the ones who have had the courage to go forward. Yet they get reviled for ''throwing grandma under the bus'' or taking Medicare away.

I was approached by a person in a factory in Indiana who came up to me and said: You are taking away my 88-year-old mother's health care. He was upset, and rightfully so, but I told him he is upset at the wrong person because we are trying to save that health care. We are trying to save Medicare.

We have two options: We can either continue with the status quo and let Medicare go bankrupt or we can step up to the plate, debate thoughtful proposals, and work to keep our promise to America's seniors by enacting meaningful reform. It is those of us who are willing to step up to the plate who are here to save Medicare, not destroy Medicare. It is those who are saying we need to do nothing or who refuse to do anything who are going to cause Medicare to go bankrupt and take benefits away from seniors.

This is the debate we need to have. We are burdened by this. We need to address it. It is the challenge of the day. Let's go forward, stand up, and do the right thing.

I appreciate the extension of time.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business and that I be followed by Senator COBURN.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ETHANOL

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Madam President, I rise today to speak about the amendment offered by my colleague, the Senator from Oklahoma, to the Economic Development Revitalization Act which would repeal the volumetric ethanol excise tax credit. His amendment is No. 436.

For months, there has been very heated public debate surrounding the blender tax credit for ethanol and the tariff on imported ethanol. Some of my colleagues advocate repealing ethanol tax incentives immediately, while others are adamantly opposed to changing course on tax policy that was enacted at the end of the last Congress and would extend these tax credits through the end of this year. Regardless, it is clear that Congress must make a decision on whether to reform the ethanol blenders tax credit and import tariff this year.

In my home State of Georgia, I see both the positive and the negative effects this tax policy has had. While it has spurred the growth of the ethanol industry, some say it has caused drastic increases in the price of corn-based feedstock.

A new study prepared for the upcoming G20 meeting shows that biofuel subsidies are directly related to food price volatility. I believe that because the credit is set to expire in December of this year and many ethanol producers have the credit embedded in their business plans, Congress should not immediately repeal the tax credit. When it expires at the end of this year—even though I have supported this tax credit for all the years I have

served in both the House and the Senate—I think the time has come for it to end. If we tell the blenders today that at the end of this year this tax credit is going to expire, it needs to expire then. So I do not intend to support an extension of that tax credit beginning upon the expiration at the end of this year.

Regardless of where one stands on the underlying issue itself, I believe the amendment deserves to have a vote on its merits and not be blocked by procedural tactics. Because so much attention has been paid to the issue and because we have had such extensive debates, this amendment deserves an up-or-down vote, rather than being stopped by a filibuster. For this reason, I intend to vote in favor of the motion to invoke cloture on the amendment of the Senator from Oklahoma, and I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

I yield the floor.

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, may I make an inquiry of the Chair?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. How much time remains for the Republicans in morning business?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. There is 15 minutes 20 seconds.

Mr. COBURN. I thank the Chair.

These are interesting days in our country. We find ourselves in a very deep hole, and it is not the fault of the people; it is the fault of the Congress. We continue to spend money we do not have on things we do not need. When we do that personally, we end up filing bankruptcy. Pretty soon, we run out of new credit cards to take on, and we get to the point where we can't pay our debts. That is a question that is in front of our country today as our economy is struggling and we have this massive debt. We ought to be about every small, medium, and large step we can take to solve the problem, not to solve the problem by saying we can't pay our bills but to solve the problem so we create a prosperous future for our kids and those who follow us.

There is a lot of controversy over the amendment I offered, and it is inaccurately claimed by the majority leader that this amendment was rule XIV'd. It was not rule XIV'd. According to the procedures of the Senate, you can file cloture on any amendment at any time. That is a privilege every Senator has. Why would somebody file cloture on an amendment? It is because, over the first 5½ months of this year, through the leadership of the Senate, we have been unable to have a free and open debate and free and open offering of amendments. Because the procedure is rarely used does not mean it is not ethical and not accurate. As a matter of fact, the reason the procedure was put there was in case at a point in time your rights as a Senator to offer amendments are being limited by the majority. That is why we have this rule. Because you can take 16 of your colleagues and file a cloture petition and, therefore, have a vote on your amendment.

So what we are hearing going on in the background today is, the reason you shouldn't vote for this amendment, even though you agree we should get rid of and save $3 billion, much as the Senator from California outlined, $3 billion that the very people who are blending and receiving the $3 billion don't want, the argument is, it is because they don't like the way the amendment came to the floor. Explain to the people at home, you have an opportunity to save this country $3 billion and you know it is the right policy, but you are not going to vote for it because you don't like the way the amendment came to the floor. I would remind my colleagues that of the $3 billion we are going to save, 1.2 billion of it we are going to borrow from China, if we go on and spend it, and we are going to charge that 1.2 billion to our kids and grandkids. The interesting point is, we have grown, over 20-some years, to rely on ethanol for 7 percent of our fuel, and it has been a very expensive process. It is expensive directly because when you go to buy gasoline today, it is not the price you pay at the pump that you are actually paying. Take all the subsidies and all the tax credits and all the low-interest loans and all the nonrepayment of all the grants and all the moneys that have been put into this program, and when you buy that tank of gas, every gallon that you put into your car after you pay for it, you already paid $1.72 through your taxes to have that gallon there.

So we are not getting rid of the mandate on ethanol. It is 7½ percent. It has helped us in some ways. It is a very inefficient fuel that causes us to consume more fuel, produce more CO_2. But the fact is, we have an amendment in the Chamber that is designed to take away a subsidy, and the only reason we are taking away the subsidy is because in law we are saying you have to do it anyway.

I would introduce, for the record, a letter from the refiners that states—this is the National Petroleum Refiners Association, representing 97 percent of the people who get this tax credit—97 percent of the $3 billion. They say they don't want the $3 billion. The vote is going to come down to something very clear. We are going to give $3 billion to some of the most profitable companies in America or we are not. The interesting fact is, they are saying: Please don't give it to us. Please don't give us this money.

Think of the time when we are borrowing the money to give to them and they are saying don't give it to us. We are going to have a vote in the Chamber and very likely not win because of a procedure or because of parochial interests. The fact is, every gallon of ethanol that is blended to gasoline, whoever does the blending, gets 45 cents a gallon, and they don't need it because they are going to blend it anyway. So the real question is, Will we continue to be ignorant in Washington of the common sense the American people want us to have? The common sense is, if you are paying somebody to do something and by law they have to do it anyway and then they write you a letter and say: Please don't pay me anymore to do this, I am going to do it anyway, why would we continue to send them the money? Why would we continue to do that, especially when 40 percent of it we have to borrow from the Chinese to be able to pay it to the American oil company? It makes no sense. There is no logic you can come up with. The calculations out of Iowa State University on this $3 billion is that the amount of jobs that have come out of this in the past cost $14 million a year per job—14 million a year per job created out of this subsidy.

No wonder we are broke. No wonder we are failing financially. No wonder we are failing our children and our grandchildren, because we continue to do things that don't have any correlation with logic or common sense. I know the arguments. I know the argument is that, well, we passed this last year as part of the extension. Well, as a Republican, I was one of the few Republicans who did not vote for that extension. Because not only did we pass additional tax cuts and additional unpaid programs, we cut no spending to be able to pay for it. So what we did was borrow a whole bunch more money and not solve any of the critical issues that lie in front of our country.

Forty percent of last year's corn crop went to ethanol. As a matter of fact, there is so much ethanol production, last year we shipped 400 million gallons overseas. That is great, except when you take the time to think about that with that 400 million gallons, we sent $500 million worth of subsidy. So now we are subsidizing the ethanol that goes to Europe with your tax dollars so they can have cheaper gasoline than we have, because they are taking $1.72 per gallon and getting the benefit of our tax dollars to have cheaper ethanol in Europe than they can get from other places.

So there is nothing about this that makes sense, other than if you are a wonk and study the politics and the procedures and the parochialism that goes on inside the political body. That is what has gotten us into trouble. We are more interested in power and position and party. I am sick of both parties. We better start focusing on the real problems in front of our country. We are going to have a $1.7 trillion deficit this year, and the way you get rid of that is 1 billion or 2 billion or 3 billion at a time.

Here is something that makes absolutely no sense. Here is something that has no true demand for it. Here is something that is $3 billion that the people we are paying it to say they don't want, and we are not going to take them up on it? What part of stupid are we? This is like a Ferrell movie. It doesn't make sense. It is comedic.

We have had a lot of debate. Let me just talk for a minute about what is going on in the agricultural community throughout this country if you are a poultry, milk or livestock producer.

You can't bring your cattle to feedlots right now because corn is too expensive—$7.65 a bushel yesterday. You can't afford to fatten your cattle, so they are not bringing them in from the range. We are slaughtering dairy cows all across this country because 70 percent of the cost of dairy cattle is the corn you feed them. We are going to get all sorts of untoward interruptions and price increases in our food if we continue this policy. Seventy percent of the cost for chickens is feed. We are having chicken processors close and go into bankruptcy. We are having chicken raisers, the actual chicken farms—a lot in Oklahoma, a lot in Arkansas, a lot throughout the South, even over in Delaware and in Virginia—can't afford to feed the chickens. So what is going to happen because we have this false subsidy? The fact is, right now, 15 percent of the food increases in this country that you have seen in the last year are directly associated with this policy—directly associated with this policy. That doesn't have any effect on the fact that what could we do by sending $7 corn out of this country to our balance of payments, which would help our trade imbalance? Instead, we are burning it, and it is a highly inefficient fuel. It is a highly inefficient fuel. Everybody knows that when they fill up with 15 percent or 10 percent ethanol, they get much poorer gas mileage. Everybody knows that. In Oklahoma, we have all these stations where it says ''ethanol free.'' Why do people pay 10 or 15 cents more a gallon? Because they win on mileage. They actually get better performance when they don't have ethanol in their fuel. We all know that. It is just in some States you don't have that option. We are fortunate. We can still buy real gas.

I understand we have about 3 minutes remaining. I will close with the following statement. This is going to be a historic vote, not about ethanol, not about subsidies. It is going to be a historic vote that sends a signal to the American people. Either the people in Washington get it and are going to stop wasting money on programs they don't need to waste money on and they are going to start acting in the best long-term interests of the country, they are either going to do that or they are not. So when we see the results of this vote, you are going to have a hard time explaining: I voted against that because I didn't like the way the amendment came up. The fact is, here is $3 billion we don't have to spend over the next 6 months. If we don't spend it, that is $3 billion we are not going to have to borrow from our children and that they are not going to be paying interest on for the next 30 years.

This comes down to the point in time, does this Senate recognize the amount of trouble we are in, and are Senators willing to give up parochial interests, procedural interests, are they willing to do what is necessary to put this country back on course? My hope and prayer is they are.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Dakota.

ENERGY

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I rise this morning to talk about America's energy future. The reality is we need a diversified energy future. What I mean by that is we need to develop all of our energy resources. In my home State of North Dakota, we are doing just that. We have coal, and we are developing clean coal technologies. We have oil and gas. We have hydro. We have biofuels—ethanol and biodiesel. We have solar. We have wind. We have biomass. We are working aggressively to develop all of them, both traditional sources of energy and our renewable sources of energy.

Ten years ago, in 2000 when I started as Governor of North Dakota, we set a course to develop a comprehensive energy plan to develop all of our energy resources, both traditional and renewable, and to do it in tandem, by encouraging private investment that would spur the development of new technologies—new technologies to develop traditional sources of energy and renewable sources of energy, and create new and exciting synergistic partnerships that would both diversify our energy mix, help us produce more energy most cost effectively, create good-quality jobs and improve environmental stewardship.

That is exactly what is happening. That is exactly what is happening in our State. That is exactly what we need to do as a nation. Let me give you some examples from our State. Oil and gas. Oil and gas development has taken off in North Dakota. We are now the fourth largest oil-producing State in the Union. We recently passed States such as Oklahoma and Louisiana, producing more oil, and we are producing it from new formations such as the Bakken Shale and the Three Forks, and we are doing it with new technologies: directional and horizontal drilling. We figured out how to use those technologies such as directional drilling and hydraulic fracturing in new ways that produce more energy but do it with good environmental stewardship. For example, in the case of hydraulic fracturing, we recycle the water. We go down 2 miles underground, we drill directionally underground for miles. So it is a small footprint. One well now produces what maybe 10 or 12 wells used to produce. The water we use to force the oil to the surface we send back down; we recycle it—we use it again—and ultimately we put it back down the hole where we drew it from in the first place when it came up with much of the oil that is produced.

In the case of coal, we take lignite coal and we produce synthetic natural gas. We put it in pipelines and we send it to other parts of the country, just like the gas you pull out of the ground. At the same time, in one of our plants, we are capturing CO_2, the carbon dioxide. We are capturing it, we are compressing it, we are putting it in pipelines, and we are sending it off to the oilfields for second or tertiary oil recovery.

Those are some of the new developments we are undertaking in traditional sources of energy. But as we do that with things such as oil and gas and coal, we are also developing the renewables. For example, wind. Our State is now the ninth largest wind energy State of all 50. We are continuing to move up the ranks, and that includes investing billions of dollars to make it happen. Again, that is more energy for our country, from more diversified sources, creating good jobs in the process.

Think how important that is. Think how important it is to create good jobs at a time when we have more than 9 percent unemployment, 15-plus million people out of work, an economy that we need to get going and growing. Energy development represents an incredible opportunity to make that happen. But when we talk about energy development, we need all of the different sources of energy. Each has strengths and each has weaknesses. That is why we need the mix.

In our State we also produce biofuels: ethanol and biodiesel. Clearly the discussion today is how do we best create that environment to continue the development, the production, and the growth of ethanol in a way that is cost effective, that serves the taxpayers of the country, but continues to develop that vital industry for our country at a time when we need to reduce our dependence on foreign oil, when we need more domestically produced energy, when we need quality jobs, when we need a growing economy.

We can do it. We can do it with the right kind of energy policy—with the right kind of energy policy—and that is what we are talking about today. Think about ethanol. It helps reduce our dependence on foreign oil. For every gallon of ethanol we use as part of the fuel mix, that is 1 less gallon of gasoline we are bringing in from the Middle East, and by increasing supply we help reduce the cost of gasoline at the pump for our consumers.

In addition to that, we are creating good-paying American jobs. In 2010, the ethanol industry employed 400,000 workers in good jobs throughout the United States—400,000 jobs. It provided an important market for American farmers throughout our country. It displaced the need for 445 million barrels of foreign oil. Let me repeat that. It displaced the need for 445 million barrels of foreign oil. It reduced the price of gasoline at the pump by 80 cents a gallon for the American consumer.

In addition to all of that, the ethanol industry paid $11 billion in Federal taxes in 2010. I want to emphasize that point. In 2010, the ethanol industry paid $11 billion in Federal tax. So it is an important industry to our country and we need it to continue.

The point of the discussion today, though, is how best to do that. So for this discussion today, how do we create the right environment to stimulate private investment so we have that growing economy, we have more jobs, we have more energy, but we also generate more tax revenues with less government spending so we both grow our way out of this debt and deficit, we get this economy going, we create a better energy future for these young people and young people all over our great country.

That is why I have sponsored legislation, along with Senator THUNE and Senator KLOBUCHAR, that will reform the ethanol tax credit. It will provide deficit reduction and set us on the right path for alternative fuel development in our country for the long run. The legislation is called the Ethanol Tax Reform and Deficit Reduction Plan.

It is the right way to transition from the current VEETC, the volumetric ethanol excise tax credit, rather than the amendment today to simply do away with VEETC. This is the right transition for us to make from the VEETC to creating the right environment to stimulate investment and energy growth in biofuels for the future. The ethanol tax reform and deficit reduction plan provides $1 billion in deficit reduction right away—provides $1 billion in deficit reduction. But it also provides the right transition for ethanol by providing the right kind of energy policy. Specifically, we provide incentives for things such as blender pumps that offer consumers choice. We provide the right kind of incentives for research, development, and deployment of second-generation ethanol, specifically cellulosic ethanol, so that instead of making ethanol from food products, we make it from stover and wheat straw and other sources.

By combining blender pumps, flex fuel vehicles, and commonsense regulation on the part of the EPA that encourages higher fuel blends, we create the business environment that will foster growth in the ethanol industry.

What does that mean? That means, No. 1, we avoid the ongoing cost of subsidies such as the VEETC. Second, we set the ethanol industry up for long-term growth. Third, we gain jobs. We gain jobs at a time when we badly need them. We produce more energy, which reduces our dependence on foreign oil, and we gain tax revenues. We gain tax revenues to help reduce our deficit.

So we not only spend less directly, helping to reduce the deficit, we grow our economy, and that growing economy builds on the $11 billion that the industry is already paying in Federal taxes, and we grow that base while we are growing our jobs. That is the right way to move forward, to move out of our deficit situation in this economy, to get our economy going and also to produce more energy.

This is a market-based approach that will give customers more choice and also reduce their fuel costs. For example, you go into the station, there is a blender pump there. You have a flex fuel vehicle. You can dial up whatever blend you choose, anywhere from 0 percent biofuels all the way up to 85 percent, whatever works best for you, whatever works best for your pocketbook, whatever works best for your vehicle.

We have blender pumps in my State. We have an incentive for blender pumps in my State. As a result, we have more blender pumps than any other State in the country. The reality is today, if you buy fuel in North Dakota, almost all of the fuel you buy will have ethanol in it and you do not even realize it. Why? Because at a 90–10 percent blend, every vehicle can use it, and it is the lowest price gasoline at the pump, so dealers want to sell it. Consumers buy it. They simply buy it because they pick the lowest priced fuel at the pump. It is a 90–10 blend.

That is where we are going with this, a market-based approach. That is how it can work for the benefit of our economy, for the benefit of our energy future, for the benefit of reducing spending, and for the benefit of growing our tax revenues. That is the choice we have today. That is the right way to approach job creation and energy development in our country. We are reducing spending. We are improving and creating an environment for private sector investment that will help us build a probusiness climate for energy and economic growth in our country.

I urge my fellow Senators to make that progrowth choice.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TESTER). Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF CLAIRE C. CECCHI TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY

NOMINATION OF ESTHER SALAS TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Claire C. Cecchi, of New Jersey, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey, and Esther Salas, of New Jersey, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 1 hour for debate equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, today is a distinct honor for me to have the opportunity to fulfill the constitutional commitment that each of us has to assure the public at large that justice is being administered as it should be. We fulfill this commitment by making sure vacancies on the Federal bench are filled with individuals who have the proper experience and will provide the kind of fairness and balance in decisionmaking that confirms America's basic tenets.

Mr. President, during a 2-year hiatus that I took from the Senate, I was honored with the naming of a Federal courthouse in Newark after me, and I was so pleased to have that association with the justice administered in our society. Before the building was dedicated, I asked that an inscription that I authored be placed on the wall. It reads exactly as I labored to write it. It says:

> The true measure of a democracy is the dispensation of justice.

As a matter of fact, when I shared that moment with my dear departed colleague, Senator Ted Kennedy, who questioned whether I wrote it because he knew I wasn't a lawyer, we joked about it, and I confirmed it. That is the way I saw things.

The sentiment behind that quote underscores how seriously I take my role in recommending New Jersey District Court nominees to President Obama. That is why I am so proud to come to the floor today and urge my colleagues to confirm President Obama's nomination of Judge Claire Cecchi and Judge Esther Salas to the U.S. District Court for New Jersey. Both are well qualified for the court, having devoted their careers to upholding the rule of law.

Throughout her career, Judge Cecchi has demonstrated her ability to navigate complicated legal matters and manage complex cases. During the confirmation process, she showed her temperament and diligence, she let us know something of her candor, and displayed the kind of character that she brings to the bench.

For the past 5 years, Judge Cecchi has served as a U.S. magistrate judge in the District of New Jersey, where she has presided over hundreds of civil and criminal cases.

Before joining the bench, Judge Cecchi spent 14 years in private practice, focusing on complex civil litigation. One of her passions is to encourage young people to pursue a career in the law. She has hosted Bring Your Child to Work Day programs in the district court, as well as a mock trial for

a local sixth grade class, to let young people have some understanding of what goes into making sure justice is fairly served in the Federal courts.

Judge Cecchi's community spirit is pronounced in her activities. She has volunteered for the Junior League, Orphans with AIDS, the Human Needs Food Pantry, and the Salvation Army, to name just a few.

She graduated from Fordham University Law School, and cum laude from Barnard College at Columbia University. Before being appointed to the bench, she was a partner at two New Jersey law firms, and she was an assistant corporation counsel for the City of New York.

Like Judge Cecchi, Judge Salas has earned the respect and admiration of New Jersey's legal community—first as an accomplished litigator and, for the past 5 years, as a U.S. magistrate judge. She was the first Latina in New Jersey to serve as a magistrate judge.

In a newspaper profile a few years ago, Judge Salas recalled how, when she was 10 years old, her family lost everything in a fire in the apartment building where they lived. The judge's mother said to her:

> Things are going to be fine. We've gotten this far, and we are going to make it.

What determination that showed. I like to tell this story because I believe it demonstrates how Judge Salas's experiences have shaped her life and her career. She has known hardship, but she has also known great success as a member of New Jersey's legal community.

Before Judge Salas became a magistrate judge, she served 9 years as an assistant Federal public defender in Newark, representing indigent clients in a variety of cases. In addition, Judge Salas has worked in private practice, handling appellate work for a New Jersey law firm. She is a graduate of the Rutgers University School of Law, and she clerked for New Jersey Superior Court Judge Eugene Codey.

Additionally, Judge Salas has served as the president of the Hispanic Bar Association of New Jersey, an organization to which she has devoted countless volunteer hours throughout her career.

As I shared with the Judiciary Committee when I introduced Judge Cecchi and Judge Salas in March, I am not a lawyer, but I have a deep and abiding respect for the law. I was pleased to recommend Judge Claire Cecchi and Judge Esther Salas because both are unquestionably qualified to serve on the district court, and they will bring honor to the people of New Jersey and our country.

I am confident that my colleagues in the Senate will agree and vote overwhelmingly to confirm their nominations.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time during the quorum call be equally divided, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise to urge my colleagues to vote for the confirmation of two of New Jersey's most outstanding judicial professionals to fill two vacancies for United States District Court judges for the District of New Jersey. I understand that vote will be taking place around noon. Both of these very qualified women are now U.S. magistrate judges.

Judge Claire Cecchi and Judge Esther Salas are among the most respected leaders in New Jersey's judicial community. Both have demonstrated skill and professionalism on the bench and an impressive ability to manage the heavy and complex dockets before them.

Judge Cecchi has a broad range of litigation experience, having worked in the private sector for over 14 years. After serving in the Office of Corporation Counsel for the City of New York, she practiced with Robinson, St. John & Wayne, and later with Robinson, Lapidus, and Livelli, both large and well-respected New Jersey firms.

She has been no stranger to complex litigation for both defendants and plaintiffs. In the course of her distinguished career, she has focused on a range of challenging issues—from security litigation and complex tort matters to employment law, criminal cases, construction cases, and contracts. In handling a case involving a suit by the Securities and Exchange Commission—a prominent case against two companies in Federal Court in the Southern District of New York—Judge Cecchi demonstrated outstanding legal skills. She was singled out by many in the legal profession in New Jersey for her depth and range of knowledge on the subject and for her conduct of the case.

Judge Cecchi later went to the firm of Carpenter, Bennet & Morrisey, the second oldest law firm in New Jersey, where she worked for almost a decade developing a range of experience in environmental and toxic tort cases, class actions, patent cases, and employment law.

She is a graduate of Fordham University and Barnard College at Columbia University, and began her career clerking for the Honorable Kevin Thomas Duffy of the Southern District of New York.

As a U.S. magistrate judge, she has shown a unique set of judicial skills that makes her an exceptional choice for the position of United States District Court Judge for the District of New Jersey, and I urge my colleagues to vote to confirm her nomination.

Magistrate Judge Esther Salas has been an exceptional public servant. In 2006, she became the first Hispanic to serve as a U.S. magistrate judge for the District of New Jersey. In her handling of a docket of well over 400 cases, she has earned the respect of many in the legal community who have said she is the finest judge they have worked with in many years of practice.

In a 10-year environmental dispute involving 350 attorneys, she managed the resulting avalanche of motions and countermotions involving Federal and State claims for more than $300 million in cleanup costs and damages. Her handling of the case prompted several lawyers not only to credit her with being the principal moving force in bringing the parties to agreement but recommending her to the Judiciary Committee with their unqualified support.

Prior to serving as a U.S. magistrate judge, Judge Salas worked for almost 10 years in the Federal Public Defenders Office, where she zealously provided her clients with her best legal advice and a skilled defense in what were often difficult and complex cases.

Judge Salas clerked with distinction for Superior Court Judge Eugene Codey, and—a proud New Jerseyan—she earned her degrees from Rutgers University and Rutgers University Law School.

She is a respected member of the New Jersey State Bar, a past president of the Hispanic bar of New Jersey, and an extraordinary jurist.

These two extraordinary nominees—two of New Jersey's most respected legal professionals—both deserve confirmation by the full Senate as U.S. District Court Judges for the District of New Jersey. I urge my colleagues to confirm their nominations and give New Jersey two respected and distinguished District Court judges who have earned the confidence of the legal community in my State, the recommendation of the Judiciary Committee and, in my view, deserve a unanimous vote in the full Senate.

Mr. President, with that, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the Senate last confirmed a judicial nominee on May 17, almost 1 month ago. This is despite the fact that almost a score of

qualified nominees have been awaiting final consideration since that date. Last month, the Senate recessed for Memorial Day with 19 judicial nominees pending on the Senate's Executive Calendar. Of those, 16 are by anyone's definition consensus nominees. All 16 were unanimously approved by every Republican and every Democratic Senator on the Judiciary Committee after thorough review. They are all supported by their home State Senators, Republicans and Democrats. These are the kind of nominees who in past years would be confirmed within days of being reported to the Senate and without the extended delays that now burden every nomination.

With judicial vacancies continuing at crisis levels, affecting the ability of courts to provide justice to Americans around the country, I have been urging the Senate to vote on the judicial nominations reported favorably by the Judiciary Committee and pending on the Senate's Executive Calendar. My efforts have not yielded much success or sense of urgency. Nor have the statements by the Chief Justice of the United States, the Attorney General of the United States, the White House counsel, the Federal Bar Association and a number of Federal judges across the country.

Those who delay or prevent the filling of these vacancies must understand that they are delaying and preventing the administration of justice. We can pass all the bills we want to protect American taxpayers from fraud and other crimes, but you cannot lock up criminals or recover ill-gotten gains if you do not have judges. The mounting backlogs of civil and criminal cases are growing larger.

We should have regular votes on President Obama's highly qualified nominees, instead of more delays. With vacancies still totaling more than 90 on Federal courts throughout the country, and with nearly two dozen future vacancies on the horizon, there is no time to delay consideration of these nominations. Had we taken positive action on the consensus nominees, vacancies would have been reduced to below 80 for the first time since the beginning of President Obama's administration.

All of the nominations reported by the Judiciary Committee and pending on the Senate's Executive Calendar have been through the committee's fair and thorough process. We review extensive background material on each nominee. All Senators on the committee, Democratic and Republican, have the opportunity to ask the nominees questions at a live hearing. Senators also have the opportunity to ask questions in writing following the hearing and to meet with the nominees. All of these nominees which the committee reported to the Senate have a strong commitment to the rule of law and a demonstrated faithfulness to the Constitution. All have the support of their home state Senators, both Republican and Democratic. They should not be delayed for weeks and months needlessly after being so thoroughly and fairly considered by the Judiciary Committee.

Today, the Senate is being allowed to vote on two more of President Obama's outstanding judicial nominees, Esther Salas and Claire Cecchi—both currently Federal magistrate judges for the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey, the court to which they are nominated. Judge Salas previously served as a Federal public defender and in private practice. She is a graduate of Rutgers University and Rutgers University School of Law. Judge Cecchi previously worked in private practice and for the city of New York. She graduated from Barnard College of Columbia University and Fordham University School of Law. Judge Salas and Judge Cecchi both have the strong support of their home state Senators, Senator LAUTENBERG and Senator MENENDEZ.

After today's votes on the two New Jersey nominees, there will remain more than a dozen other judicial nominations that were reported unanimously and that are being stalled for no good reason and without justification. They include several nominees to fill judicial emergency vacancies, including Paul Engelmayer and William Kuntz of New York, Richard Brooke Jackson of Colorado, Kathleen Williams of Florida, and Nelva Gonzales Ramos of Texas, as well as Henry Floyd of South Carolina to the Fourth Circuit.

Other nominations reported unanimously and without any opposition are Paul Oetken of New York, Romana Manglona of the Mariana Islands, Sara Lynn Darrow of Illinois, John Andrew Ross of Missouri, Timothy M. Cain of South Carolina, Nanette Jolivette Brown of Louisiana and Nancy Torreson of Maine. Some have been needlessly stalled before the Senate for months. Those with home state Republican Senators in support include Bernice Donald of Tennessee to the Sixth Circuit, Henry Floyd of South Carolina to the Fourth Circuit, Sara Lynn Darrow of Illinois, Kathleen Williams of Florida, Nelva Gonzales Ramos of Texas, John Andrew Ross of Missouri, Timothy Cain of South Carolina, Nannette Jolivette Brown of Louisiana, and Nancy Torresen of Maine. In spite of all this, we continue to be unable to secure consent from the Republican leadership for the Senate to consider and vote on these nominations. They will all be confirmed if allowed to be considered.

We could have made significant progress helping Americans seeking justice in our Federal courts before the Memorial Day recess. I hope Senators across the aisle can join together with us and work with the President to provide needed judicial resources before our Fourth of July recess.

I congratulate both of the outstanding nominees we will confirm today, and their families on what I expect will be their unanimous confirmations today.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today, the Senate will confirm two more of President Obama's judicial nominees. Both nominees are for seats in the District of New Jersey. With these confirmations today, the District of New Jersey will be fully staffed, with no vacancies.

I have been working throughout this Congress to confirm consensus nominees. Yet we continue to hear complaints in the blogs and elsewhere on the lack of confirmations or on the slow pace of confirmations. I think the record demonstrates otherwise. We have taken positive action on more than 60 percent of President Obama's nominees in this Congress. We have reported out of committee more than half the nominees. Twenty-six nominees will have been confirmed after today. Even with this pace, I remind my colleagues that we continue to carefully review the qualifications of all nominees. This is not a pro forma process. We expect quality nominations from the President, not just quantity.

Today, the Senate will consider two nominations, both to be U.S. district judge for the District of New Jersey. Since 2006, both have been serving as a U.S. magistrate judge for the District of New Jersey. I congratulate these nominees.

The first nominee is Claire Cecchi. Judge Cecchi received her bachelor's degree from Barnard College, Columbia University in 1986, and her juris doctorate from Fordham University School of Law in 1989.

Upon graduation, Judge Cecchi worked for the Office of Corporation Counsel for the city of New York. In 1992 she became an associate with the firm of Robinson, St. John & Wayne and its successor firm, Robinson, Lapidus & Livelli. There she focused her work in general practice with an emphasis on securities litigation. In 1997 Judge Cecchi joined the firm of Carpenter, Bennett & Morrissey, where she handled general litigation, including products liability, employment, antitrust, and patent law cases. She became a partner in that firm in 2001. In 2004 she joined the firm McElroy, Deutsch, Mulvaney & Carpetner, as of counsel. She was a partner in that firm in 2005 to 2006. Judge Cecchi also served as a State-certified mediator for the New Jersey State courts system while in private practice. She was appointed a magistrate judge in 2006, where she presides over pretrial motions, mediations, and settlements.

The American Bar Association has rated Judge Cecchi ''majority qualified, minority well qualified.''

The second nominee, Esther Salas, received both her bachelor's and juris doctorate from Rutgers University in 1991 and 1994, respectively.

Judge Salas began her legal career as a law clerk for Judge Eugene Cody of the Superior Court of New Jersey. After her clerkship, Judge Salas worked at the firm of Garces & Grabler, where she handled criminal

work and appellate matters. In 1997, she joined the Office of the Federal Public Defender as an assistant public defender, working for indigent criminals in Federal criminal matters. She was appointed as a U.S. magistrate judge for the District of New Jersey in 2006.

The American Bar Association has rated Judge Salas unanimously ''well qualified.''

I support these two nominees and congratulate them for their achievement and public service.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I now yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Claire C. Cecchi, of New Jersey, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey?

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUYE) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 88 Ex.]

YEAS—98

Akaka	Gillibrand	Moran
Alexander	Graham	Murkowski
Ayotte	Grassley	Murray
Barrasso	Hagan	Nelson (NE)
Baucus	Harkin	Nelson (FL)
Begich	Hatch	Paul
Bennet	Heller	Portman
Bingaman	Hoeven	Pryor
Blumenthal	Hutchison	Reed
Blunt	Inhofe	Reid
Boozman	Isakson	Risch
Boxer	Johanns	Roberts
Brown (MA)	Johnson (SD)	Rockefeller
Brown (OH)	Johnson (WI)	Rubio
Burr	Kerry	Sanders
Cantwell	Kirk	Schumer
Cardin	Klobuchar	Sessions
Carper	Kohl	Shaheen
Chambliss	Kyl	Shelby
Coats	Landrieu	Snowe
Coburn	Lautenberg	Stabenow
Cochran	Leahy	Tester
Collins	Lee	Thune
Conrad	Levin	Toomey
Coons	Lieberman	Udall (CO)
Corker	Lugar	Udall (NM)
Cornyn	Manchin	Vitter
Crapo	McCain	Warner
DeMint	McCaskill	Webb
Durbin	McConnell	Whitehouse
Enzi	Menendez	Wicker
Feinstein	Merkley	Wyden
Franken	Mikulski	

NOT VOTING—2

Casey	Inouye

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report the next nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Esther Salas, of New Jersey, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Esther Salas, of New Jersey, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, notwithstanding the previous order, I ask unanimous consent that there be 5 minutes of debate equally divided and controlled between the proponents and opponents of the Coburn amendment No. 436, as modified, prior to a cloture vote on the Coburn amendment. That would be for debate only.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, that debate would come after the recess.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:36 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. WEBB).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REVITALIZATION ACT OF 2011

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 782, which the clerk will report by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 782) to amend the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 to reauthorize that Act, and for other purposes.

Pending:

DeMint amendment No. 394, to repeal the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act.

Paul amendment No. 414, to implement the President's request to increase the statutory limit on the public debt.

Cardin amendment No. 407, to require the FHA to equitably treat homebuyers who have repaid in full their FHA-insured mortgages.

Merkley/Snowe amendment No. 428, to establish clear regulatory standards for mortgage servicers.

Kohl amendment No. 389, to amend the Sherman Act to make oil-producing and exporting cartels illegal.

Hutchison amendment No. 423, to delay the implementation of the health reform law in the United States until there is final resolution in pending lawsuits.

Portman amendment No. 417, to provide for the inclusion of independent regulatory agencies in the application of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.).

Portman amendment No. 418, to amend the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.) to strengthen the economic impact analyses for major rules, require agencies to analyze the effect of major rules on jobs, and require adoption of the least burdensome regulatory means.

McCain amendment No. 411, to prohibit the use of Federal funds to construct ethanol blender pumps or ethanol storage facilities.

McCain amendment No. 412, to repeal the wage rate requirements commonly known as the Davis-Beacon Act.

Merkley amendment No. 440, to require the Secretary of Energy to establish an Energy Efficiency Loan Program under which the Secretary shall make funds available to States to support financial assistance provided by qualified energy efficiency or renewable efficiency improvements.

Coburn modified amendment No. 436, to repeal the volumetric ethanol excise tax credit.

Brown (MA)/Snowe amendment No. 405, to repeal the imposition of withholding on certain payments made to vendors by government entities.

Inhofe amendment No. 430, to reduce amounts authorized to be appropriated.

Inhofe amendment No. 438, to provide for the establishment of a committee to assess the effects of certain Federal regulatory mandates.

Merkley amendment No. 427, to make a technical correction to the HUBZone designation process.

McCain amendment No. 441 (to Coburn modified amendment No. 436), to prohibit the use of Federal funds to construct ethanol blender pumps or ethanol storage facilities.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 5 minutes for debate only equally divided on amendment No. 436, as modified, offered by the Senator from Oklahoma, Mr. COBURN.

Who yields time? No one has yielded time. Time will be charged equally to both sides.

The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I am speaking on this amendment. I oppose the amendment. I urge my colleagues to do the same. There is going to be a change with biofuels in this country. We are going to see a phasing out of the support for biofuels in terms of Federal policy. But the time to do it is not in the middle of the year after 7 years of Federal support with 5 days' notice.

Senator THUNE and I have an alternative bill that actually takes the rest of the year, the last 6 months of this year, the funding, and puts $1 billion into deficit reduction, and then allows the industry to keep its footing so it can actually compete with oil.

I would remind my colleagues that this is now 10 percent of our fuel supply. There have been studies done that show the price of gasoline would escalate up to $1 more a gallon if the rug were suddenly pulled out from under this industry. It is the only competition with oil. So while this industry, unlike the oil industry, has acknowledged that there is change ahead and that they are willing to be part of this change and actually put money on the

table, the time to do it is not now on an unrelated bill with no discussion of a comprehensive energy plan for this country.

I know Senator THUNE would like to talk about his opposition to this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to vote no on this motion. As the Senator from Minnesota has pointed out, there is a better way to do this. I think we can all work together in a constructive way and accomplish what the proponents of this amendment want to do, but do it in a way that does not disrupt this industry.

In December, 81 Senators—81 Senators—voted for tax policy. Here we are 6 months later and we are going to say we are going to pull the rug out. We are going to tell you guys just to go pound sand—after giving them a commitment back in December that we would have this tax policy in place until the end of the year.

That is not the way to do business. This can be done in the right way. I urge my colleagues to defeat this motion, and then we can work together to try to get to where we have a solution in place that is good for jobs, good for the energy industry in this country, and good for the taxpayers of America.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, one negative aspect of Senator COBURN's amendment No. 436, as modified, to the Economic Development Revitalization Act of 2011 is that it is a tax increase that is not offset by a tax cut of an equal or greater amount.

It takes away a tax incentive and therefore increases taxes but fails to cut taxes in another area, such as by lowering tax rates. I do not favor taking away tax incentives without cutting taxes in other areas to reach a revenue-neutral result.

Revenue-neutrality should be judged using a current-policy baseline and not the unrealistic current-law baseline that builds in trillions of dollars of tax increases.

However, in this case, the policy considerations regarding ending the tax incentive for corn-based ethanol outweigh this general principle. I will note that this is not the case for the larger-dollar, and more significant, tax incentives such as the home mortgage interest deduction.

With respect to these tax incentives, any changes that increase revenue must be offset with a tax cut in another area, such as by lowering tax rates. My vote in favor of the Coburn amendment should not be viewed as a precedent for increasing taxes.

Taxes are already headed higher than they historically have been according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. Americans are not undertaxed, Washington overspends, and we need to get that spending under control.

In terms of energy policy for our Nation, I think the case is more clear in favor of this amendment. I do not believe it makes sense to provide a tax incentive for a product that is also mandated by the Federal Government, which is what we have with ethanol. Moreover, energy tax incentives should be a temporary boost, not a long-term strategy to support an energy source that cannot compete on its own. I believe the time has come for corn ethanol to stand on its own as a transportation fuel.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I will vote today against cloture on amendment No. 436, dealing with subsidies for the ethanol industry, because its author used inappropriate procedural tactics to attach it to an unrelated bill devoted to economic development.

I support eliminating unnecessary tax subsidies to the ethanol industry, but today's vote is a political maneuver orchestrated by members of the minority party. I am pleased that the Senate will have an opportunity to vote on the merits of this issue, without extraneous debates over Senate procedure and process, in the coming days.

I will then support this measure to eliminate subsidies to the ethanol industry, which is necessary to save taxpayer dollars, reduce the deficit, and rein in our national debt.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I rise to discuss my vote on the motion to invoke cloture on Senator COBURN's amendment to the Economic Development Revitalization Act of 2011 to repeal the volumetric ethanol excise tax credit and the tariff on ethanol imports. I will vote against cloture on this amendment because of assurances that there would be another vote on ethanol subsidies in the near future without the extraordinary procedural problems occasioned by this amendment as it was brought to the floor.

My position on corn ethanol subsidies is clear. I am a cosponsor of Senator COBURN's Volumetric Ethanol Excise Tax Credit Repeal Act. I also signed a letter last fall along with several of my colleagues opposing the current extension of the volumetric ethanol excise tax credit and the tariff on ethanol imports.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, we have introduced into the RECORD the industry that gets this tax credit—they represent 97 percent of all of the ethanol that is blended—does not want the $3 billion. They say it is not a disruption to them, and, in fact, it is $3 billion that we cannot afford to pay.

It is something that already has accomplished its purpose through a government mandate. I would yield the remainder of my time to the Senator from California, Mrs. FEINSTEIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California is recognized.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Oklahoma. I think everybody in this body now knows that I am strongly for this measure. Unfortunately, I think it has created a lot of feelings that really do not work to the benefit of this body.

It is my understanding there is an offer from the leader that we will have a vote by Friday next, which means a week from this Friday. I tend to just say what I think. On our side, I think there are real concerns about the process used to bring this amendment to the floor. I think that has created some, unfortunately, very bad feelings which even are enough to affect people's votes.

My view has been a little different. I have watched this ethanol amendment go from $1.5 billion in the early part of the 2000s to where it costs $5.7 billion now. It is a triple crown. It is a subsidy, it is a mandate, it is a protective tariff. It should go. I have no question about that.

I also want to see this body have an ability to work together. It also gives us a little bit of time to see if we can negotiate some agreement between the Senator from Minnesota and the Senator from South Dakota. That would be the best of all worlds. Whether we can do this, I do not know, but I am certainly willing to try.

What I hate to see is this vote get so caught up—which it is now caught up in process—that we have no chance of sorting it out. I have asked the Senator from Oklahoma would he consider withdrawing this amendment so we can try and see if we could——

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I would ask unanimous consent for a couple of seconds more.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN.—so that we could try and see if we can work something out with Senators KLOBUCHAR and THUNE. I would implore him once again, I think for the best interests of our body as a whole, both sides, we ought to take the time to try to work it out. I think we lose votes right now on the basis of the process alone that we would not lose on just a straight vote.

I believe if it were not for the process, we would have 60 votes. That is my belief. So I want the Senator from Oklahoma to know that right up front. I would implore him to let us withdraw the amendment, try to negotiate a solution, and then take this up, as the leader has pledged, by Friday next.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. I ask unanimous consent for 2 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, the reason this amendment ended up the way it is, is because we don't have an open amendment process in the Senate anymore. Rule XXII gives every Senator the right to offer an amendment. We

have no Senate unless we have the right to offer an amendment.

There is no usurpation of the power of the majority leader. He gets to set what bills are on the floor. Every Senator has the right to file cloture on their amendments—every Senator. They also have every right to offer amendments.

We would not be in this position if we did not have a closed amendment process instead of an open amendment process. I would like to solve this problem. I recognize that this is going to be blue-slipped anyway. I thank the majority leader for his offer. I do not think it accomplishes what we want. I think we end up losing what we can get and what we should get.

I think the American people deserve to have us take this $3 billion out of the hands of the large oil companies now, not to the benefit of any American except to their detriment and their children.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the pending amendment No. 436, as modified, to S. 782.

Tom Coburn, Jim DeMint, John McCain, Richard Burr, David Vitter, Kelly Ayotte, Scott P. Brown (MA), James E. Risch, James M. Inhofe, Bob Corker, Michael B. Enzi, Johnny Isakson, John Barrasso, Lamar Alexander, John Cornyn, Jeff Sessions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call is waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that the debate on amendment No. 436, as modified, offered by the Senator from Oklahoma, Mr. COBURN, to S. 782, the Economic Development Revitalization Act of 2011, should be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 40, nays 59, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 89 Leg.]

YEAS—40

Alexander	Crapo	Lieberman
Ayotte	DeMint	Manchin
Barrasso	Enzi	McCain
Boozman	Graham	McConnell
Brown (MA)	Hatch	Murkowski
Burr	Heller	Paul
Cantwell	Hutchison	Pryor
Chambliss	Inhofe	Risch
Coburn	Isakson	Rubio
Collins	Johnson (WI)	Sessions
Corker	Kyl	
Cornyn	Lee	
Shelby	Tester	Vitter
Snowe	Toomey	Webb

NAYS—59

Akaka	Hagan	Murray
Baucus	Harkin	Nelson (NE)
Begich	Hoeven	Nelson (FL)
Bennet	Inouye	Portman
Bingaman	Johanns	Reed
Blumenthal	Johnson (SD)	Reid
Blunt	Kerry	Roberts
Boxer	Kirk	Rockefeller
Brown (OH)	Klobuchar	Sanders
Cardin	Kohl	Schumer
Carper	Landrieu	Shaheen
Coats	Lautenberg	Stabenow
Cochran	Leahy	Thune
Conrad	Levin	Udall (CO)
Coons	Lugar	Udall (NM)
Durbin	McCaskill	Warner
Feinstein	Menendez	Whitehouse
Franken	Merkley	Wicker
Gillibrand	Mikulski	Wyden
Grassley	Moran	

NOT VOTING—1

Casey

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 40, the nays are 59. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

The Senator from Florida.

THE AMERICAN CENTURY

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I have the honor of representing the people of the great State of Florida here in the Senate, and today I speak for the first time on this floor on their behalf.

The Senate is a long ways away from where I come from, both literally and figuratively. I come from a hard-working and humble family, one that was neither wealthy nor connected. Yet I have always considered myself to be a child of privilege because growing up I was blessed with two very important things: I was raised by a strong and stable family, and I was blessed to be born here in the United States of America.

America began from a very powerful truth—that our rights as individuals do not come from our government, they come from our God. Government's job is to protect those rights. And here, this Republic, has done that better than any government in the history of the world.

Now, America is not perfect. It took a bloody civil war to free over 4 million African Americans who lived in slavery. It took another 100 years before they achieved full equality under the law. But since its earliest days, America has inspired people from all over the world, inspired them with the hope that one day their own countries would be one like this one.

Many others decided they could not wait, and so they came here from everywhere to pursue their dreams and to work to leave their children better off than themselves. The result was the American miracle—a miracle where a 16-year-old boy from Sweden, with no English in his vocabulary and $5 in his pocket, saved enough money to open a shoestore. Today, that store, Nordstrom's, is a multibillion-dollar global retail giant; a miracle that led to a young couple with no money and no business experience opening a toy company out of the garage of their home. Today, that company, Mattel, is one of the world's largest toy manufacturers; a miracle where the French-born son of Iranian parents created a Web site called AuctionWeb in the living room of his home. Today, that company, known as eBay, stands as a testament to the familiar phrase ''only in America.''

These are just three examples of Americans whose extraordinary success began with nothing more than an idea. But it is important to remember that the American dream was never just about how much money you made; it is also about something that typifies my home State of Florida: the desire of every parent to leave their children with a better life. It is a dream lived by countless people whose stories will never be told, people—Americans—who never made $1 million. They never owned a yacht or a plane or a second home. Yet they too live the American dream because through their hard work and sacrifice, they were able to open doors for their children that had been closed for them.

It is the story of the people who clean our offices here in this building, who work hard so that one day their children can go to college. It is the story of the men and women who serve our meals in this building, who work hard so that one day their children can accomplish their own dreams.

It is the story of a bartender and a maid in Florida. Today, their son serves here in the Senate and stands as a proud witness of the greatness of this land.

Becoming a world power was never America's plan, but that is exactly what the American economic miracle made her. Most great powers have used their strength to conquer, but America is different. For us, our power always has come with a sense that those to whom much is given, much is expected; a sense that with the blessings God bestowed upon this land came the responsibility to make the world a better place. And in the 20th century, that is precisely and exactly what America did. America led in two world wars so that others could be free. America led in the Cold War to stop the spread of and ultimately defeat communism. While our military and foreign policy contributions helped save the world, it was our economic and cultural innovations that helped transform it.

The fruits of the American miracle can be found in the daily lives of people everywhere. Anywhere in the world, someone uses a mobile phone, e-mail, the Internet, or GPS; they are enjoying the benefits of the American miracle. Anywhere in the world where a bone marrow, lung, or heart transplant saves a life, they are touched by the value of the American miracle. On one night in July of 1969, the world witnessed the American miracle firsthand, for on that night an American walked

on the surface of the Moon, and it was clear to the world that these Americans could do anything.

Now, clearly America's rise was not free of adversity. We faced a civil rights struggle that saw Governors defy Presidents; that saw police dogs attack innocent, peaceful protestors; that saw little children murdered in churches by bombs. We faced two oil crises. America faced Watergate. America faced American hostages in Iran.

I grew up in the 1980s, a time when it was morning in America. Yet even then we faced the war on drugs. We lost soldiers in Beirut and astronauts on the *Challenger*. We faced a devastating oil-spill in Alaska and a terrifying new disease called AIDS. Through challenges and triumphs, the 20th century was the American century—a century where America's political, economic, and cultural exceptionalism made the world a more prosperous and peaceful place.

But now we find ourselves in a new century, and there is this growing sense that for America, things will never be the same, that maybe this century will belong to someone else. Indeed, we do now stand at a turning point in our history, one where there are only two ways forward for us: We will either bring on another American century or we are doomed to witness America's decline.

Another American century is fully within our reach because there is nothing wrong with our people. The American people haven't forgotten how to start a business. The American people haven't run out of good ideas. We Americans are as great as we have ever been. But our government is broken, and it is keeping us from doing what we have done better than any people in the history of the world—create jobs and prosperity.

If we here in Washington could just find agreement on a plan to get control of our debt, if we could just make our Tax Code simpler and more predictable, if we could just get the government to ease up on some of these onerous regulations, the American people will take care of the rest.

If this government will do its part, this generation of Americans will do theirs. They will give us a prosperous, upwardly mobile economy, one where our children will invent, build, and sell things to a world where more people than ever can afford to buy them. If we give America a government that can live within its means, the American economy will give us a government of considerable means, a government that can afford to pay for things government should be doing because it does not waste money on the things government should not be doing.

If we can deliver on a few simple but important things, we have the chance to do something that is difficult to imagine is even possible—an America whose future will be greater than her past. Sadly, that is not where we are headed. We have made no progress on the issues of our time because, frankly, we have too many people in both parties who have decided that the next election is more important than the next generation. And our lack of progress on these issues has led to something even more troubling—a growing fear that maybe these problems are too big for us to solve, too big for even America.

Well, there is no reason to be afraid. Our story, the story of America, is not the story of a nation that never faced problems. It is the story of a nation that faced its challenges and solved them. Our story, the story of the American people, is not the story of a people who always got it right; it is the story of a people who in the end got it right.

We should never forget who we Americans are. Every single one of us is the descendant of a go-getter, of dreamers and of believers, of men and women who took risks and made sacrifices because they wanted their children to live better off than themselves. So whether they came here on the *Mayflower*, on a slave ship, or on an airplane from Havana, we are all descendants of the men and women who built the Nation that saved the world.

We are still the great American people, and the only thing standing in the way of our solving our problems is our willingness to do so. And whether we do so is of great consequence not just to us but to the whole world. I know some now say that because times are very tough at home, we can no longer afford to worry about what happens abroad, that maybe America needs to mind its own business. Well, whether we like it or not, there is virtually no aspect of our daily lives that is not directly impacted by what happens in the world around us. We can choose to ignore global problems, but global problems will not ignore us.

One of my favorite speeches is one that talks about our role in the world. It was the speech President Kennedy was set to give had he lived just 1 more day, and it closes with these words:

> We in this country, in this generation, are—by destiny rather than by choice—the watchmen on the walls of world freedom. We ask, therefore, that we may be worthy of our power and responsibility, that we may exercise our strength with wisdom and restraint, and that we may achieve in our time and for all time the ancient vision of ''peace on Earth, good will toward men.'' That must always be our goal, and the righteousness of our cause must always underlie our strength. For as was written long ago, ''except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.''

Almost a half century later, America is still the only watchman on the wall of world freedom, and there is still no one to take our place.

What will the world look like if America declines? Well, today people all over the world are forced to accept a familiar lie, that the price of security is their liberty. If America declines, who will serve as living proof that liberty, security, and prosperity can all exist together?

Today, radical Islam abuses and oppresses women, has no tolerance for other faiths, and it seeks to impose its will on the whole world. If America declines, who will stand up to them and defeat them?

Today, children are used as soldiers and trafficked as slaves. Dissidents are routinely imprisoned without trial, and they are subjected to torture and forced into confessions and labor. If America declines, what nation on Earth will take these causes as their own?

What will the world look like if America declines? Who is going to create the innovations of the 21st century? Who will stretch the limits of human potential and explore the new frontiers? And if America declines, who will do all these things and ask for nothing in return, motivated solely by the desire to make the world a better place?

The answer is, no one will. There is still no nation or institution on this planet that is willing or able to do what America has done.

Ronald Reagan famously described America as a shining city on a hill. Now, some say that we can no longer afford the price we must pay to keep America's light shining. Others like to say there are new shining cities that will soon replace us. I say they are both wrong.

Yes, the price we are going to pay to keep America's light shining is high. But the price we will pay if America's light stops shining is even higher.

Yes, there are new nations emerging with prosperity and influence. That is what we always wanted. America never wanted to be the only shining city on the hill. We wanted our example to inspire the people of the Earth to build one of their own. You see, these nations, these new emerging nations, these new shining cities, we hope they will join us. But they can never replace us because their light is but a reflection of our own.

It is the light of an American century that now spreads throughout the Earth, a world that still needs America, a world that still needs our light, a world that needs a new American century. I pray that, with God's help, that will be our legacy to our children and to the world.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican Leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on behalf of all of our colleagues, I commend our new Senator from Florida for his remarkable speech. No one is a better example of the American dream than he is, and no one expresses American exceptionalism better than Senator RUBIO. I congratulate him on behalf of all of our colleagues.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I join with my Republican counterpart in congratulating my friend from Florida for his fine speech. But I wish, in his remarks, he would have once in a while

mentioned where he spent a lot of his youth: Las Vegas and North Las Vegas, NV.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I congratulate my colleague from Florida, and I want him to know that it is a great pleasure for me to serve with him. It has been a tradition in Florida that the two Senators get along. This has been a great tradition that goes back to when Bob Graham and Connie Mack were the two Senators. It continued with Mel Martinez and me, and now I have the privilege of continuing that kind of relationship with Senator RUBIO.

The maiden speech is a big deal for a Senator, and it is always a memory that is forever etched in my mind.

I was in one of those desks over there as a very junior member, and I will never forget in the course of my speech—and it was mostly an empty Chamber—that I mentioned that it was my maiden speech. In a few minutes, all of a sudden those side doors flung open and in strode Senator Robert Byrd. So here I am giving my maiden speech and Senator Byrd is sitting in his seat. As I finished, he said: Would the Senator yield?

I said: Of course, I yield to the Senior Senator from West Virginia.

Senator Byrd, off the top of his head, gave an oration about the history of maiden speeches in the Senate. Now, of course, that is indelibly etched in my memory. Surely, the Senator's maiden speech today will be indelibly etched in his, and I congratulate him.

I thank him for his personal friendship. I thank him also for the privilege of the professional relationship that we have.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, very briefly, I have come to know Senator RUBIO. We have early morning seminars, and we have come to know one another a little better. I hope that continues. But at this point, I especially thank him for that speech because it was clearly a speech with a lot of personal reflection on one's own life and on the life of America. What he said will endure. There are things in there that we all should remember about this Nation and about our responsibility as Senators.

I thank the Senator for that fine speech, and I am glad that I was here to be a witness to it.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I would note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business for debate only until 5 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, and that at 5 p.m. the majority leader be recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

THE BUDGET

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I thank the Senator for his courtesy in allowing us to proceed and discuss issues at this point in time and wanted to recall for my colleagues that we are now at 776 days since the Senate has agreed to a budget. We have not passed a budget in 776 days. This is not responsible at a time in which we are having the largest deficits this country has ever seen.

This year it is projected our deficit, as of September 30, when the fiscal year ends, will have been $1.5 trillion. I think this is a big issue.

Last year the Budget Committee moved a budget out to the floor of the Senate, and Senator REID chose not to bring it up, the majority leader. This year he declared that it would be foolish to bring up a budget to the floor even though he has a majority in the Senate. We can pass a budget with a simple majority. It is a priority item. He has apparently asked, and the Budget Committee has not even had a markup.

The Budget Act requires a markup to begin by April 1 and a budget to be passed by April 15 so we can go about the business of funding next year's government. We need a budget. States have budgets, cities have budgets, counties have budgets. No city, county, or state that I am aware of is anything close to borrowing 40 cents of every dollar we spend as this Congress is doing. We are spending $3.7 trillion. We are taking in $2.2 trillion. That is a stunning number.

One reason we are so out of control is we do not have a budget. I have been harping away at that, and I have been talking about its impact on jobs. The Rogoff and Reinhart study makes it clear from nations around the world they have studied that when the debt reaches 90 percent of the economy, the entire economy of the country equal to that much debt, median growth drops 1 percent. Really the average is above that, I believe, but at any rate, 1 percent.

We had 1.8 percent growth the first quarter. Could we have had 2.8 percent? We are talking about more than 30 percent reduction in our growth and 1 percent in growth in our economy equals the creation of 1 million jobs. So that is the kind of thing I have been talking about and going into some detail about and have been unhappy and disappointed that my majority leader would have the gall to attack the House Members.

I have a chart. We do not want to forget this number. It is a pretty big number. It is 776. That is how long it has been since we had a budget. So I complained about that. My friend, Senator REID, has the toughest job in Washington, being the majority leader in the Senate. I do not know how he does it, but he has to lead.

As my wife says to me: Don't blame me. You asked for the job. Well, he asked for the job to be the leader, and he announced it was foolish for us to have a budget just a few weeks ago. When will we ever have one presumably?

Just today, earlier this morning, I guess he got a little tired of my harping, and he said: I heard our friend, the ranking member on the Budget Committee—that is me—come here and talk for hours, and he keeps talking about things that really have no bearing on what I think is important to the country today, and that is we know that the Republicans have put forward a budget that destroys Medicare.

Republicans did not destroy Medicare. Give me a break—and that is not the only problem we have facing the country. Medicare is going broke and we need to do something to save it, that is true. There are big issues. One of them is the surging debt that Erskine Bowles, appointed by President Obama to head the fiscal commission, testified about before the Budget Committee just a few weeks ago. He said we are facing the most predictable economic crisis in our Nation's history. This has the potential to put us into another doubledip recession. The economy is not doing well.

The things I have been talking about do have bearing on the future of our country, and I am disappointed my good friend, the Democratic leader, does not agree.

Housing prices continue to drop. They are expected to go down another 5 percent or 6 percent this year. We thought we had hit the bottom on housing. Gasoline is still close to $4 a gallon. Unemployment just went up. We had a meager increase in 54,000 jobs last month. We need to have about 200,000 to actually reduce unemployment. As a result, unemployment went up. It is the lowest and worst job numbers we have had in some time.

The debt, the economy, gasoline prices, jobs—those are matters that have no bearing on what is important to our country? I think they have a bearing on what is important. What does the majority leader believe? What does he think we should be doing?

This bill we have been fiddling with for weeks has no monumental or significant ability to alter the debt trajectory which is taking us on the most predictable course to fiscal disaster, that is what we need to be addressing. It is the most important issue facing our country. Of that I have no doubt. I do not think anybody has any doubt.

Listen to the news programs. Listen to the business channels. Read your newspaper. The debt we are facing is critical to our country.

The instability of our entitlement programs, such as Medicare, is an issue we have to talk about. We cannot deny that. We have opposition here to doing things that make sense, such as producing more oil and gas. We have a permitorium, a blocking of permits on drilling for oil and gas off our shore presumably so we can buy more oil and gas produced offshore in Brazil or Nigeria or Venezuela but not off our shores, transferring our wealth abroad that could be creating jobs and tax revenue for the United States Government.

What about this Medicare problem? Let me talk about it because it is a part of the problem. It is one of the difficulties we have to deal with, although certainly not the only one. The biggest problem we have now is discretionary spending that is out of control, not Medicare right now, not Social Security right now. In the last 2 years, under President Obama, nondefense—not defense—nondefense discretionary spending—not Social Security, not Medicare—went up 24 percent at a time when the deficits have been $1.2 trillion, $1.3 trillion, and this year $1.5 trillion, perhaps. We have never had deficits that large. The problem is, it is systemic. We have never had this kind of challenge.

I know there was a big fight in the mid-1990s, and the government was shut down, and Newt Gingrich and his team fought and said they wanted to balance the budget, and they balanced the budget. The country didn't sink into the ocean as that little shutdown occurred, but they balanced the budget. Now we are in a much deeper hole, I am telling my colleagues. I have looked at the numbers. I am the ranking member of the Budget Committee. It is not easy for us to get out of this fix, not easy at all. It is going to take some real effort and leadership.

The President submitted a budget that came before the Congress and was voted down 97 to nothing in the Senate. Not a single Member voted for his budget, which would have doubled the debt over the next 10 years. He made it worse than the baseline we were already on, which was utterly unsustainable.

So is Medicare something that absolutely cannot be discussed even though it is going into default? Let me tell my colleagues what some of our Democratic leaders have said about Medicare.

STENY HOYER, the House whip, one of the top Democratic leaders in the House, said this:

> Do I believe that there are other things we can do related to Medicare? The answer is I do. I am not going to get into articulating each one, but my expectation is they will be under discussion by the Biden group.

They have a little secret group down there meeting with the White House—some Republicans and Democrats—and we are supposed to all relax now because they are going to solve our problems and put it on a silver platter for us, and we are just going to vote for it, and it will be good for the country. Well, I am a little dubious about it, but I am anxious to hear about what they are going to produce. The longer they wait, the more critical our situation is.

What about the House minority leader, the former Speaker, NANCY PELOSI? She was on Larry Kudlow, CNBC business channel. Mr. Kudlow is a very articulate moderator, and he asked this question of former Speaker PELOSI: Is Medicare on the table or entitlements on the table?

Answer: Yes. I think Medicare is on the table.

What about President Obama and his health care summit on February 25 of last year?

> Almost all of the long-term deficit and debt that we face relates to the exploding costs of Medicare and Medicaid.

That is his direct quote, the President of the United States.

He goes on:

> Almost all of it. That is the single biggest driver of our Federal debt, and if we don't get control over that, we can't get control of our Federal budget.

Our former President, Bill Clinton, I guess maybe the spiritual head of the Democratic Party, one of the most respected Democrats, said:

> I am afraid that the Democrats will draw the conclusion . . . that we shouldn't do anything. I completely disagree with that. The Democrats may have to give up some short-term political gain by whipping up fear, if it's a reasonable Social Security program, if it's a reasonable Medicare proposal. You cannot have health care devour the economy.

Well, that is the truth. Of course we have to talk about it because it is on an unsustainable path.

Let me talk a little bit more about that because Congressman RYAN and I wrote a letter to the President today asking him to do his duty with regard to Medicare on a matter that just came up.

On May 13, the Medicare trustees issued their annual report on the financial status of the Medicare Program. Medicare has a trust fund. They have trustees who are committed to preserving the program, trying to make sure they can pay the recipients what they have been promised in the years to come and make sure the money is well handled. They do annual reports on this massive program. The Medicare Hospital Insurance trust fund—that is the HI trust fund—ran an annual cash-flow deficit of $32.3 billion last year, in 2010, and will continue to run deficits throughout the decade. That is what the trustees say about Medicare.

They went on to say this: The Medicare trust fund will become insolvent in 2024—5 years earlier than last year's date of exhaustion. Can we imagine that? They redid the numbers and have concluded it is going to be in default, become insolvent, 5 years sooner than they were predicting just last year.

They went on to say: If current law remains unchanged, Medicare's unfunded obligation is $24.4 trillion over the next 75 years. In other words, to put this on a sound basis, investing today, you need $24.4 trillion.

Like last year, the nonpartisan Chief Actuary of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Richard Foster, used his statement of actuarial opinion at the end of the report to warn that:

> The financial projections shown in this report for Medicare do not represent a reasonable expectation for actual program operations in either the short range (as a result of the unsustainable reductions in physician payment rates) or in the long range (because of the strong likelihood that statutory reductions in price updates for most categories of Medicare provider services will not be viable).

On May 20, a week after the trustees' report was released, the Chief Actuary, Mr. Foster, produced his ''illustrative alternative'' projections based on ''more sustainable assumptions.'' Those estimates indicate that under a more likely scenario for future spending, Medicare's unfunded obligations are $36.8 trillion over the next 75 years—a figure that is far larger than the official trustees' estimate of $24.4 trillion.

Mr. Foster has been there a long time. He is a very serious person. He understands his responsibility to tell us the truth. He understands the responsibility to Medicare recipients. He is telling us we need to do something about Medicare.

It goes on: The trustees projected that total Medicare spending will draw more than 45 percent of its funding out of the Treasury's general fund in 2011.

A lot of people think Medicare is funded by the Medicare tax deduction we see on our paycheck, the withholding tax we pay, and that is a significant amount of money, no doubt about it. But the Medicare trustees just reported to us that of the total money Medicare spends, 45 percent is funded directly out of the general fund—general tax revenues—not the payroll withholding. As a consequence, for the sixth year in a row, they say—2006 through 2011—the trustees made an ''excess general revenue Medicare funding'' determination. Two consecutive ''excess general revenue Medicare funding'' determinations trigger a ''Medicare funding warning.'' This Medicare warning requires that the President submit a legislative proposal to address this crisis within 15 days of his next budget. So for 5 years in a row there has been a Medicare funding warning issued. President Bush submitted a proposal when he was President to deal with the shortfall in Medicare, but the Democratic majority in both Houses at the time failed to act on it, or do anything about the crisis. But now we have gone further and deeper into debt and the trustees issued a Medicare funding warning for the fifth consecutive time in their report this year, 2007 through 2011. But President Obama is not responding.

So who cares about Medicare? I think all of us do. But does anyone dispute that the trustees, the people who are statutorily required by law to superintend this fund, don't care about it, aren't worried about the recipients? They have a lawful obligation to try to ensure that the program is on a sound basis.

Under the Medicare prescription drug bill that was passed here, Public Law 108–173, Congress established the Medicare ''trigger'' to call attention to the program's growing fiscal imbalance. If, in their report, the Medicare trustees project that Medicare will draw more than 45 percent of its funding out of the Treasury's general fund within a 7-year period, the trustees must make an excess general revenue Medicare funding determination. By law, two consecutive excess general revenue Medicare funding determinations produce a Medicare funding warning, triggering action by the President. Under the public law, U.S. Code, the President is required to submit legislation—submit legislation to whom? To the Congress, us—in response to a funding warning within 15 days of the next budget, and the proposal would then receive expedited consideration in Congress.

So when we have this 45-percent level breached, the President is supposed to submit to us a plan, and we are supposed to give it expedited attention. Why? Because Medicare is important. That is why. And when it is not on a sound financial basis, Congress has a responsibility to do something about it—not do nothing, not criticize somebody such as Congressman RYAN who proposed a sound, well-thought-out, long-term approach to Medicare. It may not be the one I would agree with or other Members would agree with, but no one can doubt, in my opinion, that it was a serious, thoughtful effort that would have put Medicare on a sound footing. But if it is not the plan we want, let's have another.

What is the President's plan? That is the one that is required by law. The President is required to submit a plan. While a Medicare funding warning has been issued each year since he has taken office, President Obama has failed to submit a single proposal to Congress in response to these warnings.

So today I joined with Congressman PAUL RYAN, the young chairman of the House Budget Committee to write a letter to the President. Nobody has worked harder. Nobody is smarter. Nobody loves this country more. Nobody is prepared to stand before the American people and explain what he thinks is best for the country and be prepared to defend it with facts, with integrity, and with responsibility. What a refreshing face he is. I have come to have the greatest admiration for him.

So what happened to Congressman RYAN? He helped write a budget, and in part of the budget, after 10 years, he proposed some changes to Medicare that would put it on a sound footing over the long term. When it came over to the Senate it was attacked by Democrats—but where is the Senate budget? The House has produced a budget. It reduces spending in the short run. It had a responsible approach to dealing with some of the long-term entitlement issues that threaten us in the long term.

It was a sound program the Congressman had, and I thought—but we could disagree. So we are looking forward to what would happen over here. Well, the majority leader said: We think it is foolish to have a budget. We are not having a budget. Do not let the Budget Committee commence its hearings. We have not even begun a markup in Budget Committee. We do not have a budget. So instead we are having secret talks. In a committee, you have to stand up before the world, offer amendments, debate the issues, express your views. You cannot hide. It is on the record; they take down your words. But secret meetings with the White House are off the record, and talk occurs behind closed doors. So I do not know what is going to happen out of this. I am nervous about it, frankly. I would rather do it by the regular order. Maybe something good will come out of it. I am not going to prejudge it. If it is good, I am going to celebrate. If it is not good, I am going to oppose it.

We wrote to the President today, and we called on him to show some leadership. We noted that the trustees have projected general revenues would account for more than 45 percent of Medicare spending for the sixth consecutive year. The Trustees have issued another funding warning that requires the President to submit a legislative proposal to Congress. He knew this was coming. The numbers have been there for several years. They knew it was coming. He is supposed to submit a legislative proposal to get Medicare on the right track. Does he plan to raise taxes? Cut benefits? Ration care? Or is he going to create a more competitive system that does the job with a little less money. What are you going to do? What is your answer? We wrote: As chairman and ranking member of the House and the Senate committees, respectively, we are deeply disappointed that the administration continues to ignore this legal obligation. In 2008, the previous administration submitted a proposal to Congress that took steps to address Medicare's fiscal imbalance. By contrast, your administration has not provided a response to the annual Medicare trigger, ignoring the law in each of the past 3 years. This year, your budget did not even acknowledge the existence of the Medicare funding warning.

I have the Medicare trustees report right here. Far from saying no changes are necessary in Medicare, the trustees have pleaded with us in their reports. The trustees' chief actuary has noted that in his official reports to us. He says: Do something.

This cannot continue. So here we are. We are going down the road with debt the likes of which this Nation has never seen before. At the end of last fiscal year, the gross debt of our country was 93 percent of GDP. By the end of this fiscal year it will be over 100 percent of GDP. I mentioned when you get to that level of debt, your growth goes down, and lower growth means a loss of jobs, and that you are not creating the jobs you should have.

How serious is our debt situation? Well, look at the chart for those around the world. Greece in this critical crisis is above 100 percent. They are at 142 percent. Their debt equals 142 percent of their economy, and they are in a state of virtual collapse. Expert after expert says they will default on their debt. They are not going to be able to work their way out of it. I hope that is not true, but that is what they are saying.

What about Ireland? You have heard Ireland. The ''PIGS'' as they call them, these countries and others in debt, what is theirs? It is now 96 percent, 2 or 3 percent higher than ours—only. They are second in the European Union. We are next at 93. Portugal is next. You have heard about Portugal being in financial trouble. Their debt to GDP is 83 percent. Spain, you have heard them talked about as being in trouble financially. Their debt to GDP—gross debt is 60 percent. So we are well above that. I am worried about the country. What is critical is we need a budget that contains spending now. We need to demonstrate a commitment to reform the unsustainable path of entitlement spending, and we need to do it in a way that focuses on creating economic growth and jobs in this country.

Growth and jobs, that is what our future should be focused on. I am confident this country has not seen its best days, but we are on a path of decline now. I truly believe it. I hate to say it. But our policies, if they are not changed, will lead inevitably to economic decline as witness after witness has told us in testimony.

How do we get out of it? We send a message through ourselves and the world: We have got the message. We are reducing spending. We are putting ourselves on a path to a balanced budget. We also know that it is not just the short term, it is long term. Many of these unsustainable programs need to be changed and strengthened, and the way to do that is to make the changes now, and you will have massive impacts in the years to come. Modest changes now will be good.

Those are the things that I think are important. Those are the things I think should be talked about. Those are the things I think my good friend Mr. REID apparently thinks are not important. Because he said—he has come down here and talked for hours, and he keeps talking about things that have no bearing on what I think is important for our country today.

I submit to my colleagues and to the American people, are the things I am talking about important, or are they

not? He wanted to talk about how the Republicans have put forth a plan that he says will destroy Medicare. That is what the majority leader wants to talk about. He wants to change the subject. Well, I wish it were not so. I wish Medicare were healthy. I wish it had the money to continue to honor the commitments we have made in the years to come. But it does not. It is just does not. We do not have the money to continue at this rate. It is not impossible, though, to fix it and it is even more possible to fix Social Security. Medicare is a little harder than Social Security. But both of these can be fixed and made permanent and sound. We need to talk to the Medicare trustees. We need to be honest with one another and see how we can make those plans solvent.

But that is just one part of the problem. In the immediate time, we have got to reduce discretionary spending, across the board. I think we have to. I wish that were not so, but it is. Countries around the world are doing it. Cities are doing it. Governors are doing it. This Congress has done nothing of the sort. Indeed, as I mentioned, last year—the last 2 years—discretionary spending—nondefense—has gone up 24 percent. Defense went up. We hear a lot of complaints about defense. It was up 2 or 3 percent a year for the last 2 years. Other nondefense went up 24 percent.

I cannot tell you how deeply I believe our Nation is on a perilous course that needs to change. I want to say again, I have great affection for my friend Senator REID. He has got a tough job. But he asked for it. He asked for it. And when the country is in financial crisis, we expect the majority leader of the Senate to effectively lead, and not to attack people who are trying to do the right thing, and to bring this country onto a sound path.

To say it is foolish to have a budget, what he meant was, it is foolish politically, of course. He was saying it is foolish politically to have a budget. It is not foolish for America to have a budget. It is foolish for America not to have one. Certainly it is not foolish to attempt to have a budget.

I feel that we, in this Congress, have not quite assimilated the severity of the situation in which we find ourselves. We remain in denial about how seriously we are being impacted and what substantial changes are going to be necessary. We are going to have to do like the Brits who are turning their country around. We might have to do as they did in Estonia. Talk to the Estonian people. The cabinet members took a 40-percent pay cut. I wonder what would happen around here if we talked about taking a 40-percent pay cut? But their debt to GDP is 7 percent, not 93. They intend to keep it that way. And their growth is coming back already. They are showing about 6-percent growth. Our growth is 1.8 percent in the first quarter. Coming out of a recession, it should be higher.

If we do the right thing, we get this country on the right path, we reduce our spending, we watch every dollar we spend, and we make our country more productive, we eliminate unnecessary regulation, we focus on creating jobs and growth, the natural capabilities, work ethic, integrity, the legal system of America will allow us to continue to be the most prosperous Nation in the world.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the letter I referred to earlier to the President.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

JUNE 14, 2011.

Hon. BARACK OBAMA,
President, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Our country faces extraordinary economic challenges: a soaring budget deficit, a jobs deficit, and a leadership deficit in Washington that has resulted in our failure to confront a looming debt crisis. These fiscal problems are driven in large part by the unsustainable growth in health care entitlement programs and an inability to credibly face our budget challenges that severely undermines confidence in our economy. The failure of politicians to put forward real solutions that will save and strengthen these critical programs is threatening the economic security of American families and the health security of America's seniors. Just last month, we learned that Medicare's Hospital Insurance Trust Fund will become insolvent by 2024, only 13 years from now.

On May 13, 2011, the Medicare Trustees not only warned us that Medicare's insolvency date had advanced five years since last year's report but also confirmed that the program is now running a $32 billion cash-flow deficit. To pay current benefits, the program is redeeming tens of billions of dollars in treasury debt instruments and dramatically contributing to our nation's surging publicly held debt. More troubling is that, in total, Medicare faces $36.8 trillion dollars in unfunded obligations over the next 75 years, according to Medicare's non-partisan Chief Actuary.

For the sixth consecutive year, the Trustees have projected that general revenues will account for more than 45 percent of all of Medicare's outlays. When Medicare breaches this limit, section 802 of P.L. 108–173, the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA), requires the President to submit a legislative proposal to Congress to respond to the warning within 15 days of the next budget. Yet again, the Medicare Trustees have issued a funding warning that requires action by your administration. In fact, the Trustees have urged action ''sooner rather than later'' in order to ''minimize adverse impacts on vulnerable populations.''

As Chairman and Ranking Member of the House and Senate Budget Committees, respectively, we are deeply disappointed that your administration continues to ignore this legal obligation. In 2008, the previous administration submitted a proposal to Congress that took steps to address Medicare's fiscal imbalance. By contrast, your administration has not provided a response to the annual Medicare trigger, ignoring the law in each of the past three years. This year your budget did not even acknowledge the existence of the Medicare funding warning.

The country deserves honest leadership on this critical issue. The Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 budget that you submitted to Congress this year showed a lack of seriousness about the major fiscal challenges before the nation. And, although you abandoned this budget in a subsequent speech, your administration still has not formally submitted a revised FY2012 budget to Congress. Meanwhile, Senate Democrats have not passed a budget in 776 days, disregarding legal statute and further eroding the integrity of the federal budget process. Now more than ever is the time to fulfill our obligations under the law rather than skirt them, and we would respectfully suggest that this mandate extends to the Medicare warnings issued each year that you have been in office.

Under the budget you submitted to Congress, Medicare as we know it will soon be unable to meet its promises to current beneficiaries. Rather than impose cuts on current beneficiaries and leave Medicare bankrupt for future generations, the House-passed FY2012 budget resolution outlines reforms to preserve and protect Medicare for those in or near retirement while saving and strengthening the program for future generations. Given the severity of this problem and your legal obligations, the nation needs leadership on this issue. Therefore, we reasonably expect your administration to submit a detailed legislative proposal to Congress addressing the Medicare funding warning as required by law.

We look forward to receiving a proposal from you that responds to the Medicare warning and to working with you to strengthen the health and economic security of those we have the honor to serve.

Sincerely,

PAUL RYAN,
Member of Congress, Chairman, House Budget Committee.

JEFF SESSIONS,
U.S. Senator, Ranking Member, Senate Budget Committee.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator COATS, who is on the floor, and I be allowed up to 15 minutes to pursue a discussion about tax reform as if in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TAX REFORM

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, Senator COATS and I have introduced bipartisan tax reform legislation. It is the first comprehensive overhaul of tax reform law in 25 years, since 1986, when then-President Reagan and Democrats got together and worked on a bipartisan reform that cleaned out scores of special interest tax breaks in order to hold down rates for all Americans and keep progressivity.

Senator COATS and I have worked also with Senator Gregg. I had that good fortune for a number of years, and

have picked up on some of what was done in 1986 by President Reagan and a large group of Democrats. He and I intend, in the days ahead, to come to the floor of the Senate and talk about some of the most offensive aspects of our totally dysfunctional tax system.

Today, we thought we would begin by discussing the alternative minimum tax. It seems to be pretty much the poster child for what is broken about the American tax system. It was enacted in 1969, after the Congress learned that 3 years earlier 155 wealthy taxpayers had paid no tax at all. The alternative minimum tax was designed to hit what amounted to a small group of tax evaders and not the millions of middle-class taxpayers who get shellacked by the AMT every single springtime. The problem has been that Congress has never indexed the AMT brackets for inflation.

While the regular tax bracket standard deductions and exemptions do get adjusted for inflation, the brackets and exemptions of the alternative minimum tax do not. As a result, millions of middle-class taxpayers, whose only fault is their incomes grew with the economy, now slip into this nefarious alternative minimum tax zone each year.

I would be interested, for purposes of starting this colloquy, to get the reaction of my friend and partner on it. We are going to bring up a number of these aspects of the tax system that cry out for overall reform. But I wonder what my friend's sense is about starting today with the alternative minimum tax, and how important it is that reform is done there for middle-class folks in Indiana and around the country.

Mr. COATS. Madam President, I want to thank my colleague from Oregon, Senator WYDEN, for working with me, and particularly working with Senator Gregg who is now retired from this Chamber. They spent an extraordinary amount of time, very productive but very time consuming, trying to put together a comprehensive tax reform, which, as Senator WYDEN has said, has been 25 years since we have tackled the Tax Code to try to simplify it and try to take out egregious provisions that were put in it over the years that may benefit a special few but don't begin to address the average middle-income taxpayer who is bearing a very substantial burden of taxes paid in this country.

Probably the most egregious provision and, as Senator WYDEN said, the poster child for the current dysfunction of the Tax Code and our tax system is the alternative minimum tax.

Senator WYDEN and Senator Gregg's program that they put together—and Senator Gregg urged me as I was coming into the Senate and he was leaving to work with Senator WYDEN in terms of working to keep this bipartisan effort going forward, and I have had the pleasure of doing so. We do have a comprehensive bill that we wish to debate and share with our colleagues. But we also want to point out the reason why tax reform is so necessary.

A Tax Code that now comprises more than 70,000 pages with more than 10,000 special exemptions and preferences is certainly something that is way beyond our Founders' intention or any intention of taxation of the American people. This complexity is literally driving everybody nuts, including the tax accountants and CPAs and those who have to deal with it every year but, more importantly, the tax filers, American citizens, who each year start getting the sweats along about mid-March in terms of how they are going to get their tax return done. If they try to do it themselves, they ought to be able to; and, if passed, Wyden-Coats would give them the simplicity of reduced rates, easy filing for information, and the ability to do their taxes at home.

We spend an extraordinary amount of money—I think it is Americans spend nearly 6 billion hours a year—to have tax preparers do their tax returns. The alternative minimum tax is particularly egregious, as Senator WYDEN has said. It is grossly unfair. It hammers working Americans.

The temporary fix Congress has added in subsequent years from its initiation now protects individuals with incomes up to $48,000-plus and couples up to $74,000-plus. But taxpayers who earn more than that get whacked by the AMT, the alternative minimum tax, and the problem just gets worse.

As Senator WYDEN has said, it started with a few taxpayers in the high income brackets trying to evade paying any tax. That is how that came into play. But in 1997, several years later from the initiation, the AMT has hit 1 percent of all taxpayers. Next year, after this current fix expires, it will hurt more than 20 percent of taxpayers. To be exact, that is 34 million hard-working Americans. It is a poor fix that is currently in place on a temporary basis.

In my State of Indiana, 42,700 taxpayers had to pay AMT taxes in 2008, and without another extension of the patch or the fix, that will rise to 372,000 in 2012.

If you are a family with a number of children and you live in a high tax State or a local tax State, you are thrown into the alternative minimum tax computation. That means a double process by which you or your preparer has to file your taxes, and it means higher taxes never intended to hit the working class.

So in continuing this, I wish to reaffirm my thanks to the Senator from Oregon for allowing me to be part of this effort, and we look forward to many opportunities to discuss some of the more egregious portions of the Tax Code and reasons why we need to continue to work for comprehensive reform.

I would ask my colleague if he would delve a little more deeply into this in this colloquy we currently are entertaining.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I hope that folks paying attention to this tax reform debate pick up on what Senator COATS has just described. When the alternative minimum tax was first debated, the country was talking about 155 people. These were the so-called wealthy folks. They were paying no taxes at all. What Senator COATS has just described is, next year, what started as a program to try to make sure that 155 people didn't end up getting a sweetheart deal, now we are going to see 34 million people crushed by this inequitable kind of tax, a kind of bureaucratic water torture.

We have about the same numbers in Oregon that Senator COATS has in Indiana. In 2008, 44,000 Oregon taxpayers had to pay the alternative minimum tax. Without some kind of extension or, as Senator COATS and I essentially want to do, abolishment of the alternative minimum tax, that is going to rise to close to 400,000 next year. The people who are getting hammered by this alternative minimum tax certainly don't fit that small class of the so-called freeloading wealthy folks who are figuring out ways to pay nothing.

For example, a woman earns $65,000 in 2010, say she manages a health club, she has three kids, she has to file her taxes independent of her husband because they are in the middle of a divorce. As someone who is married, filing separately, she would have been hit by the AMT in 2010, according to the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Think about that, a woman who manages a health club making $65,000, with three kids, filling out her taxes and going through the unbelievable headaches, being singled out under the alternative minimum tax.

I ask my friend from Indiana—and I am sure he has very similar people in Indiana—is that the kind of person the alternative minimum tax was designed to scoop up back in 1969?

Mr. COATS. Absolutely not, I would say to the Senator from Oregon. Clearly, if you go back to the origin of the alternative minimum tax, it was designed to go after those handful, in comparison to the total number of taxpayers in this country, who have found creative ways of not paying any taxes whatsoever. Wealthy taxpayers have simply been able to manipulate the Tax Code legally but in a way that allowed them to avoid paying taxes altogether. That is how all of this started.

What has happened is that we are now in a situation where it is grossly unfair to the majority of taxpayers in this country simply because they fall into categories that throw them into having the AMT calculated in their tax returns. It is costing them a lot of money. It was never intended to address the middle-class taxpayer, and it has grown exponentially since it started.

Mr. WYDEN. Would the Senator agree that the difficulty of projecting the AMT tax liability makes it tough

for taxpayers to compute their estimated tax payments and creates a situation in which, just because of its complexity, they can get hit with penalties?

I think the reason Oregonians are concerned about this—we have heard about it in the Senate Finance Committee—is that the AMT is essentially a separate tax system with its own tax rates and deduction rules which are less generous than regular rates and regular rules. This contributes to the tax-filing nightmare. The only way you can tell if you owe the alternative minimum tax is by filling out the forms or by being audited by the Internal Revenue Service. If it turns out you should have paid the alternative minimum tax and didn't, you owe back taxes plus any penalties or interests the IRS wants to dole out.

My question is, I ask my good friend, how in the world is a typical taxpayer going to be able to make sense out of something like that which lots of accountants tell me they cannot even sort through?

Mr. COATS. The Senator from Oregon is exactly right. I took three tax courses in law school. I cannot do my taxes with any assurance that I am doing it right because this code has become so incredibly complicated. The alternative minimum tax adds an additional set of calculations that make it even more complicated.

Today, 80 percent of the tax filers have to get help to file their taxes, 20 percent of those buy software and hook it into their computer and try to work through it that way, and 60 percent take it to a professional. If you are not working as a professional in a career as a CPA or a tax return specialist, you cannot keep up with the 70,000 pages and 10,000-plus exemptions and the complexity of filing a return. It should not in any sense of the matter be a tax collection system that requires 80 percent of our taxpayers to have to seek professional help at a significant cost. As I think I indicated earlier, $6 billion a year is spent on transferring money from the person paying the taxes to someone just to prepare their returns.

Small businesses face a similar problem. Small businesses do not have the big back room with the hired accountants and others to handle all the paperwork. Small business men and women have to be out front selling the product and have to be talking to the customer. Yet they now also are caught up in this web of complexity in terms of how to file their taxes, and they are having to expend time and money on getting their tax returns filed and making sure they are filed right.

Over time, as the deficit and debt problem has increased significantly, Members have been all the more reluctant to eliminate this on a single stand-alone basis because of the impact it would have on our ballooning deficit. But on comprehensive tax reform, if we can put this together with a package of comprehensive reforms, we can do it in a revenue-neutral basis so it does not have an adverse impact on the economy.

Again, I commend Senator WYDEN and Senator Gregg for putting together a package that does just that, and I ask my colleague if he wants to elaborate on that a little bit. I thank him for the opportunity to come down to discuss for the first if not the last time some of the egregious aspects of the Tax Code in this country that I think will dictate how we should move forward and why we should move forward in enacting comprehensive tax reform.

I thank the Senator.

Mr. WYDEN. The distinguished majority leader is here. I think we are about to wrap up. I am certainly happy to yield to him if he needs a few minutes to do the business of the Senate, and then Senator COATS and I will wrap up.

Mr. REID. Madam President, it is my understanding that the hour of 5 o'clock has arrived.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized. The Senator is correct.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business from now until 6:30 this evening, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each; that at 6:30 p.m. the majority leader be recognized, and that this work we are going to do during the next hour and a half be for debate only.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Oregon.

PATCHING THE AMT

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, just to wrap up, Senator COATS and I are going to come to the floor in the weeks ahead to outline some of the most outlandish examples of how broken our tax system is. We thought it was appropriate to start with the alternative minimum tax because it really is the poster child for how out of whack the American tax system has become. I think we have highlighted a number of our big concerns, but I want Senators to pick up on the last point Senator COATS made, and that is that the country cannot afford the status quo.

The idea that you would just go out and pass what is called a patch, a kind of bandaid to try to make sure some of the pain is minimized for middle-class folks—the most recent patch for just 2 years cost $135 billion. The 10-year cost to make the current patch permanent is $683 billion, according to the Congressional Budget Office. A patch does not protect everybody; it just limits the damage.

What we want to say as we start this debate about how to go forward with tax reform is that the Congress cannot continue to handle the AMT with a patch. The country cannot afford it. Patching the AMT costs way too much, especially given the discussions we are having here, bipartisan discussions about how to deal with the Federal debt.

The only affordable way to fix the alternative minimum tax, as Senator COATS has outlined this afternoon, is to fix it once and for all and do it within the context of comprehensive tax reform; to pick it up, as was done in the 1980s when a Republican President got together with Democratic Members of Congress and cleaned out special interest loopholes to hold down rates for everybody and give all Americans the opportunity to get ahead while still having a progressive tax system.

We would repeal the alternative minimum tax once and for all and do it in a way that does not add to the Federal deficit. This is not Senator COATS and I plucking a figure out of the sky. The Joint Committee on Taxation has analyzed our bill, and under their analysis, Senator COATS and I eliminate the alternative minimum tax without adding to the Federal deficit. In my view, that is a pretty good way to start tax reform, start it in a bipartisan way and particularly by focusing on something that is so inequitable to hard-working middle-class people.

I thank my good friend from Indiana. I am prepared to yield the floor if my colleague has anything else he wants to say. I want to express my appreciation for the chance to work with him. We cannot deal with these big economic issues, the big economic challenges our country faces without going forward in a bipartisan way. I am very fortunate to have such an able partner. I thank him.

Mr. COATS. I thank the Senator.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MERKLEY). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come today to visit on the floor of the Senate because since last November the President has been trying to convince the American people that he has a plan to restart our economy. He was in North Carolina yesterday with his council to talk about issues. To me, the President's approach has left a lot to be desired. If the White House created as many jobs as it creates speeches, things would be a lot better. The President's empty words are not filling the pockets of American citizens.

The President has been given a new chance to show his commitment to economic growth, and that is the chance

he has recently had to nominate a Secretary of Commerce for the United States.

When I think about the Commerce Department, it is a department with a job, in terms of American businesses, to make those businesses more innovative at home and more competitive overseas. Well, the mission of the Commerce Department states that it ''promotes job creation, economic growth, sustainable development and improved standards of living for all Americans.'' So at a time of economic crisis such as the one we have now, a nominee who can fulfill that mission, that very mission—of promoting job creation, economic growth, sustainable development, and improved standards of living for all Americans, that very mission—is needed more than ever.

Despite the administration's promise that their so-called stimulus bill would keep unemployment rates below 8 percent, we know unemployment went to 10 percent. It is still over 9 percent, and our job growth last month was the slowest it has been in almost a year. Over 13 million Americans are still out of work, and nearly half of them have been unemployed for 6 months or more. This is the highest rate of chronic unemployment we have had since the Great Depression.

These problems aren't just happening at home. America's position on the international stage is slipping as well. America's ability to pay its debts has already been called into question by Standard & Poor's credit ratings. Moody's is asking the same questions. Recently, Fitch credit ratings also warned us that the United States was playing with fire. Gas prices are very high. I hear it every weekend at home in Wyoming. Families are spending $800 on average more for gasoline this year than last year. We spend $48 million more on goods from other countries than we do on our own goods, and our economic situation is already bad.

The headlines sound worse every day. Let me give a couple of examples. From Gallup: ''U.S. Investor Optimism Declines.''

From Reuters: ''Wall Street ends down as jobs data disappoints.''

From Bloomberg: ''Economic Recovery Is Languishing as Americans Await Signal of Better Times.''

Even the Chairman of the Federal Reserve said the job market was ''far from normal.''

The facts are clear. Americans deserve the best leadership in the Commerce Department—the Department that is responsible for trade, job creation, and economic growth.

Last week, the President nominated John Bryson to be his new Commerce Secretary. Many may ask, who is this man? Is he a job promoter, someone who can bring economic growth and improve the standard of living for all Americans? Well, John Bryson's record clearly shows he is not such a nominee. In fact, his resume is exhibit No. 1 in proving that this administration is not serious about job growth. At best, it is unclear why John Bryson is the President's nominee for this position. At worst, his nomination is proof the President wants environmental activists running our economic development strategy.

When announcing Mr. Bryson's nomination, the President praised Mr. Bryson's background. According to the President, Mr. Bryson would be a good Commerce Secretary because ''he's been a fierce proponent of alternative energy.'' Well, if Mr. Bryson was being nominated to be Energy Secretary or the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency or even Interior Secretary, that fact might be relevant. But Mr. Bryson is being nominated to be Secretary of Commerce.

Mr. Bryson does have a background in the private sector. The problem is, his private sector success has more to do with government help than with his own ability to create jobs or grow the economy.

Don't take my word for it. The Wall Street Journal already has written that Mr. Bryson believes ''wholeheartedly in a strategy of politicized investment.'' They also wrote that the companies he has been associated with have generated revenue through handouts from the Federal Government rather than by being profitable.

We need a Commerce Secretary who knows how businesses turn a profit and how to create private sector jobs. We need a Commerce Secretary who will make it easier and cheaper for the private sector to create jobs, not someone who will make it harder and more expensive for the private sector to create jobs. We need a Commerce Secretary who can understand all sectors of the economy rather than someone who picks winners and losers.

Already, to me, Mr. Bryson fails the test. His support for politicizing U.S. investments is the least problematic element of his resume. Along with his private sector experience, he is also the founder of a group called the Natural Resources Defense Council, or the NRDC. This organization is so radically antibusiness that even Massachusetts Democrat Congressmen BARNEY FRANK and JOHN TIERNEY think it is troubling that Mr. Bryson is associated with it.

These Members of Congress have described the NRDC as ''one of those environmental organizations that has reflexively attacked the fishing industry inaccurately and without any real environmental basis.''

It is not just the fishing industry the NRDC reflexively attacks. Members of the NRDC staff are on record saying: ''There is no such thing as clean coal.''

But while gas prices soar and energy jobs are needed, a spokesman for the NRDC has said:

> NRDC has been very active and proud to be active in fighting new coal plant proposals in the United States.

They have also stood in the way of lifesaving sonar technology that would enhance America's national security. Why? Well, out of fear that it might harm the whales.

They have also filed thousands of lawsuits to stop the production of American energy, and American energy is critical and a part of our American national security. This anti-energy agenda is so reflexive that the NRDC has even filed lawsuits to further delay future energy exploration in the Gulf of Mexico. Well, the delay has already stretched on so long that even former President Bill Clinton has called it ''ridiculous.''

John Bryson's career has consistently shown that he agrees with this overzealous approach to environmental policy. When Mr. Bryson first started at Edison Electric, the Los Angeles Times said he had founded ''one of the Nation's most aggressive environmental organizations.''

When it comes to being antibusiness, an unpopular policy such as cap and trade is one area where he is focused. He is one of its most aggressive supporters, and the record shows it. More importantly, his own words show it. Most Americans recognize cap and trade as a job-killing energy tax. That is why the Waxman-Markey cap-and-trade bill couldn't pass the Senate. However, when referring to this very bill, John Bryson called it ''moderate but acceptable.'' He called it a moderate but acceptable piece of legislation. He even said the legislation was good precisely because it was a good way to hide a carbon tax—to hide a tax.

Mr. Bryson has repeatedly called for a national cap-and-trade system, and he has even put his money where his mouth is. But when someone says ''a good way to hide a tax,'' is that what the role of the Secretary of Commerce is, to hide a tax on American businesses to make them less competitive, to make it more expensive to do business? I think not.

According to the Daily Caller, Mr. Bryson's own company spent over $1 million lobbying for cap and trade.

So John Bryson believes in politicizing American investment. He has founded a radical environmental organization and has spent significant amounts of money lobbying for a policy that he openly acknowledges is a cover for a job-killing energy tax.

We need a Commerce Secretary. We need a Commerce Secretary who will work at making American businesses more innovative at home and more competitive abroad. We do not need a Commerce Secretary who is more interested in taking our hard-earned dollars than in creating jobs at home. The American people deserve a Commerce Secretary who is more interested in free trade than in cap and trade.

The President may believe John Bryson is the right man at the right time. I believe John Bryson is the wrong man at the worst possible time.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

JOBS IN AMERICA

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, rarely has Washington been so completely out of touch with the priorities and anxieties of ordinary working Americans. Here on Capitol Hill, policymakers are obsessed—obsessed—with the budget deficit. But the rest of America is most concerned with a far more urgent deficit—the jobs deficit.

Our Nation remains deeply mired in the most protracted period of joblessness since the Great Depression. Officially, some 14 million Americans are out of work. But real unemployment—the real unemployment, including those who are working part time but want to be working full time; those who are marginally attached; those who have never worked in the first place because they never got a job—if we add that all up, we have closer to 25 million Americans unemployed, and millions of Americans who are employed are increasingly anxious about holding on to their jobs or, at their present income, making ends meet.

But many of our political leaders in Washington are treating the jobs crisis as yesterday's news. They are putting this deficit reduction above all else. They are demanding extraordinary funding cuts—trillions of dollars in cuts, and the sooner the better, with little concern as to its adverse impact on jobs. But this is exactly the wrong approach. It is the economic equivalent of applying leaches and draining blood from a sick patient, which we used to do, by the way. That is what they did to George Washington as he lay dying. They applied leaches to him. What does that do? It just makes us weaker, and in the case of President Washington proved fatal.

In the same way, trillions in budget cuts would massively drain demand from a still weak economy. It could destroy millions of jobs. This is not just the wrong medicine for our economy; it will slow or stop economic growth, and it will make deficits worse in the future.

As Federal Reserve Chairman Bernanke warned last week:

> A sharp fiscal consolidation focused on the very near term could be self-defeating if it were to undercut the still fragile economy.

I strongly disagree with the slash-and-burn approach to deficit reduction favored by some of our colleagues. We need to recognize one of the very big reasons for the budget deficit is the jobs deficit. The best way to bring the budget under control is to help these 25 million Americans who are unemployed get good-paying middle-class jobs. It is hard-working Americans who would be delighted to be taxpayers once again.

Now, obviously, we are counting on the private sector to help drive job creation and make the economic recovery self-sustaining. It should be the case if we put more money into infrastructure. If we were to do our job in rebuilding our roads and our bridges, our highways, our sewer and water systems, our rail systems—the government doesn't do that; it goes to private contractors, private companies. Some of this is already happening but certainly not at the pace we need.

Since March of 2010, the private sector has created about 2 million jobs. However, businesses remain reluctant to invest and hire for the simple reason there is not sufficient demand for their goods and services. All of those people who are unemployed and underemployed are spending the bare minimum just trying to get from week to week. Meanwhile, the middle class is tapped out with stagnant incomes—stagnant incomes. For over 30 years, the middle class has had stagnant real incomes. They have insecure jobs, high levels of mortgage, insufficient pension funds, and other consumer debt.

That is why the Federal Government has had to play an aggressive role in helping us to recover from this great recession. Over the last 2 years, we have repeatedly cut taxes. We have extended financial aid to the States. That helped prevent massive layoffs of teachers and first responders and other essential employees.

We have made major investments in research, education, and infrastructure. All of these have either preserved jobs or created new jobs. Listen to this. We have gone from when President Obama took office—we were losing 700,000 jobs a month—700,000 jobs a month. That is just a couple of years ago. Now we are adding new jobs for the first time—and we have had 16 new consecutive months of adding jobs. Not enough. Not enough. But we are at least moving in the right direction.

The Economic Policy Institute estimates that as of the fourth quarter of 2010, the Recovery Act had created or saved up to 4 million jobs and as many as 5 million full-time equivalent jobs. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimates that through the end of 2010, the Recovery Act had raised the real inflation-adjusted gross domestic product by as much as 3.5 percent.

So to those who said the Recovery Act did not do anything, that is nonsense. That is absolute nonsense. It did a lot. But here is the problem: The shot in the arm provided by the Recovery Act is now winding down. In the absence of further Federal assistance, many States are making deep budget cuts and layoffs of public employees.

Listen to this. In Texas, Governor Perry has proposed to cut education funding by a staggering $10 billion. New York City Mayor Bloomberg has proposed laying off 6,000 teachers. Total State and local government layoffs since August of 2008 have been nearly 500,000. If the Federal Government follows suit with massive short-term spending cuts, the prospect of a double-dip recession will be all too real.

Last week the Federal Reserve Bank of New York published an article about what it called the ''Mistake of 1937,'' referring to premature fiscal and monetary pullbacks that cut short the fragile recovery and ended up prolonging the Great Depression.

Princeton economist Paul Krugman says that in important ways, we have already repeated the mistake of 1937. We have taken our eyes off what should be our No. 1 priority, creating jobs. We have pivoted since 6 months ago, since the last election, to an obsession with deep short-term budget cuts, which by their very nature will destroy jobs and weaken the economy.

Everyone agrees we must take aggressive action to reduce the deficit. But we have to do it right. We need to reduce long-term deficits but in a way that absolutely minimizes immediate job losses. We need to reduce the deficit in a balanced way.

Unfortunately, the extreme budget offered by Congressman PAUL RYAN, supported by almost every Republican in the House, and I would say also in the Senate, would make our fiscal and jobs problems far worse. That Republican budget lavishes yet more tax cuts on corporations and the wealthy, as it slashes investments that undergird the middle class in this country, everything from education funding to Medicare and Medicaid.

Let me state what I think is obvious. If working people and the middle class are going to take a hit in tough times, it should not be to pay for tax breaks for the wealthy. If the middle class is going to take a hit, let's use those taxes to put money into rebuilding the infrastructure of this country, put it into better education, better schools, better teachers.

I have often said the key to renewing America and restoring our economy is to revitalize the middle class. That means investing in education, innovation, infrastructure, boosting American competitiveness in a highly competitive global marketplace. It means restoring a level playing field with fair taxation—fair taxation.

It also means an empowered workforce, a strong ladder of opportunity to give every American access to the middle class. I believe that corporations and the wealthy can return to the levels of taxation they had in the 1990s when the economy boomed and incomes also skyrocketed.

It is absurd to take the position that any dollar in tax increases that results from having the wealthy pay their fair share or ending tax loopholes is bad and unacceptable. I think it is absurd to take that position, while at the same time you take the position that it is okay to slash funding for education, for infrastructure, for research.

In both the 1980s, under Ronald Reagan, and in the 1990s under Clinton,

we achieved a sensible balance of revenue increases plus domestic and Pentagon spending cuts in order to dramatically reduce deficits while we protected the middle class and we maintained safety net programs.

I agree with the economists who believe that given the fragile economic recovery, we should not reduce fiscal support for job creation at this time. Deficit reduction efforts can start, but we should sequence the lion's share of spending cuts so that they take place in the midterm and the long term when the economy is recovered. But now we have to keep our priorities straight.

Deficit reduction, yes, is important, but it is not our most important economic challenge right now. Our most urgent economic challenge is the fragile economy and the jobs crisis and the fact that the middle class in America is under siege. The middle class, in fact, is being dismantled as fast as big corporations can ship our manufacturing jobs overseas. People are losing their savings, their health care, their pensions, in many cases even their homes.

With good reason, people feel that they are losing the American dream for themselves and their kids. That is why we cannot look at the deficit reduction challenge in isolation. We cannot just take a Draconian slash-and-burn approach to the budget. Smart countries in tough economic times do not turn a chainsaw on themselves.

The extreme Republican budget is far more focused on shrinking the size and role of government than it is on cutting the deficit. Instead of that budget, the Republican budget, which is being sold through fear and fatalism, we need a budget that reflects the hopes and the aspirations of the American people. We need a budget that allows us to continue investments, that boosts competitiveness, creates jobs, and strengthens the middle class. There can be no real economic recovery, there can be no return to fiscal balance, without the recovery of the middle class in America. That is why our immediate No. 1 priority must be helping to create jobs, putting people back to work. That is how we will start to restore more demand for goods and services, the key to healthy economic growth. Economic growth, in turn, will help generate the revenues that will help bring deficits back into balance, into rough balance. So this is our most important job in front of us.

Yet all we hear is the constant drumbeat: Cut the size of government; cut spending; slash and burn and cut everything that supports the middle class in America; ship our jobs overseas; more tax breaks for the wealthy and big corporations.

We need to be focused on rebuilding the infrastructure of America, because that is most necessary now. That is one of the fastest ways we can put people back to work and start stimulating the economy. We need to put more money into education: rebuilding our schools across America, hiring better teachers. We need a longer school day, and we need a longer school year. I know some of the young people probably do not want to hear that.

Most young people in Europe, Asia, Japan, do not go to school 9 months out of the year, they go to school 11 months out of the year. They do not go to school for 5½ or 6 hours a day, they go for 8 hours a day. We wonder why they are getting ahead of us. But that costs money. If you are going to have a longer school year, that costs money. If you are going to have longer schooldays, if you are going to have better technology in our schools, schools that have the latest in technology so our young people can learn on the latest innovations, so they can be competitive in that global marketplace, that does cost money.

Yet to hear it around here, we cannot do anything. No, of course, now there is one place we can spend money. We can continue our operations in Iraq for God knows how many more centuries. We have already spent over $1 trillion in Iraq. We have already spent close to $100 billion in Afghanistan. But we can continue to do that with no end in sight. We can continue to buy more weapons that do not do anything to protect us in the new global fight against terrorism. They might have been good back in the Vietnam war, maybe in the Cold War. But that is over with. But, no, we have got to keep pouring money into weapons systems that do nothing to protect the country.

Two decades ago, President Clinton's team defined our Nation's central challenge with a slogan—I remember it well—they said: ''It's the economy, stupid.''

Well, today America's central challenge can be defined with more precision. ''It's the middle class, stupid.'' It is what we do to encourage, promote, protect, invigorate the middle class in America, to make sure the middle class has good jobs, good pensions, good health care systems, the ability to make sure their kids are well educated, and that they do not go to college and get out with a mountain of debt on their heads so that they too can have a good start in life. This is all part of the middle-class structure of America, as to what made America the greatest country in the history of the world.

I will close. It seems that the Republican budget they have proffered, and so much that I hear of those who keep saying, we have got to cut, cut, cut, we have got to cut spending, we have got to cut education, we have got to cut infrastructure, we have got to cut all of that stuff, it almost seems as though it is premised on the belief that we are poor—our country is poor and our country is broke and we cannot afford to do all of those things. That is really what it is. They say we are broke. We cannot afford to do all of that stuff, so we have got to cut our spending. Yet we are the richest Nation in the history of mankind. We are the richest country in the world. We have the highest per capita income of any major country. I guess you have to ask the question: If we are so rich, why are we so broke? If we are the richest country in the history of the world—we are the richest country in the world today, we have the highest per capita income of any major economy—why are we so broke?

Well, my response is, we are not broke and we are not poor. We are wealthy beyond all imagination as a nation. We are not broke. But the system is broken. That is what is broken. The system is broken, the system of who we tax and how we tax, how we raise revenues, the system of allowing corporations to tax benefits and ship jobs overseas, the system that allows companies to almost willy-nilly break up what has been one of the strengths of the middle class, that is, our labor unions. They are breaking up labor unions because they know the middle class working together in organized labor has been able to bargain more effectively for better jobs and better wages, better conditions of employment. You break them up and you can reduce their incomes, and more of it can go to profits and to higher CEO salaries. That is the system that is broken.

You can cut all the spending you want. You can cut the Federal Government to the bare bones. It will lead to another great recession, maybe even a depression. If you want to do that, that is a dead-end road.

We need more stimulus now. Does that mean we have to borrow more money and go further into debt? Not necessarily. Why don't we fix this unfair tax system we have and generate more revenues to come into the Federal Government? Why don't we say to those who made so much money in the last decade or so, maybe you ought to pay a little bit more, and for big corporations, pay a little bit more, and for the Federal Government to put that money to use rebuilding the infrastructure and educating our youth and having a health care system that is affordable and comprehensive. That is what we ought to be doing. That will support the middle class. In supporting the middle class, you will then support economic recovery.

I will close. There will be no economic recovery in America of any substance or lasting any length of time without a recovery of the middle class, which is the backbone of our country. It is time our political leaders showed some backbone in supporting the middle class.

With that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNET). Without objection, it is so ordered.

EDA FUNDING

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, for over a week the Senate has been debating the Economic Development and Revitalization Act of 2011, which would reauthorize funding for existing programs of the Commerce Department's U.S. Economic Development Administration through 2015. EDA has traditionally been noncontroversial, traditionally been a bipartisan job-creation bill supported by Presidents of both parties, often supported in this body without dissent. It helps broker deals between the public and private sectors, which is critical to our economic recovery and growth. It is particularly important to economically distressed communities, particularly in tough economic times.

Every $1 in EDA grant funding leverages nearly $7 worth of private investment. Every $10,000 in EDA investment in business incubators—or accelerators, as some call them—helps entrepreneurs start up companies in which nearly 70 jobs are created.

In Ohio—and I don't think it is much different in the Presiding Officer's State of Colorado—we have seen since 2006 that some 40 EDA grants worth $36 million have leveraged a total of more than $87 million since private resources were matched. Colleges and universities, from Bowling Green in northwest Ohio, to Ohio University in southeast Ohio, to Miami University in southwest Ohio, have received EDA funds. So, too, have port authorities in Toledo in the west and Ashtabula in the far northeast and entrepreneurs in Cleveland and Appalachia.

If we are to strengthen our competitiveness, we will need to equip businesses with the tools they need to thrive. That is what EDA is designed to do. It is the front door for communities facing sudden and severe economic distress. When economic disaster hits, communities turn to the government, and it is EDA that does the job at low cost, leveraging all kinds of private dollars.

EDA has helped redevelop the former GM plant in Moraine, OH, near Dayton, and the DHL plant in Wilmington. Ashtabula's Plant C received EDA investments to make vital repairs.

The bill the Senate is considering would strengthen a proven job-creating program. It would reduce regulatory burdens to increase flexibility for grantees. It would encourage public-private partnerships that we have already seen make a difference in my State. And the bill would better streamline EDA cooperation with other Federal, State, and local agencies to better assist communities with local economic development.

I plan to offer two amendments to further strengthen EDA. One would assist communities when a plant closure or downsizing causes economic distress, such as Wilmington or Moraine. The amendment gives special preference to auto communities. The other amendment would make more Ohio communities eligible to receive funds for business incubators. Ohio is home to the National Business Incubator Association in Athens, OH, and several model business incubators, from Toledo, to Shaker Heights, to Youngstown. This amendment would allow more companies in Ohio and more communities in Ohio to support homegrown entrepreneurship.

Two weeks ago, I visited—as I have in several places around the State—an incubator in Shaker Heights called the Launch House. It was an old car dealership that had been closed down several years ago. It was renovated with relatively little money. It is now home to about 40 entrepreneurs, one- and two-person startup operations, with the average age of these young entrepreneurs being under 30. The great majority of these 35 or 40 entrepreneurs are themselves under 30. Some of these startups won't exist in 2 years. Some will have grown in 2 years. Many will be hiring lots of people in the years ahead. Some will fail, some will succeed.

As I pointed out earlier, only $10,000 of EDA investment in a business incubator, on average, creates somewhere in the vicinity of 50, 60, or 70 jobs. If we want to promote an economy fueled by innovation, we must better equip our entrepreneurs with the resources they need to turn an idea in the lab to a product in the market.

Earlier this year, I held an innovation roundtable at Battelle with leading Ohio entrepreneurs and business leaders where we discussed the need to strengthen workforce development, promote business entrepreneurship, and support city planning. EDA assistance, they told me—as do other business leaders around the State and as entrepreneurs do tell—is critical to these goals.

This is legislation on which we should move forward. I am sorry my friends on the other side of the aisle who have been so supportive of EDA in the past—as it has always been bipartisan—seem to be standing in the way of this. It is important to move forward, so I ask for the Senate's support.

JOB CREATION

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss an amendment to the Economic Development Revitalization Act of 2011. In February of this year I introduced a 7-Point Jobs Plan aimed at creating jobs, investing in education and training, assisting small businesses, reinvigorating American manufacturing, and eliminating bureaucratic redtape. Among other things, my bill aims to provide EDA assistance for areas hit hard by job losses, and specifically those communities harmed as a direct consequence of the Base Realignment and Closure, or BRAC, process. The amendment that I am offering today would build on this plan by making it easier for communities affected by the BRAC process to access Federal funding to further their economic development goals and to recover from the loss of jobs.

Currently, most Economic Development Administration, EDA, projects are subject to a 50-percent match; however, the EDA is allowed to increase the Federal share—up to 80 percent—based on the relative need of the area in which the project will be located. The bill being debated would expand the list of circumstances under which the Federal share may be increased. My amendment would simply clarify that communities affected by ''military base closures, realignments, or mission growth'' are among those eligible for a reduced local cost share.

Maine has lost more than 5,000 military and civilian jobs as a result of the unfortunate decision to close Brunswick Naval Air Station. Several other States face similar or even greater losses. The BRAC recommendations, released by the Pentagon in May of 2005, caused Maine and many other States to face a daunting task. All of us across the State and region—political leaders, business leaders, and individual citizens from cities and small towns—worked together to build strong arguments for our bases. While we did have some great success, Maine has suffered a terrible blow with the closing of the Brunswick Naval Air Station. Nevertheless, the State and region's leaders have worked together to ensure that the closure of Brunswick Naval Air Station was accompanied by a commitment to the economic redevelopment of the base in order to lessen the impact of its closure on the entire midcoast region.

The large numbers of workers in Maine, and around the Nation, who have been or will be displaced as a result of a base closure deserve to have access to necessary resources, including job training and job placement services. The EDA, with its mission to promote economic development and stability, should be leveraging taxpayer dollars to assist these struggling communities as we work to lead America to a recovery from the worst economic recession since the Great Depression.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we be in a period of morning business, with Senators allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each, for debate only, until 7:30 today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. UDALL of Colorado). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE DREAM ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it is my honor to come to the Senate floor this evening to speak on the issue of the DREAM Act and to have among those in attendance on the floor of the Senate a group of Senators from Mexico who are part of the Mexican-American interparliamentary union. They are here on the floor with the majority leader, HARRY REID, as well as Senator TOM UDALL, who is coordinating their visit to the United States over the next several days. We are honored that they are here and that they are allowed to come on the floor and to witness our Senate, at least in this proceeding where I will make a brief statement.

The issue I am going to raise in the course of this evening is one that is of importance to many people around the world—certainly in the United States and certainly in the nation of Mexico.

Ten years ago, I introduced a bill known as the DREAM Act. The DREAM Act was an effort to put into the law an opportunity for young people who were brought to the United States and are undocumented to have a chance to become legal in the United States.

The first person brought to my attention was a young woman in Chicago, IL, who was Korean. She came to the United States at the age of 2. She was an accomplished musician. She had been accepted at the very best music schools in America, including Juilliard School of Music and the Manhattan School of Music.

As she filled out her application form, she asked her mother about her nationality and citizenship. Her mother told her: I am sorry, I don't know the answer because we never filed any papers. We brought you here as a baby and you have lived here all your life, but we don't know what your status is.

She said: What should we do?

Her mom said: We should call Durbin's office.

So they called my office, and we checked on the laws in America, and unfortunately the laws did not allow her to be treated as a legal person in the United States. In fact, the American law said she had to return to the country she came from, which coincidentally was Brazil, not Korea. She had no way of knowing that. Her family had gone from Korea to Brazil to the United States. There she was at the age of 18 with a great opportunity ahead of her and no country. She had lived for 16 years in the United States. She believed she was an American. She knew no other country. She got up every day in school and said the Pledge of Allegiance and sang the national anthem. Yet she was a person without a country.

Well, it was because of her that I introduced the DREAM Act 10 years ago. What it basically says is that many young people who are brought to the United States as children should not be punished because their parents didn't file the necessary papers. The DREAM Act would give these students a chance to become legal in America. They would have to first prove they came here as a child, they are long-term U.S. residents, they have good moral character, graduate from high school, and be prepared to do one of two things: either serve in the U.S. military or complete at least 2 years of college.

So I introduced this bill 10 years ago thinking it was a simple matter of justice that these young people would have their chance. I had no idea how many young people were affected or would be affected. As I went around the city of Chicago and the State of Illinois and spoke at gatherings about the DREAM Act, it wasn't unusual for young people to be waiting for me outside afterward, and they would say very quietly: I am one of those DREAM Act kids. I was brought here, and I am undocumented, and I don't know what I am going to do with my life. They would be very quiet about it. I would say: Well, I will do my best to pass this law.

As time passed and we tried to bring this to the floor many times, things changed some. We picked up support from a lot of different people.

The Defense Secretary, Robert Gates, supports the DREAM Act. He called me one day and said: As the former president of Texas A&M, I know what it means to have college students who cannot attend an away game for any sports because they are undocumented, and if they were stopped and asked to produce identification, they could be deported. As Secretary of Defense, I know what it would mean if we could bring these young people into the American military. There would be more diversity. We would be a stronger nation, so I support it.

GEN Colin L. Powell also has endorsed the DREAM Act. He believes, as I do, that this is a fair thing to do, a just thing to do, and would be good for our military.

Over the years, these young people started coming forward more and more and speaking about their lives, and, perhaps with more bravado than they should have, they were prepared to risk deportation to tell their stories. Over the years, these Dreamers have become an important part of this effort to pass the DREAM Act. We have the support of so many groups across America, including religious groups and many others who believe this is the right and fair thing to do. We invite young people across America, if they want to voluntarily do so, to tell us their stories.

I come to the floor of the Senate tonight to tell two stories about two young DREAM Act people and their lives.

The first one is Juan Rios. This is a photograph of Juan Rios, who was brought to the United States when he was 10 years old. He grew up in the State of Arizona. In high school, Juan discovered his calling: military service. He became a leader in the Air Force Junior ROTC, as we can see from his uniform. He became group commander and arm drill team captain and rose to the rank of cadet lieutenant colonel. Juan dreamed of one day attending the Air Force Academy, but he was unable to do so because he is undocumented. Instead, Juan enrolled in Arizona State University.

This is a more recent photograph of Juan on his commencement day at Arizona State University. Juan graduated from Arizona State University with a degree in aeronautical engineering. Since graduation, Juan has been waiting for his chance to either serve in our military or to use his degree. He can't enlist, obviously, because he is undocumented, and he can't work in his field—the aeronautics industry—because of the same legal obstacle.

He just sent me a letter, and this is what it said:

> The United States of America is the country I want to live my life in, where I want to flourish as a productive citizen, where I want to grow old among my lifelong friends, where I want to one day fall in love and raise a family.

What we heard from Juan we could hear from young people all across America. It is his American dream—a dream that won't come true unless we pass the DREAM Act.

This next young lady I wish to introduce my colleagues to is someone I met just a few weeks ago. This is Tolu Olubumni. She was brought to the United States from Nigeria when she was a child. She graduated from high school here in the United States at the top of her class. She won a full scholarship to a prestigious university in Virginia and in 2002 graduated with a degree in chemical engineering.

It has been 10 years since I first introduced the DREAM Act in 2001 and almost 10 years since she graduated from college. The DREAM Act has yet to become law, and she has yet to work 1 day as a chemical engineer because she is undocumented. Instead, Tolu has dedicated her life to passing the DREAM Act for her benefit and the benefit of others. For years, she has worked as a full-time volunteer. Recently, she wrote me a letter, and this is what she said:

> I don't have a powerful organization behind me or a fancy job title or even a paycheck, but I am committed to stand and fight for you for as long as you ask me to.

Tolu is not standing alone. Her commitment and the commitment of many other Dreamers is what inspires me to continue this effort for the DREAM Act.

There are so many others like Tolu who are living a life of uncertainty. They have amazing accomplishments in their lives, and yet they can't use the degrees they have earned to make this a better nation and to have a whole life of their own. So last month I reintroduced the DREAM Act. Tolu joined me on that occasion, with Senator HARRY REID, who has been a strong supporter; BOB MENENDEZ, our Hispanic colleague here in the Senate; and RICHARD BLUMENTHAL from the State of Connecticut.

Here is what Tolu said:

> Passing the DREAM Act is critically important to me and so many others. I don't believe I am entitled to anything more than what this great Nation has taught me—that we all have a right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

She is right. Thousands of immigrant students in the United States were brought here as children. It wasn't their decision to come, but they grew up here, they made it their home, and they are prepared to make this a better Nation.

Some of my colleagues have come to the floor of the Senate criticizing the DREAM Act because people under the age of 35 are eligible. They say the DREAM Act should really only benefit children. They ignore the obvious: In order to qualify for the DREAM Act, an individual must have come to the United States as a child, just like Tolu. Now she is 30 years old. She has been waiting patiently for 10 years. To say she is now ineligible because we have not acted I think would be fundamentally unfair.

Today we had an interesting speech which I listened to on the floor. It was the first speech—so-called maiden speech—of our colleague, Senator MARCO RUBIO from Florida. It was an excellent speech, and I complimented him afterward. Among the things he talked about was the contribution of immigrants to the United States.

I am a first-generation American. My mother was an immigrant to this country. One hundred years ago, in 1911, her mother brought her at the age of 2 into this country. My mother didn't become a citizen until her mid-twenties, after she was married and had already had two children. She was a very proud and hard-working woman, raised a good family, I think—I am a little bit partial—and now her son is a U.S. Senator from Illinois.

This is not just my story. It is not just my family's story. This is the American story. This is who we are, immigrants who came to this country and risked everything to be a part of America and only asked for a chance—a chance to make this a better Nation and to create a better life for them and their families. The DREAM Act will give thousands of young people across America that chance to become a part of America's future. It is the just and fair thing to do to make us a stronger Nation and to keep our promise that we are going to be fair in the way we administer the laws.

I urge my colleagues to take a look at the version of the DREAM Act that has been introduced. I urge them as well to join me as cosponsors. We will work carefully with other countries and other nations to make sure we demonstrate to them the sense of fairness that is part of America.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN PROGRAM

Mr. INOUYE. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the importance of the Emergency Medical Service for Children, or EMSC, Program. Recently, we celebrated National EMSC Day, an annual event raising awareness about the need to improve and expand specialized care for children in the prehospital and acute care settings.

The EMSC Program holds great personal importance to me. More than 30 years ago, Senator HATCH and I, on a bipartisan basis, took note of the systematic problems and deficiencies surrounding emergency care for children. With these deficiencies in mind, we authored legislation to address the gaps in emergency care for children. Through the support of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Surgeon General the bill became law in 1984 authorizing Federal funding for EMSC.

For over 25 years now, EMSC, which is administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration's, HRSA, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, has been doing truly amazing work. With just over $20 million a year, EMSC works with all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories to educate emergency medical personnel. In addition to educating and training health care professionals, EMSC supports research at leading governmental and academic institutions so that our children are treated with cutting-edge technology and services.

The EMSC Program addresses the entire continuum of pediatric emergency services, from injury prevention and EMS access through out-of-hospital and emergency department care, intensive care, rehabilitation, and reintegration into the community, while ensuring the ongoing involvement of the child's primary care physician. It serves the unique needs of children in a way no other program can. Over the years, we have also funded various projects for emergency care. I thank my colleagues for supporting the inclusion of a 5-year reauthorization of the EMSC Program in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

In recognition of all that EMSC has done and will continue to do for this Nation's children, several experts gathered on Capitol Hill last month to hold an educational briefing in conjunction with EMSC Day. Sponsored by the American Academy of Pediatrics, staff heard from Dr. Elizabeth Edgerton, the new branch chief for EMSC and injury prevention at the Maternal and Child Health Bureau at HRSA, who described the EMSC Program and what it has accomplished. Katherine Dixon Hert, EMSC program manager, Office of EMS and Trauma at the Alabama Department of Public Health, recounted the devastation of the recent tornadoes that swept through the State of Alabama; the challenges in caring for children often separated from their parents; and the pediatric deaths that occurred. Lastly, Joseph Wright, M.D., M.P.H., F.A.A.P., principal investigator and medical director of the EMSC National Resource Center, shared his experience of ''growing up'' with the EMSC Program as part of the original cohort of board-certified pediatric emergency physicians in the United States.

I do not know a parent or grandparent who would advocate for anything but the best care of our children during an emergency. The EMSC Program has filled a void that existed within the EMS system prior to its inception. Many experts have identified the need for a lead agency for EMS in the U.S. While such a lead agency could improve optimal emergency care and response, any reorganization of Federal EMS Programs must maintain the EMSC Program as a freestanding program. Without the EMSC Program, children's medical and treatment needs will not be met. I would like to honor and thank the many hard-working Americans that work daily to serve and save our children.

TRIBUTE TO J. DAVID HOOD

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a faithful public servant on the occasion of his retirement. J. David Hood, the regional commissioner of the Public Buildings Service for General Services Administration's Great Lakes Region, is retiring on July 1, 2011, after 40 years of dedicated service to the Federal Government. David heads an organization that is responsible for more than 35 million square feet of Federal offices and workplaces in nearly 1,000 buildings owned or leased by GSA. He also manages over $1.2 billion in construction and renovation projects throughout the region.

David joined GSA's Great Lakes Regional Office in 1971 as an intern before becoming a real estate appraiser, a project manager, director of planning, and eventually serving as deputy assistant regional administrator, Public Buildings Service. In 1993, David moved to the agency's former Federal Supply Service, FSS, where he served as assistant regional administrator for 9 years before taking the same position, now regional commissioner, with Public Buildings Service. He is a member of the Federal Government's Senior

Executive Service and is a recipient of GSA's Meritorious Service Award. David also served as acting regional administrator for GSA's Great Lakes Region from January 2009 until January 2011.

In a sense, David is the landlord for my State offices in Chicago and Carbondale. In that capacity, I saw firsthand David's commitment to the Federal Government and wise use of taxpayer money. Last year, my Chicago office in the Kluczynski Federal Building was in need of repair and reconfiguration. David and his team completed what would normally be a yearlong project in just 4 months, and stayed within budget. In addition to meeting the operational needs of my Chicago staff so that they can best serve the people of Illinois, the renovation also produced considerable cost- and energy-savings.

As David's storied career in public service comes to a close, I rise to thank him for his hard work on behalf of the American people, and in particular the people of Illinois. David is an exemplary civil servant, and while his retirement is well-deserved, his service to the Federal Government will be missed.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

LANCE CORPORAL SEAN MICHAEL NICHOLAS O'CONNOR

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to honor and express our Nation's deepest thanks to a brave young man and his family. On Monday, I received word that LCpl Sean M.N. O'Connor of Douglas, WY, had fallen on June 12, 2011, in the line of duty in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Lance Corporal O'Connor was killed while supporting combat operations in Helmand Province in southern Afghanistan.

Lance Corporal O'Connor was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 8, II Marine Expeditionary Force FWD, 1st Marine Division, out of Camp Pendleton, CA. Sean's roots in the Marine Corps run deep. He was born at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton. Like his father, Lance Corporal O'Connor joined the U.S. Marine Corps in 2007 soon after graduating from Douglas High School. Sean was an avid reader, swimmer and shooter. He will be remembered as a fun loving son and friend who could always be counted on to lend a hand to those in need.

It is because of individuals like Sean O'Connor that all Americans are able to live our daily lives as free people. They put their very lives on the line every day, and because of their bravery and their families, our Nation remains free and strong. Freedom is not free. It carries a very high price. And that price has been paid over and over by many generations of men and women who answered the call to arms and willingly bear the burdens of defending our Nation. They deserve our deepest respect and gratitude.

The motto of the U.S. Marine Corps is ''Semper Fidelis.'' It means ''Always Faithful.'' LCpl Sean O'Connor lived up to these words with great honor. He made the ultimate sacrifice in the name of freedom for you and I to enjoy. He gave his life, that last full measure of devotion, for you, me, and every single American. Today we thank Lance Corporal O'Connor for serving and defending our country. He was always faithful to our country and its citizens, and to his fellow marines.

Lance Corporal O'Connor is survived by his parents Daniel and Dee O'Connor and his Aunt Sarah O'Connor. He is also survived by his brothers and sisters in arms of the U.S. Marine Corps. We say goodbye to a son, friend, neighbor, and a marine. The United States of America pays its deepest respect to LCpl Sean O'Connor for his sacrifice, so that we may remain free. Sean was the embodiment of honor, courage and commitment. All of Wyoming, and indeed the entire Nation, is proud of him. May God bless him and his family. Lance Corporal O'Connor, Semper Fi.

AMERICA INVENTS ACT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I was pleased that the Chamber of Commerce today wrote to Members of the House of Representatives in support of the America Invents Act. The Senate-passed companion legislation was approved in March in a 95–5 vote. This bill will create jobs and grow the economy without adding a penny to the deficit. Today's announcement by the Chamber of Commerce is a strong indication of a growing consensus that this legislation is what America needs to win the future through innovation. I applaud the work that Chairman SMITH, Mr. WATT, and others have done to move the legislation forward in the House, and I encourage the full House to act swiftly.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a full copy of the Chamber's letter.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Washington, DC, June 14, 2011.

To the Members of the U.S. House of Representatives:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than three million businesses and organizations of every size, sector, and region, supports H.R. 1249, the ''America Invents Act,'' which would encourage innovation and bolster the U.S. economy. The Chamber believes this legislation is crucial for American economic growth, jobs, and the future of U.S. competitiveness.

A key component of H.R. 1249 is section 22, which would ensure that fees collected by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) fund the office and its administration of the patent system. PTO faces significant challenges, including a massive backlog of pending applications, and this backlog is stifling domestic innovators. The fees that PTO collects to review and approve patent application are supposed to be dedicated to PTO operation. However, fee diversion by Congress has hampered PTO's efforts to hire and retain a sufficient number of qualified examiners and implement technological improvements necessary to ensure expeditious issuance of high quality patents. Providing PTO with full access to the user fees it collects is an important first step toward reducing the current backlog of 1.2 million applications waiting for a final determination and pendency time of 3 years, as well as to improve patent quality.

In addition, the legislation would help ensure that the U.S. remains at the forefront of innovation by enhancing the PTO process and ensuring that all inventors secure the exclusive right to their inventions and discoveries. The bill shifts the U.S. to a first-inventor-to-file system that we believe is both constitutional and wise, ending expensive interference proceedings. H.R. 1249 also contains important legal reforms that would help reduce unnecessary litigation against American businesses and innovators. Among the bill's provisions, Section 16 would put an end to frivolous false patent marking cases, while still preserving the right of those who suffered actual harm to bring actions. Section 5 would create a prior user right for those who first commercially use inventions, protecting the rights of early inventors and giving manufacturers a powerful incentive to build new factories in the United States, while at the same time fully protecting universities. Section 19 also restricts joinder of defendants who have tenuous connections to the underlying disputes in patent infringement suits. Section 18 of H.R. 1249 provides for a tailored pilot program which would allow patent office experts to help the court review the validity of certain business method patents using the best available prior art as an alternative to costly litigation.

The Chamber strongly opposes any amendments to H.R. 1249 that would strike or weaken any of the important legal reform measures in this legislation, including those found in Sections 16, 5, 19 and 18. The Chamber supports H.R. 1249 and urges the House to expeditiously approve this necessary legislation.

Sincerely,

R. BRUCE JOSTEN,
Executive Vice President, Government Affairs.

REMEMBERING PRIVATE FIRST CLASS JOHN T. MARR

Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts. Mr. President, on this day in 1777, the Second Continental Congress adopted the flag of the United States. At that time, American colonists were just 2 years into their long and bloody struggle for independence and only a year earlier had declared independence from the British throne. Since that time, our flag has been carried into countless battles and has been proudly worn on the uniforms of millions of American servicemen and women.

I rise today to tell the story of one such American, US Army PFC John T. Marr of Dorchester, MA. Private Marr was mortally wounded in combat on a hill on the other side of the globe. The hill happened to be in Korea in 1953. It could have been so many other places where Americans fought and died: Bunker Hill in Boston, Cemetery Ridge at Gettysburg, the cliffs of Normandy, Kakazu Ridge on Okinawa, Hamburger

Hill in Vietnam or the Tora Bora region of Afghanistan.

Private First Class Marr could have been so many other people's husband, son or brother throughout our nation's history.

John Marr, ''Jack'' to his family and friends, was among thousands of Massachusetts residents to serve our Nation in Korea and among the hundreds to die there. Korea has been referred to as the ''forgotten war.'' By the early 1950s, our Nation had grown war weary, having so recently endured a global war in which more than 400,000 American servicemen died and far more than a half million were wounded. Yet while the Greatest Generation returned from Europe, Africa, and the South Pacific to build modern America, hundreds of thousands of their younger brothers were fighting and dying on the Korean Peninsula. The Korean war was never forgotten by people like the Marr family of Dorchester who on a hot summer day in 1953 received word that their middle child had died in the service of his Nation.

By all accounts, Jack Marr was a young man with a promising life ahead of him. He was an outstanding athlete, well-liked by all, newly married, and worked for his family's successful South Boston contracting business. Yet like millions before and after, Jack answered his Nation's call to serve.

In Korea, Jack was communications chief of Company D, 179th Infantry Regiment of the 45th Infantry Division. On July 19, 1953, his unit came under heavy mortar attack, wounding several members who were caught in the open. With no thought for his own safety, Jack Marr left the cover of his bunker to pull wounded comrades to safety and was mortally wounded by an exploding mortar round. Private First Class Marr was among the last Americans to die in the Korean war, and succumbed to his injuries just 2 days before the Armistice went into effect. Jack left behind his wife Mary, loving parents, brothers Daniel, Jr. and Robert, and a sister Judith Marie.

The Marr family will honor Jack this Flag Day by dedicating a flagpole on the grounds of their family business on D Street in South Boston. I join the Marr family in honoring the service and sacrifice of PFC John T. Marr and will close with words engraved on the plaque they will unveil today. ''This flagpole is dedicated to the courageous military service of John T. Marr. Jack answered the call to defend the people of South Korea. His sacrifice will forever be an example of hope, conviction and the unconquerable American spirit in the pursuit of freedom.''

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR GENERAL JAMES C. McCONVILLE

Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize MG James C. McConville for his professional dedication and service as the Army's Chief of Legislative Liaison, from January 6, 2010, to July 5, 2011. In this capacity, Major General McConville was responsible for advising the Secretary of the Army, the Chief of Staff of the Army and other Army senior leadership on all legislative and congressional matters. During this period of extraordinary change and challenge for the Army, he masterfully led the Army's outreach to Congress.

It is an honor and a pleasure to recognize my good friend Jim McConville who is a native of Quincy, MA. He received his nomination to the U.S. Military Academy from the late senior Senator from Massachusetts, Senator Edward M. Kennedy. Upon graduation from West Point, he was commissioned as an infantry officer. He was also a 2002 national security fellow at Harvard University. He has had an exemplary military career culminating in his recent selection as the commanding general of the 101st Airborne Division, Air Assault, at Fort Campbell, KY.

Major General McConville clearly understood the importance of fostering a strong relationship with the Congress. He worked tirelessly on behalf of the Army to earn the trust and confidence of Members of Congress and their staffs and his candor and availability ensured continuous support for the Army.

Major General McConville handled some of the most complex and sensitive issues our Army has ever faced through two legislative cycles with unparalleled results. His service assisted the Army in its efforts to restore balance to a force stretched and stressed by the demands of the longest war our Nation has fought. His efforts greatly contributed to the Army's transformation by building versatile, modular units and improving the capabilities of individual soldiers.

Major General McConville's career includes key command and staff assignments. He was deployed as the Commander of 4th Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Based on the heroism of his aviators and courageous efforts of his soldiers, his brigade was selected as the 2004 Aviation Unit of the Year. Major General McConville also served as Deputy Commanding General for the 101st Airborne Division, Air Assault, in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. His key staff assignments include executive officer to the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army and deputy chief of the Office of Congressional Liaison.

I thank Jim for his tremendous service to our Nation. I know that his wife Maria, their children Michael, Jessica, and Ryan, and the people of Massachusetts are extremely proud of his service. I wish him the utmost success as he continues to serve our great Nation at the 101st Airborne Division, Air Assault.

WOLF KAHN AND EMILY MASON GALLERY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it is a delight to call the attention of the Senate to the generosity and vision of Wolf Kahn and Emily Mason, whose longstanding commitment to the communities of southern Vermont is being commemorated with the dedication of the Wolf Kahn and Emily Mason Gallery at the Brattleboro Museum and Art Center. While nationally and internationally recognized as accomplished artists, it is Wolf's and Emily's selfless contributions to their neighbors and their community that makes me the most proud to call them Vermonters.

The works of local painters, sculptors, musicians, photographers, and authors enrich Vermont's culture throughout the beautiful Green Mountain State. Displaying their creations in community venues, from libraries to coffee shops, artists working in all mediums enrich our lives, deepen our pride in our communities and strengthen our bond with Vermont, its landscape, its beauty and its cultural heritage. Anyone who has contemplated a painting in a museum or examined an original manuscript or composition, and has gained a greater understanding of both the artist and the subject as a result, knows the power and importance of these works in our lives.

Since 1968, Wolf and Emily have spent the summers and autumns in West Brattleboro, VT, where the landscape provides them inspiration for countless paintings and drawings. Wolf and Emily's love of Vermont, however, does not end with the environment our State offers to create their work. They carry their passion into the community, to create equally rich experiences for other artists and the general public. Forty years ago, Wolf and Emily were instrumental in the formation of the Brattleboro Museum and Art Center. Over the ensuing decades, they have offered invaluable guidance and advice, and helped the Museum and Art Center establish important connections with the broader art world. They have also played a crucial role and offered the same unwavering support in the creation of the Vermont Studio Center—a working studio space where artists and writers from across the country and the world descend upon Johnson, VT, to immerse themselves in their work. Today these two organizations are not only flourishing, but they are also firmly embedded in Vermont's rich participation in the arts. The success of these programs is a true credit to Wolf and Emily's continued support throughout the years. They truly are energy givers, infusing all around them with their enthusiasm and sense of possibility.

Wolf and Emily have lived in Vermont, but they also have enriched the quality of life for all Vermonters by generously lending their hands and their talent to a number of institutions in Vermont—from cultural experiences, to supporting the basic needs of our most vulnerable community members. Their positive impact will be felt in Vermont for generations to come.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO NORA THOMBS

• Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, in the 1930s, the forces of tyranny and oppression seemed to be taking over the world. The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary were especially concerned that tyrannical regimes were indoctrinating their young people in hateful ideology, and so they countered with an initiative to better educate young Americans in democracy and leadership. Since then, some 2 million high school students have been delegates to Boys and Girls State programs throughout our Nation. Forty-one years ago, I served as a Dirigo Girls State delegate in my State of Maine, and I will never forget that inspiring week.

Today I wish to recognize Nora Thombs of New Sharon, ME, for her remarkable commitment to this program. When Dirigo Girls State convenes on June 19, Nora will mark her 50th year of involvement. The first year was as a delegate during her high school years. The other 49 have been helping to bring this great experience to other young Maine women. From her early service as a staff volunteer to her current position as director, she has helped forge new generations of involved citizens.

Nora exemplifies the principles that Boys and Girls State instills. Although she never sought elective office, her appreciation of the importance of every person's vote and her knowledge about the process of government made her an effective and respected town meeting moderator, one of the most challenging roles in local government throughout New England. The leadership skills she learned helped her become an outstanding teacher and principal.

But the best evidence of those principles is Nora's dedication to spreading them. As soon as one year's Girls State week concludes, she is hard at work planning the next—working with high schools, recruiting delegates, and arranging for speakers, presentations, and experiences that will inform and inspire.

It is an honor to congratulate Nora Thombs for her 50 years of contributions to Dirigo Girls State. She is proof that the delegates of yesterday are the leaders of today. Thanks to her, the delegates of today will be the leaders of tomorrow.•

REMEMBERING RICHARD W. CARR

• Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to the remarkable life and legacy of Richard W. Carr. One year after Dick Carr's passing, I feel deprived of the ongoing, often surprising revelations of his depth and diversity. But also, of course, I feel deeply grateful to have been his friend.

Dick Carr was like a great book in which you find new meanings, insights, and strengths every time you return to it.

When I first met Dick, he seemed like another good guy with a kind and vivacious wife and wonderful daughters who lived a block away from my family in Hillandale. He was surely all that but over time, as I came to know him better, it was clear that Dick Carr was much, much more.

He was a man of property but also a man of poetry. He was a man who knew history, but also understood what it meant to be holy. He learned a lot and taught a lot. He laughed a lot and loved a lot.

Little things sometimes tell us big things about people. For instance, in Hillandale, Dick was one of the few residents who took care of his own yard, with Marie's help of course. Not, I presume, because he couldn't afford gardening help, but because he just enjoyed doing it himself and wanted his grounds to be as perfect as he and Marie would make them. And it tells you a lot about Dick that he didn't stop with his own yard. He took care of the yards of neighbors who were away or whose husbands were ailing or gone. That was Dick Carr.

Dick had many loves in his life none of course greater than Marie, Kate, Annie, Beth, his parents, and his siblings. But he also had a special love for this city—its history and its people—and he helped, along with his family, to rebuild, enrich, and beautify Washington in many lasting ways. Dick's work to restore the Willard Hotel to its previous grandeur was a great gift to our country and its Capital City. His charitable work changed the lives of many who had much less than he did. And he did it all in a quiet way that showed he had the self-confidence not to need the public credit.

In the last 3 years since he was diagnosed with aplastic anemia, I learned some other new things from Dick Carr. In the face of repeated bleak diagnoses and painful treatments, Dick taught me and all of us new meaning of words like strength, courage, and grace under pressure. He didn't just fight the good fight; he fought a great fight until he had given to life all that he could and God was ready to take his soul from this Earth. And Marie, his love and life's partner, fought tirelessly for him and alongside him every step of the way in the most sustained, selfless, and devoted acts of caring I have ever seen. Marie Carr is simply saintly.

Thank you, Marie, for what you showed and taught all of us about love and faith over the years. I pray that you will be strengthened now and in the years ahead by your faith and comforted by wonderful memories of Dick.

I pray also, with total confidence, that Dick's soul has soared to heaven where he is living in eternal peace, which in his case will probably mean reading, writing, gardening, dreaming, and building. In fact, I would not be surprised if right now Dick was devising plans to restore some heavenly structure to its previous grandeur.

Today, in Sister's Garden of the Dahlgren Chapel of the Sacred Heart here in Washington, DC, Dick's great life and legacy will be honored and memorialized forever in that lush, green, and holy space.

May God bless you and keep you, Dick, as you blessed and inspired each of us who knew you.•

TURTON, SOUTH DAKOTA

• Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize Turton, SD. The town of Turton will celebrate the 125th anniversary of its founding this year. Located in Spink County, Turton came into existence during a time known as the ''Great Dakota Boom,'' when the railroads were expanded throughout the State.

Since its beginning 125 years ago, the Turton community has continued to serve as an outstanding example of South Dakota traditions and values. I would like to offer my congratulations to the citizens of Turton on this milestone date and wish them continued prosperity for years to come.•

REPORT ON THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13405 OF JUNE 16, 2006, WITH RESPECT TO BELARUS—PM 10

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency and related measures blocking the property of certain persons undermining democratic processes or institutions in Belarus are to continue in effect beyond June 16, 2011.

The flawed December 2010 Presidential election in Belarus and its aftermath—the harsh violence against peaceful demonstrators; the continuing detention, prosecution, and imprisonment of opposition Presidential candidates and others; and the continuing repression of independent media and civil society activists—all show that the Government of Belarus has taken steps backward in the development of democratic governance and respect for human rights. The actions and policies of the Government of Belarus and other persons to undermine Belarus democratic processes or institutions,

to commit human rights abuses related to political repression, and to engage in public corruption pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared to deal with this threat and the related measures blocking the property of certain persons.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *June 14, 2011*.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–2102. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Office of Policy, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Pesticide Tolerances; Technical Amendments'' (FRL No. 8875–4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 10, 2011; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–2103. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Office of Policy, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Difenoconazole; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 8876–4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 10, 2011; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–2104. A communication from the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Loan Policies and Operations; Loan Purchases from FDIC'' (RIN3052-AC62) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 10, 2011; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–2105. A communication from the Director of the Policy Issuances Division, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Cooperative Inspection Programs: Interstate Shipment of Meat and Poultry Products'' (RIN0583-AD37) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 8, 2011; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–2106. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting legislative proposals relative to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–2107. A communication from the Secretary, Division of Corporation Finance, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Beneficial Ownership Reporting Requirements and Security-Based Swaps'' (RIN3235-AK98) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 13, 2011; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2108. A communication from the Administrator, Energy Information Administration, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Uranium Marketing Annual Report; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–2109. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Decommissioning Planning'' (RIN3150-AI55) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 13, 2011; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2110. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Office of Policy, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of California; Interstate Transport of Pollution; Significant Contribution to Nonattainment and Interference with Maintenance Requirements'' (FRL No. 9318–1) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 10, 2011; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2111. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Office of Policy, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of California; Regional Haze State Implementation Plan and Interstate Transport Plan; Interference with Visibility Requirement'' (FRL No. 9317–9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 10, 2011; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2112. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Office of Policy, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Land Disposal Restrictions: Revision of the Treatment Standards for Carbamate Wastes'' (FRL No. 9318–4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 10, 2011; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2113. A communication from the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a legislative proposal relative to the collection of fees under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act to support an electronic hazardous waste manifest system; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2114. A communication from the Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a semiannual report relative to the status of the Commission's licensing and regulatory duties; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2115. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Regulations Governing Practice Before the Internal Revenue Service'' (RIN1545-BH01) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 8, 2011; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2116. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Foreign Acquisition Amendments'' ((RIN0750-AH16)(DFARS Case 2011–D017)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 8, 2011; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2117. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Fiscal Year 2010 Medical Device User Fee and Modernization Act (MDUFMA) Financial Report''; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–2118. A communication from the Executive Director, Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Fiscal Year 2011 Performance Accountability Report and Financial Statements; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–2119. A communication from the Deputy Secretary of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Defense's Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from October 1, 2010 through March 31, 2011; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2120. A communication from the Executive Director, United States Access Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's fiscal year 2010 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2121. A communication from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, transmitting legislative proposals relative to health care benefits, personnel-related matters and benefits for homeless Veterans; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC–2122. A communication from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, transmitting a legislative proposal entitled ''Veterans Benefit Programs Improvement Act of 2011''; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC–2123. A communication from the Director of Exporter Services, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Wassenaar Arrangement 2010 Plenary Agreements Implementation: Commerce Control List, Definitions, Reports; Correction'' (RIN0694-AF11) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 9, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2124. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Export Control Reform Initiative: Strategic Trade Authorization License Exception'' (RIN0694-AF03) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 9, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2125. A communication from the Deputy Chief, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Structure and Practices of the Video Relay Service Program, Order Suspending Effective Date'' ((CG Docket No. 10–51)(FCC 11–86)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 13, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2126. A communication from the Legal Advisor and Chief, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment of the Commission's Rules Regarding Maritime Automatic Identification Systems'' (FCC 11–80) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 13, 2011; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–2127. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Department of Commerce's Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2011–2016; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and

were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM–33. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana memorializing Congress to enact laws to establish, implement, and ensure that universal communication is at all times and at all places available to warn the American people of imminent and impending dangers; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 3

Whereas, the Congress of the United States should enact laws to establish and implement an effective, reliable, integrated, flexible, and comprehensive system that will alert and warn the American people in situations of war, terrorist attack, natural disaster, or other hazards to public health, safety and well-being, taking appropriate account of the functions, capabilities, needs of all people, the private sector and of all governments, so as to ensure that, under all conditions, universal communication is at all times and at all places available to warn the American people of imminent and impending dangers; and

Whereas, Congress should investigate and conduct hearings to inventory, evaluate, and assess capabilities and integration with the public alert and warning system of federal, state, territorial, tribal, and local public alert and warning resources; and

Whereas, Congress should establish or adopt common alerting and warning protocols, standards, technology, and operating procedures that are effective without the necessity of maintaining a database of contact information (while protecting privacy of all Americans) and for the public alert and warning system to enable interoperability and the secure delivery of coordinated messages to the American people through as many communication pathways as practicable, utilizing today's technology so as to guarantee the delivery of warnings and alerts in a timely manner to the entire population when surface infrastructure does not exist, has been compromised, or otherwise rendered ineffective; and

Whereas, Congress should ensure the capability to adapt the distribution and content of communications on the basis of clearly defined geographic locations, risks, or personal user preferences, as appropriate; and

Whereas, Congress should provide that any public alert and warning system is capable of alerting and warning all Americans, including those with disabilities and those who lack an understanding of the English language, in the most remote geographic areas of America and its territories; and

Whereas, Congress should, through cooperation with the owners and operators of communication facilities, maintain, protect, and, if necessary, restore communications facilities and capabilities necessary for the public alert and warning system; and

Whereas, Congress should establish training, annual tests, and exercises for the public alert and warning system, and provide for direct access thereto by appropriate federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial emergency personnel; and

Whereas, Congress should ensure the conduct of public education efforts so that federal, state, territorial, tribal, local governments, the private sector, and the American people understand the functions of the public alert and warning system and how to access, use, and respond to information issued through all public alert and warning systems and devices; and

Whereas, Congress should require all governments, federal, state, local, territorial, and media communication organizations to consult, coordinate, and cooperate with the private sector, including emergency response providers and users, as appropriate for the full implementation of a state of the art early warning and alert system; and

Whereas, Congress should, in performing the functions set forth above, coordinate with all appropriate departments and agencies of all governments referenced in this Resolution. Therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana, in session duly assembled, memorializes the Congress of the United States of America, and the Louisiana delegation to the United States Congress in particular, to expedite a solution that will provide public alert and warning in situations of war, terrorist attack, natural disaster, or other hazards to public safety and well-being to all people of the United States of America. Be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Speaker and the Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader of the United States Senate, and to all sitting members of Louisiana's delegation to the Congress of the United States of America.

POM–34. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the Legislature of the State of Iowa relative to recognizing the positive impact of the Community Services Block Grant program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 44

Whereas, in state fiscal year 2010, 365,752 Iowans in 140,333 households were helped in their fight against poverty through services funded by the federal Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program; and

Whereas, more than 96 percent of the families receiving services were at or below 175 percent of the federal level or $35,427 annual family income; and

Whereas, more than 76 percent of the individuals served by the 18 community action agencies were working or received social security as their source of income; and

Whereas, those 18 community action agencies have 127 service centers throughout all 99 Iowa counties; and

Whereas, each community action agency is governed by a community-based volunteer board of directors consisting of elected officials, private sector representatives, and low-income Iowans; and

Whereas, Iowa's 18 community action agencies employ 3,350 Iowans; and

Whereas, CSBG funding for the 18 community action agencies brought in $2.3 million in local funding, $13.6 million in private funding, $13.9 million in state funding, and $222.9 million in federal funding to Iowa's local communities; and

Whereas, CSBG funding for Iowa's 18 community action agencies helped generate $17.7 million in in-kind goods and services and donated items; and

Whereas, the 18 community action agencies received $7,154,281 in CSBG funding enabling the community action agencies to operate their service centers and to administer state and federally funded programs; and

Whereas, President Obama has proposed a 50 percent reduction in CSBG funding and making the allocation of the remaining funds competitive instead of continuing the current allocation formula that brings stability to Iowa's community and economic development initiatives; and

Whereas, the Iowa House of Representatives supports efforts of the United States Congress to effectively reduce the federal deficit while promoting the current and future economic security of all Iowans; Now therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the House of Representatives supports the positive impact of the CSBG program in Iowa and opposes federal action to reduce CSBG funding disproportionately compared to the rest of the federal domestic discretionary budget; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be sent to the President of the United States, the President and Secretary of the United States Senate, the Speaker and Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, and each member of the Iowa congressional delegation.

POM–35. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of Louisiana memorializing Congress to enact legislation to provide additional funding for research in order to find a treatment and a cure for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 26

Whereas, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis or ALS is better known as Lou Gehrig's disease; and

Whereas, ALS is a fatal neurodegenerative disease characterized by degeneration of cell bodies of the lower motor neurons in the gray matter of the anterior horns of the spinal cord; and

Whereas, the initial symptom of ALS is weakness of the skeletal muscles, especially those of the extremities; and

Whereas, as ALS progresses the patient experiences difficulty in swallowing, talking, and breathing; and

Whereas, ALS eventually causes muscles to atrophy and the patient becomes a functional quadriplegic; and

Whereas, ALS does not affect a patient's mental capacity, so that the patient remains alert and aware of his or her loss of motor functions and the inevitable outcome of continued deterioration and death; and

Whereas, on average, patients diagnosed with ALS only survive two to five years from the time of diagnosis; and

Whereas, ALS has no known cause, means of prevention, or cure; and

Whereas, research indicates that military veterans are at a 60% or greater risk of developing ALS than those who have not served in the military; and

Whereas, the Department of Veterans Affairs implemented regulations to establish a presumption of service connection for ALS thereby presuming that the development of ALS was incurred or aggravated by a veteran's service in the military; and

Whereas, a national ALS patient registry, administered by the Centers for Disease Control, is currently identifying cases of ALS in the United States and may become the single largest ALS research project ever created; and

Whereas, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month increases the public's awareness of ALS patients' circumstances and acknowledges the terrible impact this disease has not only on the patient but on his or her family and the community and recognizes the research being done to eradicate this horrible disease. Therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Legislature of Louisiana hereby recognizes May 2011 as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month. Be it further

Resolved, That the Congress of the United States is hereby memorialized to enact legislation to provide additional funding for research in order to find a treatment and a cure for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. Be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to the secretary of the United States Senate and the clerk of the

United States House of Representatives and to each member of the Louisiana delegation to the United States Congress.

POM–36. A petition transmitted by a private citizen relative to the examination of the record and conduct of a judicial nomination; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. LEVIN for the Committee on Armed Services.

*Leon E. Panetta, of California, to be Secretary of Defense.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. BROWN of Ohio:

S. 1188. A bill to require the purchase of domestically made flags of the United States of America for use by the Federal Government; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. ENZI, Mr. HATCH, Mr. RISCH, and Mr. TOOMEY):

S. 1189. A bill to amend the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.) to provide for regulatory impact analyses for certain rules, consideration of the least burdensome regulatory alternative, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. CHAMBLISS, and Mr. INOUYE):

S. 1190. A bill to reduce disparities and improve access to effective and cost efficient diagnosis and treatment of prostate cancer through advances in testing, research, and education, including through telehealth, comparative effectiveness research, and identification of best practices in patient education and outreach particularly with respect to underserved racial, ethnic and rural populations and men with a family history of prostate cancer, to establish a directive on what constitutes clinically appropriate prostate cancer imaging, and to create a prostate cancer scientific advisory board for the Office of the Chief Scientist at the Food and Drug Administration to accelerate real-time sharing of the latest research and accelerate movement of new medicines to patients; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 1191. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to carry out a study regarding the suitability and feasibility of establishing the Naugatuck River Valley National Heritage Area in Connecticut, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. BEGICH:

S. 1192. A bill to supplement State jurisdiction in Alaska Native villages with Federal and tribal resources to improve the quality of life in rural Alaska while reducing domestic violence against Native women and children and to reduce alcohol and drug abuse and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. CARDIN:

S. 1193. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to preserve and renew Federal-aid highways to reduce long-term costs, improve safety, and improve the condition of Federal-aid highways; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. LEAHY:

S. 1194. A bill to facilitate compliance with Article 36 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, done at Vienna April 24, 1963, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MENENDEZ:

S. 1195. A bill to protect victims of crime or serious labor violations from deportation during Department of Homeland Security enforcement actions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. WICKER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. LEE, Mr. HATCH, Mr. VITTER, Mr. COBURN, and Mr. CORKER):

S. 1196. A bill to expand the use of E-Verify, to hold employers accountable, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. VITTER, Mr. LUGAR, and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S.J. Res. 19. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States authorizing Congress to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. BROWN of Ohio:

S. 1188. A bill to require the purchase of domestically made flags of the United States of America for use by the Federal Government; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the All-American Made Flag Act, on this 234th celebration of Flag Day in our Nation, On June 14, 1777, the Second Continental Congress first adopted a flag for our new country, bestowing a meaning to the stars and stripes of our founding commitment to freedom and democracy.

Our flag inspires servicemembers in times of war; it looks over state capitals and schools, stadiums and veterans halls as a reminder of the price of our peace and security. It stood through the smoke in Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, and the rubble in New York City and Washington D.C. on September 11, 2001. The flag instills hope of a better life for generations of immigrants, embodying an aspiration of free people around the world. Americans pledge allegiance to the flag, reminding us about our Nation's history, and the system of checks and balances and separation of powers that tenders the balance of our laws and freedoms.

The flag that inspired our national anthem rests in the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. Smaller, hand-held flags are waived during Fourth of July Parades and on Memorial Day are placed alongside headstones. But whether in museums or in parades or upon memorials, the American flag reaffirms the power and meaning first ascribed to it by our founders.

And what better way to celebrate its meaning, our Nation's history and virtue, than to ensure it is stamped with the Made-in-America label. On this day, I introduce the All-American Made Flag Act, which would require that American flags purchased by the Federal Government are entirely made in America.

Across the nation, and especially in Ohio, manufacturers and businesses have been making and selling American flags for generations. In Coschocton, Ohio, the nation's oldest and largest producer of American flags has been doing so since 1851. From the first World's Fair in New York City, through the Civil War and World War II, and into the universe and onto the moon these flags, made in Coschocton, have played a role in our nation's history. Today, on Flag Day, it joins other businesses that sell All-American made American flags, from Cincinnati to Dayton to Columbus to Cleveland.

Few things can give better meaning to the Made-in-America label than our own flag. The All-American Made Flag Act would provide that meaning, and in doing so, would invest in America's workers and manufacturers who embody the ingenuity and patriotism embodied in the very flag itself.

By Mr. BEGICH:

S. 1192. A bill to supplement State jurisdiction in Alaska Native villages with Federal and tribal resources to improve the quality of life in rural Alaska while reducing domestic violence against Native women and children and to reduce alcohol and drug abuse and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, today I introduce legislation to address issues of great concern to me and to all who care about public safety in Alaska Native villages.

Last year President Obama signed the Tribal Law and Order bill into law. That legislation passed because Congress recognized the great need to provide more support for the criminal justice system and communities in Indian Country. While this law has some important provisions that will benefit Alaska Native communities, I believe the remoteness and other unique conditions in many Native villages in my State compel us to do more. That is why I am introducing the Alaska Safe Families and Villages Act of 2011.

My bill will establish a demonstration project allowing Alaska Native tribes to set up tribal courts, establish tribal ordinances, and impose sanctions on those people who violate the ordinances. It would enhance current tribal

authority, while maintaining the State's primary role and responsibility in criminal matters. Additionally, those communities selected to be part of the demonstration project would be eligible for an Alaska Village Peace Officer grant, enabling a Peace Officer to serve participating communities in a holistic manner.

Due to the vastness of Alaska, too many of our small remote villages lack any law enforcement. Too often, minor cases involving alcohol and domestic abuse go unreported because the nearest State Trooper resides in a distant hub community, located a long and expensive airplane ride away. Frequently, harsh weather prevents the Troopers from flying into a community even when the most heinous acts have occurred. Approximately 71 villages have a sole, unarmed Village Patrol Safety Officer, VPSO, who must be on duty 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Compounding the challenges of a small number of local law enforcement, these few hard-working VPSOs are often underpaid. While communities try to provide some housing and heating assistance, in places where fuel oil can cost as much as $10 a gallon, it can be difficult to retain qualified VPSOs and also sustain the funding for these public servants.

As one who believes whole-heartedly in community involvement, I strongly believe tribes in Alaska should benefit from true self-determination and have a role in their law enforcement needs. This local control not only provides security for communities, but also encourages local acceptance of the established or existing judicial system as a whole. With the changes in place that my bill would require, residents of Alaska Native villages will see a culturally-relevant system replacing a crisis-management system that is set in place after a tragedy has occurred.

Unfortunately, Alaska Native communities have grown all too familiar with alarming suicide rates. In the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, over a two-month period during the summer of 2010, there were at least nine self-inflicted deaths in several of the region's villages. Nick Tucker, an elder in the village of Emmonak, wrote a letter to the State of Alaska's rural affairs advisor to try to bring attention to the issue. Part of Mr. Tucker's letter begged for the Governor to call the Legislature into session to address the issue. He also said it is no longer acceptable for village residents to wait for State Troopers because ''in the villages, they take forever.''

Part of the disturbing cycle of suicide in rural Alaska can be attributed to the presence of drugs and alcohol. Despite the knowledge that an individual can speak with an elder and learn who is bootlegging alcohol or selling drugs, predators do not fear law enforcement intervention because there is no consistent police or State Trooper presence.

Further, despite many Alaska Native communities' wealth of cultural heritage and tradition, many suffer from economic, cultural, and educational depression. Villages often experience high unemployment rates, above 20 percent, due to their remoteness and lack of economic opportunity. Most economic development in Alaska is centered in either the metropolitan areas, or in very remote areas where local residents are able to develop local resources. This economic depression, coupled with the 10,000-year practice of subsistence, means Alaska Natives' physical and spiritual survival remains highly dependent on the land. They subsist on game, berries, and fish. However, as hunting and fishing stocks dwindle, many of these Alaskans are feeling disconnected from their heritage and, at times, have turned to drugs and alcohol. Though educational attainment in the last 40 years has increased dramatically, the dropout rate in Alaska still hovers at 40 percent. Too many of our young men and women have lost hope and are losing a sense of community.

We must give our Nation's communities the tools necessary to protect themselves. Too often, we pour resources into urban areas, but decry lack of resources when we try to work toward innovative solutions for our most remote communities. We should no longer allow the answer from anyone to be ''we don't have the resources.'' Alaska Native villages are vibrant, strong communities and we should do everything in our power to answer their calls for help. I am hoping the Alaska Safe Families and Villages Act of 2011 will be just one piece of the puzzle.

I encourage my colleagues to join me on this legislation, and ask for the full Senate to consider and pass it—providing much-needed help and resources to some of our country's neediest places.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 1192

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Alaska Safe Families and Villages Act of 2011''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) while the State of Alaska and numerous Alaska organizations have struggled for years to address crime and substance abuse problems in Alaska, Native Villages continue to suffer from disproportionally high rates of illicit drug use, alcohol abuse, suicide, and domestic violence;

(2) the suicide rate in Alaska Native villages is 6 times the national average, and the alcohol-related mortality rate is 3.5 times that of the general national population;

(3) Alaska Native women suffer the highest rate of forcible sexual assault in the United States, and an Alaska Native woman is sexually assaulted every 18 hours;

(4) according to the 2006 Initial Report and Recommendations of the Alaska Rural Justice and Law Enforcement Commission more than 95 percent of all crimes committed in rural Alaska can be attributed to alcohol;

(5) the cost of drug and alcohol abuse in Alaska is estimated at $525,000,000 per year;

(6) the State of Alaska's public safety system does not effectively serve vast areas of the State in which many remote Alaska Native villages are located, except in response to serious crimes involving severe injury or death, which are handled by Alaska State Troopers who are located in only a small number of hub communities around the State;

(7) extreme weather conditions often prevent or delay travel into remote Alaska Native villages, forcing residents to wait for several days for an Alaska State Trooper to arrive and respond to these crimes, compared to a law enforcement response time normally within minutes for residents of urban communities;

(8) in many rural Alaska Native villages, there is no local law enforcement presence whatsoever;

(9) to the extent there are resident law enforcement officers in rural villages, they consist of Village Public Safety Officers (VPSOs) through the State VPSO Program, and a very limited number of other peace officers such as Village Police Officers (VPOs), Tribal Police Officers (TPOs) and Community Peace Officers (CPOs) who tend to have only minimal training and experience;

(10) the VPSO Program is not able to adequately serve all remote Alaska Native villages because there is insufficient funding or officers to address the urgent need for additional law enforcement in these communities;

(11) the number of VPSOs currently serving in Alaska is approximately 71, yet there are about 200 remote villages in Alaska, all of which could benefit from a law enforcement presence;

(12) studies have concluded that the lack of effective law enforcement in Alaska Native villages contributes significantly to increased crime, alcohol abuse, drug abuse, domestic violence, and rates of suicide, poor educational achievement, and a lack of economic development in those communities;

(13) law enforcement that is created and administered by Indian tribes in Alaska will be more responsive to the need for greater local control, local responsibility, and local accountability in the administration of justice; and

(14) it is necessary to invoke the plenary authority of Congress over Indian affairs under section 8 of clause 3 of Article I of the Constitution, in order to improve law enforcement conditions in Alaska Native villages.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to establish a demonstration project under which a limited number of Indian tribes in Alaska Native villages will exercise local law enforcement responsibilities to combat alcohol and drug abuse and to enhance existing tribal authority over domestic violence and child abuse and neglect;

(2) to enhance coordination and communication among Federal, State, tribal, and local law enforcement agencies; and

(3) to increase funding for, and therefore availability of, local law enforcement.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term ''Indian tribe'' means any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community of Indians recognized as eligible for the services provided to Indians by the Secretary because of their status as Indians, including any Alaska Native village as defined in section

3(c) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1602(c)).

(2) PROJECT.—The term ''Project'' means the Alaska Safe Families and Villages Demonstration Project established by section 4(a).

(3) PROJECT AREA.—The term ''Project Area'' means the geographical area within which an Indian tribe proposes to enforce the laws of the Indian tribe developed under the Project, as determined by the tribal government of the applicable Indian tribe and as approved by the Office of Justice Programs upon a showing that the extension of jurisdiction to such area is in the interest of justice.

(4) TRIBAL COURT.—The term ''tribal court'' means any court, council, or other mechanism sanctioned by an Indian tribe for the adjudication of disputes, including the violation of tribal laws, ordinances, or regulations.

(5) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The term ''tribal organization'' has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

SEC. 4. ALASKA SAFE FAMILIES AND VILLAGES DEMONSTRATION PROJECT.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF PROJECT.—The Office of Justice Programs of the Department of Justice shall carry out the Alaska Safe Families and Villages Demonstration Project as provided by this section.

(b) NUMBER OF TRIBES.—The Office of Justice Programs shall select not more than 9 Indian tribes in Alaska to participate in the Project in Alaska over a 3-year period, with not more than 3 Indian tribes selected during each of fiscal years 2012, 2013, and 2014.

(c) DURATION OF PROJECT.—Each Indian tribe selected to participate in the Project shall remain in the Project for a period of 5 years.

(d) ANNUAL REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—On or before May 1 of each year, the Attorney General shall provide to the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a brief annual report detailing activities undertaken under the Project and setting forth an assessment of the Project, together with any recommendations of the Attorney General for further action by Congress.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—Each report submitted under this subsection shall be prepared—

(A) in consultation with the governments of Indian tribes in Alaska; and

(B) after those governments and the State of Alaska have an opportunity to comment on each report prior to the finalization of the report.

(e) APPLICATIONS.—

(1) CRITERIA.—To qualify to participate in the Project, an Indian tribe in Alaska shall—

(A) request participation by resolution or other official action by the governing body of the Indian tribe;

(B) have for the preceding 3 fiscal years no uncorrected significant and material audit exceptions regarding any Federal contracts or grants;

(C) demonstrate to the Attorney General sufficient governance capacity to conduct the Project, as evidenced by the history of the Indian tribe in operating government services, including public utilities, children's courts, law enforcement, social service programs, or other activities;

(D) demonstrate the ability to sustain the goals and purposes of the Project after funding for the Project has expired; and

(E) meet such other criteria as the Attorney General may promulgate, after providing for public notice.

(2) COPY TO THE ALASKA AG.—Each Indian tribe shall send a copy of its application submitted under this section to the Attorney General of Alaska.

(f) TRIBAL REPORTING.—The Attorney General may by regulation promulgate such minimum reporting requirements as the Attorney General determines are reasonably necessary to carry out this Act.

(g) PUBLIC COMMENT.—All applications submitted pursuant to subsection (e) shall be subject to public comment for a period of not less than 30 days following publication of notice in a newspaper or other publication of general circulation in the vicinity of the Alaska Native village of the Indian tribe requesting participation in the Project.

(h) PLANNING PHASE.—Each Indian tribe selected for participation in the Project shall complete a planning phase that includes—

(1) internal governmental and organizational planning;

(2) the development of written tribal law or ordinances detailing the structure and procedures of the tribal court;

(3) enforcement mechanisms; and

(4) those aspects of drug or alcohol related matters that the Indian tribe proposes to regulate.

(i) CERTIFICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Upon completion of the planning phase under subsection (h), an Indian tribe shall provide to the Office of Tribal Justice—

(A) the constitution of the Indian tribe (or equivalent organic documents showing the structure of the tribal government and the placement and authority of the tribal court within that structure);

(B) the written tribal laws or ordinances of the Indian tribe governing court procedures and the regulation and enforcement of drugs, alcohol, and related matters;

(C) a map depicting the Project Area of the Indian tribe; and

(D) such other information or materials as the Attorney General may by public notice require.

(2) CERTIFICATION.—The Office of Tribal Justice shall certify the completion of the planning phase under this section.

(3) TIMING.—Certification under paragraph (2) may occur at the time at which an Indian tribe applies for participation in the Project if the Indian tribe demonstrates that the Indian tribe has already met the requirements of the planning phase.

(j) EFFECT OF CERTIFICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Commencing 30 days after the certification described in subsection (i) and except as provided in paragraph (2), an Indian tribe participating in the Project shall exercise jurisdiction, concurrent with the civil jurisdiction of the State of Alaska under State law, over—

(A) the drug, alcohol, or related matters described in subsection (i) within the Project Area of the Indian tribe; and

(B) persons of Indian or Alaska Native descent or other persons with consensual relationships with the Indian tribe or a member of the Indian tribe.

(2) SANCTIONS.—An Indian tribe participating in the Project shall impose such sanctions as shall be determined by the tribal court to be appropriate, consistent with the Indian Civil Rights Act and tribal law, including such measures as—

(A) restorative justice;

(B) community service;

(C) fines;

(D) forfeitures;

(E) commitments for treatment;

(F) restraining orders; and

(G) emergency detentions.

(3) AGREEMENT REQUIRED.—A person may not be incarcerated by an Indian tribe participating in the Project except pursuant to an agreement entered into under section 7.

(4) TREATMENT OF PROTECTIVE ORDERS.—For purposes of this subsection, the protective order of an Indian tribe participating in the Project excluding any member or nonmember from a community shall be considered a civil remedy.

(5) EMERGENCY CIRCUMSTANCES.—Nothing in this subsection shall prevent an Indian tribe participating in the Project from acting in the following emergency circumstances:

(A) A tribe may assume protective custody of a tribal member or otherwise take action to prevent imminent harm to self or others.

(B) A tribe may take immediate, temporary protective measures to address situations involving an imminent threat of harm to self or others by a non-member.

(k) EFFECT OF ACT.—Nothing in this Act—

(1) limits, alters, or diminishes the civil or criminal jurisdiction of the State of Alaska, or any subdivision of that State, the United States, or any Indian tribe in Alaska, including existing inherent and statutory authority of the tribes over child protection, child custody, and domestic violence;

(2) confirms or denies that any area of Alaska does or does not constitute Indian country;

(3) diminishes the trust responsibility of the United States to Indian tribes in Alaska, or abridges or diminishes the sovereign immunity of any Indian tribe in Alaska;

(4) alters the jurisdiction of the Metlakatla Indian Community within the Annette Islands Reservation;

(5) limits in any manner the eligibility of the State of Alaska, any political subdivision of the State, or any Indian tribe in Alaska, for any other Federal assistance under any other law; or

(6) shall be construed to alter the tribes' existing jurisdictional authority over domestic violence under the Violence Against Women Act.

(l) LIABILITY OF STATE OF ALASKA.—The State of Alaska and any political subdivision of the State shall not be liable for any act or omission of an Indian tribe participating in the Project, including acts or omissions undertaken pursuant to an intergovernmental agreement entered into under section 7.

(m) CONTRACTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each Indian tribe participating in the Project shall be eligible for a contract from the Office of Justice Programs, in an amount not to exceed $250,000 per year, for use in defraying costs associated with the Project, including costs relating to—

(A) tribal court operations and personnel;

(B) utility and maintenance;

(C) overhead;

(D) equipment; and

(E) continuing education (including travel).

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The contracts made available under this subsection shall be—

(A) in addition to such grants as may be available under this Act or other provisions of law; and

(B) awarded as contracts in a form authorized by the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450 et seq.).

(3) TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS.—A tribal organization may enter into contracts on behalf of an Indian tribe participating in the Project upon express written delegation of authority of the Indian tribe to the tribal organization.

(n) REGULATIONS.—The Attorney General may promulgate such regulations as the Attorney General determines to be necessary to carry out this section.

(o) FULL FAITH AND CREDIT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each State shall give full faith and credit to all official acts and decrees of the tribal court of an Indian tribe participating in the Project to the same extent and in the same manner as such State accords full faith and credit to the official acts and decrees of other States.

(2) OTHER LAW.—Nothing in this subsection impairs the duty of a State to give full faith and credit under any other law.

(p) FEDERAL JURISDICTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), Project Areas and Indian tribes participating in the Project shall be eligible for the same law enforcement programs of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Office of Justice Programs, as are applicable to those areas under section 401 of Public Law 90–284 (25 U.S.C. 1321).

(2) APPLICABILITY IN ALASKA.—Nothing in this Act limits the application in Alaska of any provision of title II of Public Law 111-211.

(q) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out subsection (m) $2,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2018.

SEC. 5. ALASKA VILLAGE PEACE OFFICERS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF ALASKA VILLAGE PEACE OFFICER GRANTS PROGRAM.—The Office of Justice Services of the Department of the Interior shall carry out a contract program for the employment by Indian tribes of Village Peace Officers in Alaska Native villages as provided in this section.

(b) APPLICATION CRITERIA.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To qualify for a contract under this section, an applicant shall—

(A) be an Indian tribe in Alaska that participated in a Project;

(B) demonstrate the lack of other resident law enforcement in the applicable Alaska Native village; and

(C) satisfy such other criteria as may be established by notice by the Office of Justice Services.

(2) LIMITATION.—Each contract awarded under this section shall be in an amount not to exceed $100,000 for the salary and related costs of employing and equipping 1 Village Peace Officer, except that the Office of Justice Services shall be authorized to waive the 1-officer limitation upon a showing of compelling circumstances.

(c) CONTRACTS.—At the request of an applicant Indian tribe, the Office of Justice Services shall disburse funds awarded under this section through modifications to existing self-determination contracts or self-governance compacts authorized under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450 et seq.), or by contract to a political subdivision of the State of Alaska pursuant to an agreement, if any, under section 7.

(d) ELIGIBILITY FOR BIA TRAINING.—Village peace officers hired pursuant to this section shall be eligible to attend the Bureau of Indian Affairs Police Officer Training Program.

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2018.

SEC. 6. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General may enter into 18-month contracts with tribal organizations in Alaska to provide training and technical assistance on tribal court development to any Indian tribes in Alaska.

(b) COOPERATION.—Tribal organizations may cooperate with other entities for the provision of services under contracts described in subsection (a).

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section $2,000,000.

SEC. 7. INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The State of Alaska, political subdivisions of that State, Indian tribes in Alaska, and the United States are each authorized and encouraged to enter into intergovernmental agreements, including agreements concerning—

(1) the employment of law enforcement officers, probation, and parole officers;

(2) cross-appointment and cross-deputization of tribal, State, municipal, or Federal officials;

(3) the detention or incarceration of offenders; and

(4) jurisdictional or financial matters.

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as restricting the right of the judicial system of Alaska to enter into agreements with the tribal courts.

By Mr. CARDIN:

S. 1193. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to preserve and renew Federal-aid highways to reduce long-term costs, improve safety, and improve the condition of Federal-aid highways; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I am introducing legislation to help improve and extend the value of our Nation's highways and bridges. This bill will help ensure that the Federal Government makes better investments of the taxpayer dollars spent on transportation infrastructure. Helping build the roads and bridges of this Nation has been one the best Federal investments our government has made and it is an investment that is worth taking care of to ensure the lasting value, efficiency and safety of our Nation's highways and bridges.

It was during the Thomas Jefferson Administration that the Federal Government developed the concept of a ''Federal-Aid'' Highway. In 1806, Congress authorized federal funding to build the ''National Road.'' Much like the National Highway System of today, the purpose of the National Road was to facilitate interstate commerce between the large commercial centers of the Eastern United States to points west. Construction on the National Road began in 1811 in Cumberland, MD, 200 years, and trillions of dollars, later the United States has one of the world's most expansive highway networks.

The age and expanse of this system underscores the importance of ensuring adequate and consistent investments in our existing transportation infrastructure. The need for performance measures and national state-of-good repair standards are long overdue. Implementing such policies are essential ensuring the quality of the road condition, the economic value of our Nation's transportation infrastructure, and the wise investment of taxpayer dollars on transportation infrastructure.

The American Society of Civil Engineers, ASCE, gave our Nation's highways and bridges a grade of ''D−'' in its 2009 ''Report Card for America's Infrastructure.'' These poor road conditions are costing motorists time, money, and in the worst and most unfortunate situations, costing motorists their lives.

A 2011 transportation infrastructure study produced by TRIP, a non-partisan non-profit transportation research organization sponsored by various transportation stakeholder industries, found that 32 percent of America's major roads are in poor or mediocre condition. Poor road conditions take a major toll on the repair and operating costs of motorist's vehicles to the tune of $67 billion a year, or approximately $333 per driver. Poor road conditions contribute to 42 percent of America's urban highways being congested. Traffic congestion costs American motorists more than $78 billion in wasted fuel and lost productivity, and more than 4 billion hours of wasted time that drivers could have otherwise spent with family, earning income or engaged in personal activities. Poor road conditions are a ''significant factor'' in approximately one-third of fatal traffic accidents.

It is Congress's responsibility to ensure that Federal transportation dollars are spent wisely to improve the safety and efficiency of our roads. Making repair and maintenance of our existing infrastructure a priority, during these times of fiscal restraint, is a wise approach to Federal transportation infrastructure. Ignoring maintenance and repair needs on Federal-Aid highways, while advancing capacity expansion projects at the expense of neglected existing infrastructure, exacerbates the decline in the state-of-good repair of our country's roads and bridges and exemplifies irresponsible spending of Federal taxpayer dollars.

ASCE put the cost of the maintenance and repair backlog for roads and bridges at $930 billion. Therefore it is important to understand that this is an infrastructure issue will not be achieved of the course of one surface transportation authorization cycle. However, we can change our Federal policies in such a way that improves how Federal dollars are spent on highway and bridge maintenance so that the taxpayer gets a better return on their transportation taxes.

Breaking the cycle of neglected road and bridge maintenance that stems from allowing a highway facility to decline to into poor or very poor condition in the first place is critical to improving the quality of investment of Federal transportation dollars.

Highway investment figures from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials: ''Rough Roads Ahead: Fix It Now or Pay for It Later'' demonstrate that neglecting maintenance and instead waiting for the road surface to reach a condition rating of ''very poor'', on average 16 years, before repairing the road cost nearly twice as much, on average, as compared with making biannual investments to maintain a ''very good'' road condition over that same 16-year period. Not to mention the costs in

damage to vehicles that is caused by the years that a road spends in fair, poor, or very poor condition.

My Preservation and Renewal of Federal-Aid Highways Act aims to create a culture of sound transportation investment while providing the States improved resources and flexibility to keep their highway facilities in a state of good repair.

The Preservation and Renewal of Federal-Aid Highways Act will establish policies that require the Secretary of Transportation to establish ''state of good repair standards'' for the various classes of Federal-Aid highways to serve as benchmarks of achievement for States to reach.

The act will require States to use an ''Asset Management Process'' to develop ''State System Preservation and Renewal Plans'' and ''State System Preservation and Renewal Performance Targets'' to ensure that their Federal-Aid roads are being kept in a state of good repair.

The act will consolidate the Interstate Maintenance program, Highway Bridge program and half of the National Highway System Federal-Aid highway programs funds together to create a flexible System Preservation and Renewal Program Fund for the States to use as they see fit to meet the goals of their System Preservation and Renewal Plans and Performance Targets.

Both the Federal Government and the States are facing enormous challenges to deliver essential services, like well-maintained, safe and efficient roads, for the country. As with any proposal that calls for a change in the way business is done there needs to be adequate time for transition. My bill, while establishing new standards for maintaining the quality of highways and bridges, also takes special care to grant leeway during emergency circumstances, when essential defense infrastructure investments are needed, and gives consideration to States that have planned to use these newly consolidated funds prior to how these funds would be repurposed under this legislation.

The backlog of maintenance and repair on our existing transportation infrastructure can no longer be ignored. In recent years, our country has experienced a number of tragic incidents that resulted in the loss of life as a direct result of the poor condition of transportation infrastructure. These are preventable incidents that are costly in so many ways. We must make transportation system preservation and renewal a priority because it makes good fiscal sense, good safety sense, and good business sense for our country. My bill does this in a collaborative way between the States and the U.S. Department of Transportation.

I urge my colleagues to support my effort to make improved investments in our existing transportation infrastructure so as to ensure its continued excellence for years to come by co-sponsoring the Preservation and Renewal of Federal-Aid Highways Act.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 1193

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Federal-Aid Highway Preservation and Renewal Program Act of 2011''.

SEC. 2. SYSTEM PRESERVATION AND RENEWAL PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 119 of title 23, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''§ 119. System preservation and renewal program

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) ASSET MANAGEMENT.—The term 'asset management' means a strategic process for the management of transportation infrastructure that takes into consideration economic and engineering factors to make cost-effective investment decisions to improve the overall state of good repair of facilities.

''(2) ELIGIBLE COST.—The term 'eligible cost' means, with respect to costs incurred for a project, costs of—

''(A) development and implementation of asset management systems in support of system preservation and renewal plans;

''(B) inspection activities for highway bridges and tunnels in the State;

''(C) reducing or eliminating an identified highway or bridge safety problem;

''(D) training of personnel responsible for inspection of highway tunnels and inspection and load rating of highway bridges in the State;

''(E) data collection to monitor the condition of highways and highway bridges in the State;

''(F) environmental restoration and pollution abatement to offset or mitigate the impacts of a project eligible under subparagraph (A);

''(G) control of terrestrial and aquatic noxious weeds and establishment of non-native plant species within the limits of a project eligible under subparagraph (A); and

''(H) implementation of the policy established pursuant to subsection (l)(1).

''(3) ELIGIBLE HIGHWAY FACILITY.—The term 'eligible highway facility' means—

''(A) a highway located on a Federal-aid highway;

''(B) a bridge located on a Federal-aid highway;

''(C) a bridge not located on a Federal-aid highway; and

''(D) a bicycle or pedestrian lane, path, walkway, or similar travel surface located within the right-of-way of a Federal-aid highway.

''(4) ELIGIBLE PROJECT.—The term 'eligible project' means a project that is—

''(A)(i) a project for resurfacing, restoration, rehabilitation, replacement, or reconstruction of an eligible highway facility;

''(ii) a project for preservation, protection, or other preventive repair of an eligible highway facility; or

''(iii) a project to reduce or eliminate an identified highway safety problem, if the project—

''(I) is eligible under section 148; and

''(II) has a cost of less than $10,000,000; and

''(B) consistent with the investment strategy of the State in which the project is to be carried out.

''(5) INVESTMENT STRATEGY.—The term 'investment strategy' means a State investment strategy established under subsection (h)(2)(B).

''(6) OVERALL STATE OF GOOD REPAIR STANDARDS.—The term 'overall state of good repair standards' means the performance standards established under subsection (f)(1)(B).

''(7) PRESERVATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term 'preservation' means any cost-effective activity to prevent, delay, or reduce deterioration on an eligible highway facility, including preventive and corrective actions.

''(B) EXCLUSION.—The term 'preservation' does not include structural or operational improvement beyond the originally designed traffic capacity of an existing highway facility except to the extent the improvement occurs as an incidental result of the preservation activity or improves safety.

''(8) PROGRAM.—The term 'program' means the system preservation and renewal program established under subsection (b).

''(9) PROTECTION.—The term 'protection', with respect to a highway, means the conduct of an activity or action associated with the design and construction of measures to protect highways from hazards such as earthquakes, floods, scour, icing, vessel collision, vehicular impact, and security threats.

''(10) STATE OF GOOD REPAIR PERFORMANCE TARGET.—The term 'state of good repair performance target' means a performance target established under subsection (f)(2).

''(11) SYSTEM PRESERVATION AND RENEWAL FUNDS.—The term 'system preservation and renewal funds' means funds apportioned under sections 104(b)(4), 104(m), and 144(e) for the program.

''(12) SYSTEM PRESERVATION AND RENEWAL PLAN.—The term 'system preservation and renewal plan' means a system preservation and renewal plan established by a State under subsection (h).

''(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish and implement a surface transportation infrastructure preservation and renewal program designed to maintain and preserve the quality, efficiency, safety, and value of Federal-aid highways and Federal-aid and non-Federal-aid bridges in accordance with this section.

''(c) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the program shall be—

''(1) to establish national priorities and goals for bringing Federal-aid highways and Federal-aid and non-Federal-aid bridges into a state of good repair and preserving that state of good repair;

''(2) to focus Federal investment on preserving and improving the condition of roadways and bridges; and

''(3) to strengthen the connection between the use by a State of Federal surface transportation funding and the accomplishment of performance outcomes.

''(d) USE OF APPORTIONED FUNDS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A State may obligate funds apportioned to the State under the program for—

''(A) eligible projects; and

''(B) eligible costs.

''(2) PRIORITY FOR NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM PROJECTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), a State shall give priority to eligible projects that help meet the overall state of good repair standards for the National Highway System under subsection (f)(1)(B).

''(B) EXCEPTION.—This paragraph shall not apply to any State that is meeting the overall state of good repair standards for the National Highway System established under subsection (f)(1)(B), as determined by the Secretary.

''(3) LIMITATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—A project cost attributable to expansion of the capacity of a highway located on a Federal-aid highways shall not be eligible for funding under this section if the new capacity consists of 1 or more new travel lanes that are not auxiliary lanes.

''(B) NON-FEDERAL-AID BRIDGES.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Not less than 15 percent of the amount apportioned to each State under section 144(e) for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2017 shall be expended for projects to preserve, rehabilitate, protect, or replace highway bridges, other than those bridges on Federal-aid highways.

''(ii) REDUCTION IN EXPENDITURES.—The Secretary, after consultation with State and local officials, may reduce the amount required to be expended under clause (i) for bridges in the State that are not located on a Federal-aid highway if the Secretary determines that the State has inadequate needs to justify the expenditure.

''(4) EXCEPTION.—

''(A) DEBT FINANCING INSTRUMENTS.—Prior to the apportionment of funds made available for a program, a State may deduct amounts sufficient for the payment of any debt-financing instruments committed, guaranteed, or obligated to a third party before the date of enactment of the Federal-Aid Highway Preservation and Renewal Program Act of 2011 for eligible projects under this title (including this section) and title 49.

''(B) DEFENSE BASE CLOSURE AND REALIGNMENT IMPACTS.—Before October 1, 2013, a State may use up to 25 percent of the funds of the State for system preservation and renewal for projects to address transportation impacts relating to decisions of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission.

''(e) OTHER ELIGIBLE COSTS.—In addition to the funds obligated for eligible projects, a State may obligate, in the aggregate, not to exceed 5 percent of the funds apportioned to the State under the program for a fiscal year to pay other eligible costs.

''(f) SYSTEM PRESERVATION AND RENEWAL PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AND TARGETS.—

''(1) SECRETARY RESPONSIBILITIES.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Federal-Aid Highway Preservation and Renewal Program Act of 2011, the Secretary shall, by regulation and in consultation with States, establish—

''(A) criteria for determining the state of good repair of eligible highway facilities, based on highway pavement condition or bridge structural adequacy, as applicable; and

''(B) overall state of good repair standards for each class of infrastructure described in paragraph (3), based on the criteria established under subparagraph (A).

''(2) STATE RESPONSIBILITIES.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the Federal-Aid Highway Preservation and Renewal Program Act of 2011, and every 2 years thereafter, each State, in conjunction with the development of the system preservation and renewal plan of the State, shall establish or revise, for each class of infrastructure described in paragraph (3), quantifiable State of good repair performance targets that, at a minimum, estimate the projected percentage change over a 2-year period of infrastructure that is rated as being not in state of good repair based on the criteria established under paragraph (1)(B).

''(3) CLASSES OF INFRASTRUCTURE.—The classes of infrastructure referred to in paragraph (1) are—

''(A) the total deck area of highway bridges in a State that are located on the National Highway System;

''(B) the total deck area of highway bridges in a State that are located on Federal-aid highways;

''(C) the total lane miles in a State that are located on the National Highway System; and

''(D) the total lane miles in a State that are located on Federal-aid highways.

''(4) COMPLIANCE.—If a State meets an overall state of good repair standard established under paragraph (1)(B) for a class of infrastructure described in paragraph (3), that class of infrastructure in the State shall be considered to be in a state of good repair.

''(5) APPLICABILITY.—No State shall be required to establish state of good repair performance targets under paragraph (2) for any class of infrastructure that a State certifies as meeting the overall state of good repair standard under paragraph (1)(B).

''(g) STATE ASSET MANAGEMENT PROCESS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Federal-Aid Highway Preservation and Renewal Program Act of 2011, a State shall develop an asset management process to support the development and implementation of system preservation and renewal plans under subsection (h).

''(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The process developed under paragraph (1) shall be based on analytical mechanisms to identify cost-effective investments to preserve, rehabilitate, restore, resurface, reconstruct, protect, or replace Federal-aid highways and highway bridges on Federal-aid highways to improve the overall state of good repair of those highways and bridges.

''(h) STATE SYSTEM PRESERVATION AND RENEWAL PLANS.—

''(1) SUBMISSION OF PLANS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the Federal-Aid Highway Preservation and Renewal Program Act of 2011 and biennially thereafter, a State shall develop or update, as applicable, and submit to the Secretary for approval, a system preservation and renewal plan.

''(2) PLAN REQUIREMENTS.—A system preservation plan of a State and any update of such a plan shall—

''(A) include documentation on the state of good repair based on the criteria under paragraph (f)(1) and each class of infrastructure described in subsection (f)(3);

''(B) include an investment strategy that—

''(i) covers a period of 6 years; and

''(ii) describes the manner in which the State will allocate funds apportioned to the State to carry out this section among, at a minimum—

''(I) facilities in good condition, fair condition, and poor condition;

''(II) projects located on each class of infrastructure described in subsection (f)(2);

''(III) projects that vary with respect to geographical location, as determined by the State; and

''(IV) other eligible costs;

''(iii) is based on an asset management process under subsection (g);

''(iv) describes any Federal, State, local, or private funds that the State plans to use, in addition to system preservation and renewal funds, on projects that would help to meet the state of good repair performance targets established under this section;

''(v) indicates the number of lane miles of highways and quantity of deck area on highway bridges that the State would address through the allocations described in clause (ii); and

''(vi) subject to subsection (d)(2), provides for investment in projects that, once completed, would allow the State to meet the applicable state of good repair performance targets;

''(C) include a description of the extent to which the use by the State of system preservation and renewal funds apportioned to the State during the 2 most recent fiscal years was consistent with the investment strategy of the State, including—

''(i) an identification of the number of lane miles of highways and quantity of deck area on highway bridges on which the State has used those funds during those 2 fiscal years;

''(ii) an identification of the distribution of highway and bridge facilities, by level of ownership (Federal, State, tribal, and local) and by functional classification, on which the State has obligated those funds during those 2 fiscal years;

''(iii) an assessment of the progress that the State has made toward meeting each of the state of good repair performance targets of the State based on the projects that the State has carried out under this section and the contribution that those projects have made or would make, once complete, to the State meeting those performance targets; and

''(iv) a description of the expenditure of funds on a geographical basis, as determined by the State; and

''(D) describe the manner in which the investment strategy of the State would enable the State—

''(i) to meet the state of good repair performance targets of the State; and

''(ii) improve the condition of the classes of infrastructure described in subsection (f)(3) in the State.

''(3) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF PLAN.—A State shall make the system preservation and renewal plan of the State, and each update of the plan, available to the public.

''(i) FAILURE TO MEET STATE OF GOOD REPAIR PERFORMANCE TARGETS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—If a State does not meet the biennial system preservation and renewal performance targets under this section, the State shall coordinate with the Secretary to direct portions of Federal funds available under this title to the State toward projects eligible under this section in order to meet the state of good repair performance targets under this section.

''(2) WAIVER.—The Secretary may temporarily waive the application of this subsection if—

''(A) unforeseen events significantly impact the ability of a State to meet the biennial state of good repair performance targets; or

''(B) eligible facilities under this section in the State have suffered serious damage due to an event that results in the declaration of—

''(i) an emergency by the Governor of the State; or

''(ii) a major disaster by the President under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.).

''(j) OVERSIGHT.—Beginning for the third fiscal year after the date of enactment of the Federal-Aid Highway Preservation and Renewal Program Act of 2011, and at least biennially thereafter or at such other times or intervals as are determined to be necessary by the Secretary, the Secretary, in conjunction with the submission of the State system preservation and renewal plan under subsection (g), shall conduct oversight activities to assess whether the use by each State of funds under this section is consistent with the investment strategy of the State under this section.

''(k) BIENNIAL REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than September 30, 2013, and biennially thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate a report containing—

''(1) an evaluation of the performance of each State with respect to—

''(A) the investment strategy of the State under this section; and

''(B) the system preservation and renewal performance targets established for the State under this section; and

''(2) such recommendations as the Secretary may provide for improvements of the program.

''(l) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS.—

''(1) SAFE STREETS POLICY.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the Federal-Aid Highway Preservation and Renewal Program Act of 2011, each State shall develop a policy applicable to any project funded, in whole or in part, under the program that—

''(A) ensures the adequate accommodation, in all phases of project planning and development, of all users of the transportation system, including—

''(i) pedestrians;

''(ii) bicyclists;

''(iii) public transit users;

''(iv) older individuals;

''(v) motorists;

''(vi) individuals with disabilities; and

''(vii) users of motor vehicles with a taxable gross weight (as defined in section 4481 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) in excess of 55,000 pounds;

''(B) ensures the consideration of the safety and convenience of all users in all phases of project planning and development; and

''(C) delineates a clear procedure that gives due consideration to the geographical location, road classification, population density, and other demographic factors by which projects funded, in whole or in part, under this program may be exempted from complying with the policy.

''(2) CATEGORICAL EXCLUSIONS.—To the extent appropriate, the Secretary shall develop categorical exclusions from the requirement that an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement under section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332) be prepared for transportation activities located within an existing right-of-way funded under the program.

''(3) MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT PROVISION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—For any fiscal year for which a State receives funds pursuant to this section, the State shall certify to the Secretary that the State will expend funds for the maintenance and operations of facilities in an amount that is at least equal to the average annual amount of funds expended over the preceding 3 fiscal years.

''(B) FORM AND DEADLINE.—A certification described in subparagraph (A) shall be submitted in such form and not later than such date as shall be determined by the Secretary.

''(C) PENALTY FOR NONCOMPLIANCE.—If a State fails to provide a certification to the Secretary in accordance with subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall withhold from the State, for each fiscal year until such time as the State submits the certification in accordance with subparagraph (A), an amount equal to 10 percent of the amounts the State would have received under this section for the fiscal year.

''(D) WAIVER.—The Secretary may temporarily waive the application of this paragraph if unforeseen events significantly impact the ability of a State to meet the biennial state of good repair performance targets.

''(m) APPLICABILITY OF PLANNING REQUIREMENTS.—Nothing in this section limits the applicability of sections 134 and 135 to projects carried out under this section.

''(n) CONTINUATION OF CURRENT REVIEW PRACTICE.—Because each individual project that is carried out under the investment strategy described in the system preservation and renewal plan of a State is subject to review under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), a decision by the Secretary concerning a system preservation and renewal plan or an update of the plan in connection with this section shall not be considered to be a Federal action subject to review under that Act.

''(o) TRANSFER OF NHS, BRIDGE PROGRAM, AND INTERSTATE MAINTENANCE APPORTIONMENTS.—On application by a State and approval by the Secretary, the Secretary may transfer to the apportionment of the State under section 104(b)(1) the amount of funds apportioned to the State for a fiscal year ending before October 1, 2010, under paragraphs (1) and (4) of section 104(b), and section 144(e) (as those sections were in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the Federal-Aid Highway Preservation and Renewal Program Act of 2011), that remains available for expenditure by the State.

''(p) REGULATIONS ON PERFORMANCE MEASURES OF STRUCTURAL ADEQUACY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Federal-Aid Highway Preservation and Renewal Program Act of 2011, the Secretary shall promulgate such regulations as are necessary to carry out this section.''.

(b) APPLICATION TO SYSTEM PRESERVATION AND RENEWAL FUNDS.—Section 126 of title 23, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''subsections (b) and (c)'' and inserting ''subsections (b), (c) and (d)''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(d) APPLICATION TO SYSTEM PRESERVATION AND RENEWAL FUNDS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A State may transfer funds apportioned to the State under section 104(m) for the system preservation and renewal program if the State meets the overall state of good repair standards established under section 119(f)(1)(B) for classes of infrastructure under subparagraphs (A) and (C) of sections 119(f)(3).

''(2) GOOD REPAIR STANDARDS.—A State may transfer funds apportioned to the State under sections 104(b)(4) and 144(e) for the system preservation and renewal program if the State meets each of the overall state of good repair standards established under section 119(f)(1)(B).''.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 1 of title 23, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to section 119 and inserting the following:

''Sec. 119. System preservation and renewal program.''.

(d) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 104 of title 23, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(m) SYSTEM PRESERVATION AND RENEWAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, ½ of the funds apportioned to a State under subsection (b)(1) shall be used for system preservation and renewal under section 119 of title 23, United States Code.''.

(2) Section 105 of title 23, United States Code, is amended in each of subsections (a)(2) and (b)(2) by striking ''the Interstate maintenance program'' each place it appears and inserting ''the system preservation and renewal program''.

(3) Section 118 of title 23, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by striking subsection (c); and

(B) by redesignating subsections (d) and (e) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively.

By Mr. LEAHY:

S. 1194. A bill to facilitate compliance with Article 36 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, done at Vienna April 24, 1963, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today, I am introducing the Consular Notification Compliance Act. This legislation will help bring the United States into compliance with its obligations under the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, VCCR, and is critical to ensuring the protection of Americans traveling overseas.

Each year, thousands of Americans are arrested and imprisoned when they are in foreign countries studying, working, serving the military, or traveling. From the moment they are detained, their safety and well-being depends, often entirely, on the ability of United States consular officials to meet with them, monitor their treatment, help them obtain legal assistance, and connect them to family back home. That access is protected by the consular notification provisions of the VCCR, but it only functions effectively if every country meets its obligations under the treaty—including the United States.

Unfortunately, in some instances, the United States has not been meeting those obligations. There are currently more than 100 foreign nationals on death row in the United States, most of whom were never told of their right to contact their consulate and their consulate was never notified of their arrest, trial, conviction, or sentence. There are many other foreigners in U.S. prisons awaiting trial for non-capital crimes, some facing life sentences, who were similarly denied consular access. This failure to comply with our treaty obligations undercuts our ability to protect Americans abroad and deeply damages our image as a country that abides by its promises and the rule of law. It would also be completely unacceptable to us if our citizens were treated in this manner.

The Consular Notification Compliance Act seeks to bring the United States one step closer to compliance with the convention. It is not perfect. It focuses only on the most serious cases—those involving the death penalty—but it is a significant step in the right direction and we need to work together to pass it quickly. Texas is poised to execute the next foreign national affected by this failure to comply with the treaty on July 7, 2011. He was not notified of his right to consular assistance, and the Government of Mexico has expressed grave concerns about the case. We do not want this execution to be interpreted as a sign that the United States does not take its treaty obligations seriously. That message puts American lives at risk. The Government of Great Britain has expressed similar concerns about a case involving a British citizen facing the death penalty here, who was denied consular access.

The bill I am introducing would allow foreign nationals who have been convicted and sentenced to death to ask a court to review their cases and determine if the failure to provide consular notification led to an unfair conviction or sentence.

The bill also recognizes that law enforcement and the courts must do a better job in the future to promptly notify individuals of their right to consular assistance so the United States does not find itself in this precarious position again. To that end, the bill reaffirms that the obligations under the treaty are Federal law and apply to all foreign nationals arrested or detained in the United States. For individuals arrested on charges that carry a possible punishment of death, the bill ensures adequate opportunity for consular assistance before a trial begins.

This bill offers very limited remedies to a very limited number of people. I am troubled that it has to be so narrow, as we demand far broader protection for American citizens abroad every day. However, carrying out a death sentence is an irreversible action, and I believe that we must act quickly. I understand that a limited bill has the best chance of achieving the bipartisan support needed to move forward on such an important issue at this time.

Compliance with our consular notification obligations is not a question of partisan interest. There should be unanimous support for this bill. The VCCR was negotiated under President Kennedy, ratified during the Nixon administration, and it has been fully supported by every President since. President George W. Bush understood the critical need to honor our obligations under this treaty. Although he was ultimately unsuccessful, he vigorously worked to bring the United States into compliance, and he supported action along the lines of what I propose today. He understood the implications of noncompliance for our citizens, our businesses, and our military. I have no doubt President Obama shares the same commitment to resolving this issue.

I saw the need to resolve this issue first-hand this spring when a young, innocent Vermont college student was detained by Syrian police simply for taking photos of a demonstration. I worked hard with the U.S. consulate in Syria to obtain access to him. His safety depended on the ability of our consular officers to see him, provide assistance, and monitor his condition.

Similarly, the United States invoked the VCCR to seek access to the three American hikers detained in Iran after accidently crossing an unmarked border in 2009. In 2001, when a U.S. Navy surveillance plane made an emergency landing in Chinese territory, the State Department cited the VCCR in demanding immediate access to the plane's crew.

I doubt there are many Members of Congress who have not sought similar help from our consulates when their constituents have been arrested overseas. We know how critically important this access is, and we expect other governments to provide it. Those governments expect no less of us.

This bill has the support of the Obama administration, including the Department of Justice, the Department of Defense, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of State. I have heard from retired members of the military urging passage of the bill to protect service men and women and their families overseas, and from former diplomats of both political parties who know that compliance with our treaty obligations is critical for America's national security and commercial interests.

Given the long history of bipartisan support for the VCCR, there should be unanimous support for this legislation to uphold our treaty obligations. A failure to act places Americans at risk.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill and letters of support be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 1194

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Consular Notification Compliance Act of 2011''.

SEC. 2. PURPOSE AND STATEMENT OF AUTHORITY.

(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to facilitate compliance with Article 36 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, done at Vienna April 24, 1963 and any comparable provision of a bilateral international agreement addressing consular notification and access.

(b) STATEMENT OF AUTHORITY.—This Act is enacted pursuant to authority contained in articles I and VI of the Constitution of the United States.

SEC. 3. CONSULAR NOTIFICATION AND ACCESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—As required under, and consistent with, Article 36 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, done at Vienna April 24, 1963 and any comparable provision of a bilateral international agreement addressing consular notification and access, if an individual who is not a national of the United States is detained or arrested by an officer or employee of the Federal Government or a State or local government, the arresting or detaining officer or employee, or other appropriate officer or employee of the Federal Government or a State or local government, shall notify that individual without delay that the individual may request that the consulate of the foreign state of which the individual is a national be notified of the detention or arrest.

(b) NOTICE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The consulate of the foreign state of which an individual detained or arrested is a national shall be notified without delay if the individual requests consular notification under subsection (a), and an appropriate officer or employee of the Federal Government or a State or local government shall provide any other consular notification required by an international agreement.

(2) FIRST APPEARANCE.—If an appropriate officer or employee of the Federal Government or a State or local government has not notified the consulate described in paragraph (1) regarding an individual who is detained pending criminal charges and the individual requests notification or notification is mandatory under a bilateral international agreement, notification shall occur not later than the first appearance of the individual before the court with jurisdiction over the charge.

(c) COMMUNICATION AND ACCESS.—An officer or employee of the Federal Government or a State or local government (including an officer or employee in charge of a facility where an individual who is not a national of the United States is held following detention or arrest) shall reasonably ensure that the individual detained or arrested is able to communicate freely with, and be visited by, officials of the consulate of the foreign state of which the individual detained or arrested is a national, consistent with the obligations described in section 2(a).

(d) NO CAUSE OF ACTION.—Nothing in this section is intended to create any judicially or administratively enforceable right or benefit, substantive or procedural, by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or other entities, its officers or employees, or any other person or entity, including, an officer, employee, or agency of a State or local government.

SEC. 4. PETITION FOR REVIEW.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) JURISDICTION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a Federal court shall have jurisdiction to review the merits of a petition claiming a violation of Article 36(1)(b) or (c) of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, done at Vienna April 24, 1963, or a comparable provision of a bilateral international agreement addressing consular notification and access, filed by an individual convicted and sentenced to death by any Federal or State court before the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) DATE FOR EXECUTION.—If a date for the execution of an individual described in paragraph (1) has been set, the court shall grant a stay of execution if necessary to allow the court to review a petition filed under paragraph (1).

(3) STANDARD.—To obtain relief, an individual described in paragraph (1) shall make a showing of actual prejudice to the criminal conviction or sentence as a result of the violation. The court may conduct an evidentiary hearing if necessary to supplement the record and, upon a finding of actual prejudice, shall order a new trial or sentencing proceeding.

(4) LIMITATIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A petition for review under this section shall be filed within 1 year of the later of—

(i) the date of enactment of this Act;

(ii) the date on which the Federal or State court judgment against the individual described in paragraph (1) became final by the conclusion of direct review or the expiration of the time for seeking such review; or

(iii) the date on which the impediment to filing a petition created by Federal or State action in violation of the Constitution or laws of the United States is removed, if the individual described in paragraph (1) was prevented from filing by such Federal or State action.

(B) TOLLING.—The time during which a properly filed application for State post-conviction or other collateral review with respect to the pertinent judgment or claim is pending shall not be counted toward the 1-year period of limitation.

(5) HABEAS PETITION.—A petition for review under this section shall be part of the first Federal habeas corpus application or motion for Federal collateral relief under chapter 153 of title 28, United States Code, filed by an individual, except that if an individual filed a Federal habeas corpus application or motion for Federal collateral relief before the date of enactment of this Act or if such application is required to be filed before the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, such petition for review under this section shall be filed not later

than 1 year after the enactment date or within the period prescribed by paragraph (4)(A)(iii), whichever is later. No petition filed in conformity with the requirements of the preceding sentence shall be considered a second or successive habeas corpus application or subjected to any bars to relief based on pre-enactment proceedings other than as specified in paragraph (3).

(6) APPEAL.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A final order on a petition for review under paragraph (1) shall be subject to review on appeal by the court of appeals for the circuit in which the proceeding is held.

(B) APPEAL BY PETITIONER.—An individual described in paragraph (1) may appeal a final order on a petition for review under paragraph (1) only if a district or circuit judge issues a certificate of appealability. A district judge or circuit judge may issue a certificate of appealability under this subparagraph if the individual has made a substantial showing of actual prejudice to the criminal conviction or sentence of the individual as a result of a violation of Article 36(1) of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, done at Vienna April 24, 1963, or a comparable provision of a bilateral international agreement addressing consular notification and access.

(b) VIOLATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An individual not covered by subsection (a) who is arrested, detained, or held for trial on a charge that would expose the individual to a capital sentence if convicted may raise a claim of a violation of Article 36(1)(b) or (c) of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, done at Vienna April 24, 1963, or of a comparable provision of a bilateral international agreement addressing consular notification and access, at a reasonable time after the individual becomes aware of the violation, before the court with jurisdiction over the charge. Upon a finding of such a violation—

(A) the consulate of the foreign state of which the individual is a national shall be notified immediately by the detaining authority, and consular access to the individual shall be afforded in accordance with the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, done at Vienna April 24, 1963, or the comparable provisions of a bilateral international agreement addressing consular notification and access; and

(B) the court—

(i) shall postpone any proceedings to the extent the court determines necessary to allow for adequate opportunity for consular access and assistance; and

(ii) may enter necessary orders to facilitate consular access and assistance.

(2) EVIDENTIARY HEARINGS.—The court may conduct evidentiary hearings if necessary to resolve factual issues.

(3) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to create any additional remedy.

SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

(1) the term ''national of the United States'' has the meaning given that term in section 101(a)(22) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(22)); and

(2) the term ''State'' means any State of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and any territory or possession of the United States.

JUNE 14, 2011.

Re The Consular Notification Compliance Act.

Hon. PATRICK J. LEAHY,
Chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Washington, DC.
Hon. CHARLES E. GRASSLEY,
Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN LEAHY AND RANKING MEMBER GRASSLEY: We write to urge you to support prompt passage of the Consular Notification Compliance Act, legislation that would give domestic legal effect to U.S. obligations under the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (Vienna Convention) to provide consular access to foreign nationals in U.S. law enforcement custody by providing for judicial review of certain claims that this obligation has not been satisfied. International consular notification and access obligations are essential to ensuring humane, non-discriminatory treatment for both non-citizens in U.S. custody and U.S. citizens in the custody of foreign governments. As retired military leaders, we understand that the preservation of consular access protections is especially important for U.S. military personnel, who when serving our country overseas are at greater risk of being arrested by a foreign government.

U.S. military personnel are at risk for being taken into foreign custody after accidental incursions into foreign territories, while on leave or furlough, or while stationed abroad pursuant to, or in absence of a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). When American military personnel or their family members find themselves in foreign custody, consular access is indispensable in allowing the U.S. government to fulfill its duty to ensure fair and humane treatment for such individuals.

For example, in 2001 when a U.S. Navy surveillance plane made an emergency landing in Chinese territory after colliding with a Chinese jet, the State Department cited the Vienna Convention and other consular treaties in demanding immediate access to the plane's crew. Chinese authorities responded by granting consular visits to the crew members, who were detained in China for 11 days. Moreover, military regulations implementing SOFA requirements anticipate that consular officers will assist the designated commanding officer in key areas such as protesting inhumane treatment and ensuring that the individual has access to an adequate defense.

The strength of consular access protections for U.S. military personnel abroad is dependent on the United States' reciprocal commitment to fulfill its obligations at home. But given the Supreme Court's 2008 decision in Medellin v. Texas, the executive branch is unable, without further action by Congress, to enforce certain consular protections under the Vienna Convention with regards to U.S. state law enforcement personnel. In light of the Medellin decision, additional legislation is needed to ensure the integrity of the consular notification and access rights upon which U.S. service members rely.

Legislation to ensure review and appropriate relief if needed when a foreign national faces or is sentenced to death, while relatively limited in scope, would improve foreign governments' confidence in the United States' ability to uphold its consular access obligations, making it more likely that such governments will giant this access to Americans in their custody.

Improving U.S. enforcement of its consular notification and access legal obligations will help protect American citizens detained abroad, including U.S. military personnel and their families stationed overseas. We urge you to support those who are serving our country overseas by ensuring swift passage of the Consular Notification Compliance Act to meet our international responsibilities.

Sincerely,

Rear Admiral Don Guter, USN (Ret.).
Rear Admiral John D. Hutson, USN (Ret.).
Brigadier General James P. Cullen, USA (Ret.).
Brigadier General David R. Irvine, USA (Ret.).
Brigadier General Murray G. Sagsveen, USA (Ret.).
Colonel Lawrence B. Wilkerson, USA (Ret.).

JUNE 14, 2011.

Re The Consular Notification Compliance Act.

Hon. PATRICK J. LEAHY,
Chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Washington, DC.
Hon. CHARLES E. GRASSLEY,
Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN LEAHY AND RANKING MEMBER GRASSLEY: As former U.S. diplomats and State Department officials, we write to urge your support for the Consular Notification Compliance Act, legislation that we believe is vitally important to meeting the United States' foreign policy objectives and to protecting the interests of its citizens abroad. We urge you to act promptly to enact this legislation that would secure compliance with the United States' binding treaty obligations by providing a review mechanism for the cases of foreign nationals who—without the benefit of timely consular notification and access—were convicted and received death sentences.

Each year, thousands of Americans are detained abroad. Prompt knowledge of and access to our fellow-citizens held in foreign jails ensures that U.S. consular officers can help them obtain legal assistance, monitor their treatment, and connect them to family and friends back home. This crucial lifeline of consular support can only function effectively if the detaining authorities comply with their obligations under Article 36 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, which grants all foreigners in custody the right to consular notification, communication and access ''without delay.'' Insisting on compliance with and protesting violations of Article 36 provisions has thus long been an integral element of the U.S. policy of providing protective consular services to detained Americans overseas.

For instance, when three Americans were detained after accidentally crossing an unmarked border into Iran in 2009, a State Department spokesperson insisted that ''Iran has obligations under the Vienna Convention, and we demand consular access at the first opportunity.'' The Secretary of State later called on the Iranian government ''to live up to its obligations under the Vienna Convention by granting consular access and releasing these three young Americans without further delay.'' Once consular access was finally granted, the State Department ''welcome[d] the fact that Iran is meeting up to its obligations under the Vienna Convention''.

Unfortunately, the United States has sometimes violated Article 36 requirements even as we call on foreign governments to comply with its terms. In 2004, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) determined that some fifty Mexican nationals were entitled to judicial hearings to determine if Article 36 breaches, which were proven to have occurred, affected the fairness of their capital murder convictions and/or sentences.

The United States is required by the U.N. Charter to comply with decisions of the ICJ. President George W. Bush attempted to enforce this decision at the state court level, but the U.S. Supreme Court later ruled in Medellin v. Texas that only Congress could ensure compliance by adopting legislation providing for the compulsory review and reconsideration mandated by the ICJ. The Supreme Court also observed that the ICJ decision undeniably bound the United States under international law and that ''plainly compelling'' reasons existed for its domestic implementation. ''In this case,'' the Medellin Court noted, ''the President seeks to vindicate United States interests in ensuring the reciprocal observance of the Vienna Convention, protecting relations with foreign governments, and demonstrating commitment to the role of international law.''

Clearly, the safety and well-being of Americans abroad is endangered by the United States maintaining the double standard of protesting denials of consular notification and access to its own citizens while simultaneously failing to comply with its obligation to remedy identical violations. We cannot realistically expect other nations to continue to comply with consular treaty commitments that we refuse to uphold. For that reason alone, it is essential that Congress act swiftly to provide the limited procedural remedy that both our Executive and Judicial Branches have so clearly indicated is in the national interest.

As the Supreme Court pointed out, however, the United States' interest in implementing these international obligations goes beyond protecting the reciprocal rights and safety of its overseas citizens. Our national security, effective commercial and trade relations relating to our prosperity and almost every matter of national interest, large and small, is covered by reciprocal treaty obligations. We risk jeopardizing these interests if we practice an indifference to these obligations in this or other arenas. We believe that continued non-compliance will surely alienate this nation from its allies. We also believe that any further failure to provide the modest remedy of ''review and reconsideration'' required in these cases will undermine America's credibility as a global champion of the rule of law, thereby seriously hindering our foreign policy objectives. It is worth noting the United States agreed to be bound by the ICJ's decision both before and after the case was heard and has consistently advised multiple international and domestic courts that it is doing everything within its power to comply with this decision. Passing legislation to ensure our nation's compliance needs to be accomplished in order to make good on this representation.

The ability of the United States to secure future international agreements vital to our commercial interests and national security depends largely on whether this nation is perceived as honoring its international obligations. It is vitally important for Congress to mandate judicial enforcement of America's treaty obligations. Anything less jeopardizes our global reputation as a dependable treaty partner. We therefore urge you to support the rapid passage of the Consular Notification Compliance Act to accomplish this end, and thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Harry Barnes, Jr., U.S. Ambassador to Chile, 1985–1988; U.S. Ambassador to India, 1981–1985; Director General of the Foreign Service 1977–1981; U.S. Ambassador to Romania, 1974–1977.

John B. Bellinger, III, Partner, Arnold & Porter LLP; Legal Advisor to the Department of State, 2005–2009; Legal Advisor to the National Security Council, 2001–2005.

David E. Birenbaum, of Counsel, Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP; Senior Scholar, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars; U.S. Ambassador to the UN for UN Management and Reform, 1994–96.

James R. Jones, U.S. Ambassador to Mexico, 1993–1997; Member of U.S. Congress (D-OK), 1973–1987.

David Charles Miller, Jr., Special Assistant to the President, National Security Council, 1989–1990; U.S. Ambassador to Zimbabwe, 1984–1986; U.S. Ambassador to Tanzania, 1981–1984.

Thomas R. Pickering, Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, 1997–2000; U.S. Ambassador and Representative to the United Nations, 1989–1992.

William H. Taft, IV, Legal Advisor, U.S. Department of State, 2001–2005; U.S. Ambassador to NATO, 1989–1992.

JUNE 7, 2011.

Governor RICK PERRY,
Office of the Governor, Austin, Texas.
TEXAS BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES,
Austin, Texas.

DEAR GOVERNOR PERRY AND MEMBERS OF THE TEXAS BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLES: As former prosecutors and judges, we are strong supporters of a robust and accurate criminal justice system. We are well aware that international consular notification and access, as required under the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (Vienna Convention), is essential to such a system, and to ensuring non-discriminatory treatment for both non-citizens in U.S. custody and U.S. citizens in the custody of foreign governments; and is also critical to the efficient, effective, and fair operations of criminal justice systems throughout the United States. In light of these important considerations and out of concern for the domestic and international implications of an execution without proper compliance with U.S. international obligations, we are writing to urge you to grant a reprieve in the case of Humberto Leal Garcia. We take no position on the merits of his petition, but believe that a reprieve should take place pending congressional enactment of legislation that would allow foreign nationals who were denied consular access while in law enforcement custody and face the death penalty to receive appropriate review of that failure.

It is appropriate to ensure that our country complies with the laws to which it has obligated itself, and to ensure that those laws apply to our own citizens as well. At all stages of the proceedings, foreign nationals—whether our own citizens in other countries or those from other countries in the United States—face unique disadvantages and challenges when confronted with prosecution and imprisonment under the legal system of another nation. Prompt consular access ensures that they have the means necessary to be advised of their rights and to prepare an adequate defense.

Ensuring prompt consular access to foreigners arrested in the United States also enhances the truth-seeking function that lies at the heart of American justice. Much in the same way as the right to counsel under the Sixth Amendment, consular notification is essential to enabling fair access for those who are unfamiliar with our legal system. As Chief Judge Juan Torruella of the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit observed, ''Without [consular access], I think that we presume too much to think that an alien can present his defense with even a minimum of effectiveness. The result is injury not only to the individual alien, but also to the equity and efficacy of our criminal justice system.'' U.S. v. Li, 206 F.3d 56, 78 (1st Cir. 2000) (Torruella, C.J., concurring in part and dissenting in part).

Consular assistance provides a unique and indispensable protection for foreign nationals who are unfamiliar with the U.S. criminal justice system. This is true with regard to our own citizens abroad as well. As many domestic courts have recognized, consulates can provide essential resources that are simply not available through other means, particularly in identifying and explaining the ways in which the U.S. criminal justice system differs from their native systems. Early consular access can prevent misunderstandings and missteps by a foreign national that might otherwise prejudice their ability to obtain a fair trial. Consulates can assist defense counsel in locating crucial documents, witnesses, and exonerating evidence available only in their native country and can assist in translations that in too many cases have been demonstrated to be erroneous, thus jeopardizing the accuracy of the proceedings. This can mean the difference between conviction and acquittal, or between life and death.

We want to emphasize that demonstrating our nation's commitment to complying with Vienna Convention obligations is also critical to ensuring the safety of Americans traveling, living and working abroad. The United States expects countries to grant consular notification and access to Americans in law enforcement custody. In return, we pledge to accord the same right to foreign nationals within our borders. In addition, particularly in states bordering Mexico and Canada, cooperation between law enforcement agencies is critical to ensuring the safety of citizens on all sides of the border. These accords are threatened when the United States erects procedural hurdles that prevent foreign nationals from obtaining meaningful judicial review when denied consular notification and access and may well mean that our own citizens' rights will be jeopardized in countries whose citizens' rights have not been respected by the United States.

Providing meaningful enforcement of the Vienna Convention's consular notification and access requirements will increase the efficient, effective, and fair operations of our criminal justice system and protect U.S. citizens abroad. Delaying the execution of Humberto Leal Garcia to ensure full opportunity for congressional action and appropriate review of the case will demonstrate to foreign governments the United States' good faith in upholding its consular access obligations, increasing the likelihood that foreign governments will grant access to Americans in their custody. For these reasons, we strongly urge you to support a reprieve in this case pending congressional action on these matters.

Sincerely,

Hon. Charles F. Baird, Former Judge, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals; Former Judge, 299th District Court of Travis County, Texas.

Hon. William G. Bassler, Former Judge, United States District Court for the District of New Jersey (1991–2006); Former Judge, Superior Court of New Jersey (1988–1991).

A. Bates Butler III, United States Attorney, District of Arizona (1980–81); First Assistant United States Attorney, District of Arizona (1977–80).

Robert J. Del Tufo, Attorney General, State of New Jersey (1990–1993); United States Attorney, District of New Jersey (1977–1980); Former First Assistant State Attorney General and Director of New Jersey's Division of Criminal Justice.

W. Thomas Dillard, United States Attorney, Northern District of Florida (1983–1986); United States Attorney, Eastern District of Tennessee (1981).

Hon. Bruce J. Einhorn, Former United States Immigration Judge (1990–2007); Special Prosecutor and Chief of Litigation,

United States Department of Justice Office of Special Investigations (1979–1990).

Hon. Shirley M. Hufstedler, United States Secretary of Education (1979–1981); Former Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit (1968–1979); Former Associate Justice, California Court of Appeal (1966–1968); Former Judge, Los Angeles County Superior Court (1961–1966).

Hon. John J. Gibbons, Former Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit (1970–1990) (Chief Judge (1987–1990)).

Hon. Nathaniel R. Jones, Former Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, (1979–2002); Assistant United States Attorney, Northern District of Ohio (1962–1967).

Hon. Gerald Kogan, Former Chief Justice, Supreme Court of the State of Florida; Former Chief Prosecutor, Homicide and Capital Crimes Division, Dade County, Florida.

Kenneth J. Mighell, United States Attorney, Northern District of Texas (1977–1981); Assistant United States Attorney, Northern District of Texas (1961–1977).

Hon. Stephen M. Orlofsky, Former Judge, United States District Court for the District of New Jersey (1995–2003); Magistrate Judge, United States District Court for the District of New Jersey (1976–1980).

Professor Mark Osler, Professor of Law, University of St. Thomas, Minnesota; Former Professor of Law, Baylor University, Texas; Former Assistant United States Attorney, Eastern District of Michigan.

H. James Pickerstein, United States Attorney, District of Connecticut (1974); Chief Assistant United States Attorney, District of Connecticut (1974–1986).

James H. Reynolds, United States Attorney, Northern District of Iowa (1976–1982).

Hon. William S. Sessions, Director of the FBI (1987–1993); Former Judge, United States District Court for the Western District of Texas (1974–1987) (Chief Judge (1980–1987)); United States Attorney, Western District of Texas (1971–1974).

John Van de Kamp, Attorney General of California (1983–1991); District Attorney of Los Angeles County (1975–1983).

Mark White, Governor of Texas (1983–1987); Attorney General, State of Texas (1979–1983); Secretary of State of Texas (1973–1977); Assistant Attorney General, State of Texas (1965–1969).

Hon. Michael Zimmerman, Former Justice, Supreme Court of Utah (1984–2000) (Chief Justice (1994–1998)).

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. WICKER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. LEE, Mr. HATCH, Mr. VITTER, Mr. COBURN, and Mr. CORKER):

S. 1196. A bill to expand the use of E-Verify, to hold employers accountable, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today, I am introducing legislation to expand the E-Verify program and enhance our ability to hold employers accountable for their hiring practices. I am pleased that several of my colleagues have joined me in cosponsoring this commonsense bill titled Accountability Through Electronic Verification Act.

Known as the Basic Pilot Program, E-Verify currently provides employers with a simple, web-based tool to verify the work eligibility of new hires. In 1986, Congress made it unlawful for employers to knowingly hire or employ aliens not eligible to work in the United States. Under current law, if the documents provided by an employee reasonably appear on their face to be genuine, the employer has met its obligation to review the worker's documents.

Unfortunately, since then, identity theft has soared and counterfeit documents have become a thriving industry. Because of this, Congress created the Basic Pilot Program in 1996. Employers in this program can electronically verify a new hires employment authorization with more than 455 million Social Security Administration records, more than 122 million Department of State passport records, and more than 80 million Department of Homeland Security immigration records.

This program is voluntary and free for all employers to use. In fact, it is currently used by 269,913 employers representing 903,358 hiring sites. More than 11.3 million queries have been made this year. During fiscal year 2010, more than 98.3 percent of those were verified almost instantly.

Less than 1.7 percent of employees receive a tentative non-confirmation, and must sort out their records with the Social Security Administration. Many times, it is a simple misunderstanding relating from a typo to neglecting to update records after a name change.

With the program set to expire in a little over a year, I see the need to continue its use, without an expiration date. E-Verify is a proven tool in combatting illegal immigration. With the unemployment rate hovering around 9.1 percent, can we afford not to use every instrument available to ensure Americans and legal workers are the ones obtaining employment?

My legislation would make E-Verify a staple in the workplace so that American workers are on a level playing field with cheaper labor. Should an employer refuse to participate, my bill increases the penalties currently used under the Immigration and Nationality Act. Employers would be required to check the status of current employees within 3 years, and would allow employers to run a check prior to offering a job, saving that employer valuable time and resources. Employers will also be required to re-check those workers whose authorization is about to expire, such as those who come to the United States on visas. These visas have expiration dates, and it is imperative we do not allow employers to aide in the overstaying of any alien.

A commonsense fix that is also included would require the Social Security Administration to develop algorithm technology that would flag social security numbers that are being used more than once. You would think the Social Security Administration would already have this in place, but sadly they do not. This provision alone will save many from falling victim to identity theft.

For those who do find themselves victim of identity theft, this bill would amend the criminal code to clarify identity fraud is punishable regardless if the defendant did not have knowledge of the victim. This provision stems from the 2009 Supreme Court decision holding that identity theft requires proof that an individual knew the number being used belonged to an actual person. This is a commonsense and long overdue provision. Anyone who has had their identity stolen by an illegal alien would agree. We need to strengthen our laws to deter the robust black market for fraudulent documents.

Another provision in the bill, which I know will benefit many rural areas such as small towns in Iowa, would help those businesses without internet capabilities to participate in E-Verify. Requiring the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to establish a demonstration project in these rural areas will greatly measure the needs of our rural employers and involve the small business community.

Some may want to criticize the database used to check employees, but with continued enhancements, we are making great strides. For instance, just this past March, the Department of Homeland Security initiated the ''Self Check'' program to allow workers in five States and the District of Columbia to self-check employment eligibility. One of my staffers used Self Check and received confirmation of work authorization almost instantly. The entire process took her less than 90 seconds.

Another development is the recent launch to include U.S. passport photo matching capabilities. This further enhances the integrity of the program by enabling E-Verify to automatically check the validity and authenticity of all U.S. passports and passport cards presented for employment verification checks. E-Verify is supported by many. Most notably by DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano who has said, ''E-Verify is a smart, simple, and effective tool that allows us to work with employers to help them maintain a legal workforce.'' According to DHS, the ''E-Verify program infrastructure is capable of handling the volume of queries that would be necessary for a nationwide mandatory employment verification system.'' DHS has been preparing for such an occasion, and I'm pleased to put forward my proposal today.

For those who were here during the 2007 immigration debate, you may remember that I, Senator BAUCUS and then-Senator Obama worked very closely on the issue of employment verification. I have kept many of the principles agreed upon in 2007 and included them in this bill. With that said, I look forward to hearing from my colleagues with any ideas they may have to strengthen this system.

While everyone may not agree with every aspect of this bill, it serves as a starting point for a much-needed conversation about illegal immigration and our struggling job market. People

back home want employers to be held accountable. They want to see our government do more to make sure we are reducing the magnet for people to cross our borders illegally. I hope more colleagues will join me in my effort to achieve accountability through electronic verification.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. VITTER, Mr. LUGAR, and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S.J. Res. 19. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States authorizing Congress to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, today is Flag Day and it is the perfect day to re-introduce a constitutional amendment that would allow Congress to protect the American flag from physical desecration. I am joined in doing so today by my friend, the distinguished Senator from Montana, Senator BAUCUS. He was an original cosponsor of this amendment on 6 previous occasions when I have introduced it, including in the 109th Congress when this body came within one vote of approving it.

The American flag is a unique symbol of our country, of its history, and of our shared values. There is, in fact, no more powerful unifying general symbol. At the same time, the flag no doubt means different specific things to different individuals; Congress cannot, and should not attempt to, dictate what Americans believe, think, or say about the flag and whatever it represents to individuals.

That said, Congress should have authority to protect this unique symbol from at least physical desecration. The Supreme Court stripped even that authority from Congress in 1990 when it held that physical desecration is ''speech'' protected by the First Amendment. I believe the Court was wrong in that conclusion, but because the Court claimed to speak for the Constitution, the only way for Congress once again to have authority to protect the flag is by amending the Constitution.

In his farewell address in 1796, President George Washington said that the very basis of our political system is the right of the people to make and to alter the Constitution. The Constitution belongs to the people, not to the Supreme Court. As a result, the American people must have the opportunity to decide whether their Constitution should allow Congress to protect the flag.

The amendment we introduce today is as simple as it can be. It states: ''The Congress shall have power to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States.'' Unfortunately, simplicity does not prevent distortion, either by negligence or intention. Critics and some in the media have led many to believe that this amendment by itself bans flag desecration. It does not. In fact, should Congress propose and the states ratify this amendment, it might not result in any change in the law at all. That would be up to Congress and the people we represent to decide.

The issue is that today Congress is today prohibited by the Supreme Court from passing laws that protect the flag even if 100 percent of the American people wanted those laws and the Congress was ready to enact them.

The American people should be given the opportunity to decide whether they want their Constitution to allow their Congress to pass laws protecting the American flag. That is the way a representative democracy like ours should function. The Supreme Court distorted that process and this amendment will correct the Court's error. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, as many of you have done in the past, to support this amendment and to give this decision back to the American people.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 466. Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Ms. SNOWE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 782, to amend the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 to reauthorize that Act, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 467. Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Ms. SNOWE, and Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 782, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 468. Mrs. HUTCHISON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 782, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 469. Mr. BROWN of Ohio submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 782, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 470. Mr. BROWN of Ohio (for himself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 782, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 471. Mr. NELSON of Florida submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 782, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 466. Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Ms. SNOWE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 782, to amend the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 to reauthorize that Act, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 10, line 19, before ''and'' insert ''military base closures or realignments,''.

SA 467. Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Ms. SNOWE, and Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 782, to amend the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 to reauthorize that Act, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 29, after line 20, insert the following:

SEC. 22. FIDUCIARY EXCLUSION.

Section 3(21)(A) of the Employee Retirement Income and Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1002(21)(A)) is amended by inserting ''and except to the extent a person is providing an appraisal or fairness opinion with respect to qualifying employer securities (as defined in section 407(d)(5)) included in an employee stock ownership plan (as defined in section 407(d)(6)),'' after ''subparagraph (B),''.

SA 468. Mrs. HUTCHISON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 782, to amend the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 to reauthorize that Act, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. ____. REPEAL OF CERTAIN LIMITATIONS ON HEALTH CARE BENEFITS.

(a) REPEAL OF DISTRIBUTIONS FOR MEDICINE QUALIFIED ONLY IF FOR PRESCRIBED DRUG OR INSULIN.—Section 9003 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111–148) and the amendments made by such section are repealed; and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 shall be applied as if such section, and amendments, had never been enacted.

(b) REPEAL OF LIMITATION ON HEALTH FLEXIBLE SPENDING ARRANGEMENTS UNDER CAFETERIA PLANS.—Sections 9005 and 10902 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111–148) and section 1403 of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–152) and the amendments made by such sections are repealed.

SA 469. Mr. BROWN of Ohio submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 782, to amend the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 to reauthorize that Act, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 7, strike lines 9 through 13 and insert the following:

''(ii) reduce the dependence of the United States on foreign oil;

''(iii) encourage efficient coordination and leveraging of public and private investments; and

''(iv) encourage development of manufacturing capability within the region.''; and

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SA 470. Mr. BROWN of Ohio (for himself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 782, to amend the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 to reauthorize that Act, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 12, between lines 11 and 12, insert the following:

SEC. 10. BUSINESS INCUBATORS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title II of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 is amended by inserting after section 207 (42 U.S.C. 3147) the following:

''SEC. 208. BUSINESS INCUBATORS.

''(a) DEFINITION OF BUSINESS INCUBATOR.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In this section, the term 'business incubator' means an organization

or entity established to foster the start-up of businesses or accelerate the growth of fledgling companies by providing entrepreneurs with resources and services to produce viable businesses that can help create jobs and restore vitality to distressed areas.

''(2) EXCLUSION.—The term 'business incubator' does not include an organization or entity that is organized primarily as a for-profit venture.

''(b) DEVELOPMENT OF PLANS FOR CREATION OR EXPANSION OF BUSINESS INCUBATORS.—On receipt of an application from an eligible recipient (as determined by the Secretary in accordance with subsection (d)), the Secretary may provide grants to an eligible recipient for—

''(1) the development of feasibility studies and plans for the creation of new, or expansion of existing, business incubators;

''(2) the implementation of those studies and plans by supporting the creation of new, or expansion of existing, business incubators and related programmatic and technical assistance, which may include—

''(A) making investments in an early-stage business;

''(B) providing training, counseling, and other assistance to an early-stage business to support the development of the business;

''(C) carrying out due diligence activities to analyze and assess the desirability, value, and potential of an opportunity to provide assistance; or

''(D) meeting operational expenses of the business incubator; and

''(3) the temporary support of operations of business incubators, to the extent that the Secretary determines that the support is essential to assist a business incubator in becoming self-sustainable.

''(c) LIMITATION ON AMOUNT OF GRANTS.—The amount of a grant provided to an eligible recipient under this section may not exceed—

''(1) $750,000, if the grant is to be used for feasibility studies and plans; or

''(2) $3,000,000, if the grant is to be used for implementation of those studies and plans.

''(d) PROCEDURE FOR PROVIDING GRANTS.—

''(1) COMPETITIVE PROCESS REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall provide each grant under this section to an eligible recipient selected pursuant to a competitive process.

''(2) SELECTION CRITERIA.—The Secretary shall publish the criteria to be used in any competition under this paragraph for the selection of eligible recipients of grants under this section, including requirements relating to—

''(A) the projected number of jobs required to be created at a new or expanded business incubator for each of the first 6 years after the date of receipt of the grant;

''(B) the funding to be required to create or expand a business incubator during the first 5 years after the date of receipt of the grant;

''(C) the types of businesses and research entities expected in the business incubator and surrounding community;

''(D) letters of intent or support by businesses and research entities to establish a location in the business incubator;

''(E) the capability to attract a well-trained workforce to the business incubator;

''(F) the management of the business incubator; and

''(G) such other factors as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

''(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section such sums as are necessary for fiscal year 2012 and each fiscal year thereafter.

''(2) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts made available pursuant to paragraph (1) shall remain available until expended.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3121 et seq.) is amended by adding after section 207 the following:

''Sec. 208. Business incubators.''.

SA 471. Mr. NELSON of Florida submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 782, to amend the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 to reauthorize that Act, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 5, after line 24, insert the following:

SEC. ___. GRANTS FOR PUBLIC WORKS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT.

Section 201(b)(1)(B) of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3141(b)(1)(B)) is amended by inserting ''high-technology'' before ''employment''.

On page 13, strike lines 7 through 13 and insert the following:

the communities;'';

(3) in paragraph (4), by striking ''or'' after the semicolon at the end; and

(4) by striking paragraph (5) and inserting the following:

''(5) the loss of information technology, aerospace, manufacturing, natural resource-based, agricultural, or service sector jobs, for reinvesting in and diversifying the economies of the communities; or

''(6) termination of a major civilian Federal program with commercial and industrial applications, for help in reinvesting and diversifying the economies of the communities and retaining the workforce necessary for technology-focused jobs.''.

On page 19, after the matter following line 2 and before line 3, insert the following:

SEC. ___. ELIGIBILITY OF AREAS.

Section 301(a) of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3161(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(4) CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SKILLED WORKFORCE; CAPACITY TO USE ASSISTANCE.—The area has—

''(A) a well-developed capital infrastructure and a skilled workforce; and

''(B) the capacity to effectively use Federal assistance to increase employment in a technology-focused or manufacturing sector.''.

On page 20, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

SEC. ___. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS.

Section 401(a)(3) of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3171(a)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as subparagraphs (B) and (C), respectively;

(2) by inserting before subparagraph (B) (as redesignated by paragraph (1)) the following:

''(A) contains a specific plan to increase employment in manufacturing or a field with commercial, industrial, and military applications;''.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 14, 2011, at 10 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 14, 2011, at 2:30 p.m. in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 14, 2011, at 10 a.m. in room 366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 14, 2011, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AIRLAND

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Airland of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 14, 2011, at 9 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Personnel of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 14, 2011, at 5 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 14, 2011, at 3:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Seapower of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 14, 2011, at 2 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on June 14, 2011, at 10:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Kelsey Beltramea, Nikhil Sahai, and Cathryn Curoe of my staff be granted floor privileges for the duration of today's proceedings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2011

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, June 15; that following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate proceed to a period of morning business until 2 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the first hour equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first 30 minutes and the majority controlling the next 30 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:58 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, June 15, 2011, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate June 14, 2011:

THE JUDICIARY

CLAIRE C. CECCHI, OF NEW JERSEY, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY.

ESTHER SALAS, OF NEW JERSEY, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF DR. RALPH RUSH HENDRICKS

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it is with great respect and honor that I rise today to recognize the life of Northwest Florida's beloved Ralph Hendricks.

Born in Jay, Florida on June 3, 1927, Ralph Hendricks lived a life deeply rooted in his strong faith in God and love for his family and community. Dr. Hendricks began preaching along the Gulf Coast after graduating from Asbury College and Candler School of Theology at Emory University. An ordained elder in the United Methodist Church, Dr. Hendricks served pastorates throughout the Alabama-West Florida Conference for 40 years, including those in Escambia, Santa Rosa and Okaloosa counties.

His service to the Northwest Florida community, however, spread beyond the doors of the church. A pivotal leader in the local community, Dr. Hendricks served six years as a District Superintendent of the Andalusia District. He also served 37 years in the United States Navy and became chaplain of the Alabama Army National Guard. During his role as chaplain, he obtained the rank of Colonel and was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal. After his retirement, he continued to dedicate his time to those in need as Hospice chaplain in Escambia County, Florida.

To some, Ralph Hendricks will be remembered as a community leader and to others as a dedicated pastor and chaplain. To his family, he will forever be remembered as a loving husband, father, grandfather, and great grandfather. Ralph is survived by his wife Betty of 57 years; his children, Randy, Steve, and Mary Kaye; 7 grandchildren and 1 great grandchild.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to honor the life of Dr. Ralph Hendricks for his honorable leadership and service to Northwest Florida and to this great nation. My wife Vicki and I offer our prayers for his entire family. He will be truly missed.

RECOGNIZING MARITIME INTERNATIONAL FOR THE 2011 LOUISIANA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LANTERN AWARD

HON. CHARLES W. BOUSTANY, JR.

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Maritime International, a company from South Louisiana, for being named winner of the 2011 Lantern Award, District 4. The Lantern Award is presented by Louisiana Economic Development to salute manufacturers from across the state for their outstanding contributions to the Louisiana economy and to their communities.

Maritime International is owned by David Leblanc, John Deats and Donald Nassar and provides full service marine engineering and manufacturing. It serves many different clients including the U.S. Navy, oil companies, government agencies and port authorities. Maritime's goal is to offer clients effective and economical solutions for their mooring and berthing needs. Five engineering and sales offices are located in the U.S., China, the U.K., UAE and France.

Maritime makes an effort to purchase items from Louisiana vendors and is very involved in the local community. The company provides support to community events and charitable needs including Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, St. Jude, UNICEF and many more. Maritime International has steadily grown and innovated since beginning in 1996 and is continuing to do so with new expansion jobs underway.

It goes without saying that Maritime International is very deserving of the honor of being given the 2011 Lantern Award. The staff at Maritime International is innovative and effective in what they do. I wholeheartedly thank Maritime International for their service to Louisiana, and I congratulate the company on this award.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 1, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2017) making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes:

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition of H.R. 2017, the FY 2012 Homeland Security Appropriations Bill. As a member of the House Homeland Security Committee, I cannot stress enough the importance of ensuring state and local officials have the resources they need in order for them to efficiently and effectively respond to national and local emergencies. This bill breaks faith with first responders, who are essential to our national security, by significantly underfunding them.

In particular, this bill proposes to cut firefighter assistance grants by more than fifty percent. The Assistance to Firefighter Grant program (FIRE) focuses on equipping firefighters with the necessary resources they need to respond to any national or local emergency in a post 9/11 environment. The Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant program is designed to allow fire departments to increase their training and hiring of more firefighters. By cutting FIRE grants by 51 percent, from $405 million in FY 2011 to $200 million in FY 2012 and SAFER grants by 63 percent, from $405 million in FY 2011 to $150 million in FY 2012, we ultimately risk jeopardizing the safety of our communities. In addition, this bill takes away direct funding for nine key state and local security grants (including State Homeland Security Grants, Urban Area Security Initiative, Transit Security Grants, and Port Security Grants), combines them into a separate block grant, and slashes the funding of the block grant by 55 percent—from $2.2 billion in FY 2011 to $1 billion in FY 2012. By requiring all of these critical programs to compete against one another for essentially half the funding they each received the previous year, this bill will force many of these programs to be underfunded or zeroed out entirely.

This bill also significantly cuts Homeland Security Research and Development projects by 42 percent—from $688 million in FY 2011 to $398 million in FY 2012. By implementing these cuts, this bill would force us to eliminate more than 144 research projects in areas such as biological and explosives detection, advanced cyber security, and interoperability. In a time when our nation remains highly vulnerable to terrorism, we cannot afford to lose these essential counterterrorism research projects.

In response to our troubling debt, many cuts were already made to H.R. 1473, the FY 2011 Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act (P.L. 102–10) For example, State Homeland Security Grants were cut from $950 million in FY 2010 to $725 million in FY 2011; the Urban Area Security Initiative was cut from $887 million in FY 2010 to $725 million in FY 2011; Transit Security grants were cut from $300 million in FY 2010 to $250 million in FY 2011; Port Security Grants were cut from $300 million in FY 2010 to $250 million in FY 2011; and SAFER grants were cut from $420 million in FY 2010 to $405 million in FY 2011. By continuing to make substantial cuts, this bill will undoubtedly hinder the capabilities of our nation's first responders.

According to The International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) these cuts would have disastrous effects on the safety of our communities. They have stated that "[a]t a time when state and local public safety budgets are shrinking, it is unconscionable to implement cuts of this magnitude. Make no mistake, if this proposal is enacted, it would devastate local fire department budgets and threaten public safety nationwide." In addition to the cutting of research programs, this bill also makes a foolish mistake of preserving a cap on the total number of TSA screeners at 46,000—which will prevent the additional hiring of personnel needed to staff new security technology.

There will be a number of other troubling consequences if this bill is to pass:

Transit agencies would not have funding to hire additional law enforcement officers, acquire bomb sniffing dogs, or install explosive screening devices at a time when open source media reports indicate that Al Qaeda may be attempting a major attack on the U.S. rail system.

States and localities would receive greatly reduced funding (or be denied funding entirely) to harden tunnels and bridges or install surveillance systems at high-risk areas.

Ports would not have funds for vessels to protect harbor waterways from a terrorist threat or for maritime training of law enforcement personnel at the ports.

According to the National Association of Counties, a reduction in grant programs and the combining of funding would result in communities of all sizes not being able to enhance their level of preparedness to deal with all hazards, including potential nuclear, chemical, and biological attacks.

As a member of the House Homeland Security Committee, I refuse to stand by this bill. We as members of Congress have a responsibility to protect our communities from any possible danger. For this reason, there is no higher priority than to adequately fund our homeland security, particularly our first responders such as firefighters. It makes no sense to weaken our Homeland Security program by cutting their resources in a time when terrorist threats continue to put our nation at risk. We as members of Congress must unite and assist our brave first responders in their efforts to help contain any threats by providing them with all necessary resources, rather than turn our backs and leave them without sufficient funding. This bill not only undermines our nation's security, it also undermines our allegiance to the American people who look up to us in this particular time to protect them from any possible danger, whether it is an act of terrorism or a natural disaster. For this reason, I oppose H.R. 2017, the FY 2012 Homeland Security Appropriations Bill.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, on May 11th, my vote on rollcall vote No. 309 was incorrectly recorded as ''aye'' when I intended to vote ''no.'' I did not see the error until it was too late. I have strong opposition to H.R. 1229 and my intention was to vote ''no'' on this legislation.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PROSTATE ACT

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during Men's Health Week to urge my colleagues to support the fight against one of our Nation's leading causes of death among men—prostate cancer. There are significant racial and ethnic disparities that demand attention: African Americans have prostate cancer mortality rates that are more than double those in the white population. Underserved rural populations have higher rates of mortality compared to their urban counterparts. Additionally, certain veterans' populations may have nearly twice the incidence of prostate cancer than the general population of the United States.

There should be coordination across Federal agencies which are already receiving significant resources focused on prostate cancer programs. This coordination would serve to improve accountability and actively encourage the translation of research into practice. Additionally, this coordination would serve to identify and implement best practices, in order to foster an integrated and monolithic focus on effective prevention, diagnosis and treatment of this disease.

For these reasons, I, along with Rep. BROUN, now introduce this bi-partisan piece of legislation. Our bill provides for a time-limited interagency taskforce to ensure that the Federal dollars invested in the fight against this disease are well spent.

In 2010, more than 217,730 new patients were diagnosed with, and more than 32,050 men died from this disease. Furthermore, about 1 man in 6 will be diagnosed with prostate cancer, and roughly 2 million Americans are living with a diagnosis of prostate cancer and its consequences. While prostate cancer generally affects older individuals, younger men are also at risk for the disease. When prostate cancer appears in early middle age it frequently takes on a more aggressive form. Prostate cancer continues to be a serious threat to our Nation's men.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and use this as an opportunity to show America's men that they have your support.

RECOGNIZING MAX BRAKE CONTROLLERS FOR THE 2011 LOUISIANA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LANTERN AWARD

HON. CHARLES W. BOUSTANY, JR.

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Max Brake Controllers, a company from Cameron Parish, Louisiana, for being named winner of the 2011 Lantern Award, District 3. The Lantern Award is presented by Louisiana Economic Development to salute manufacturers from across the state for their outstanding contributions to the Louisiana economy and to their communities.

Thomas McDaniel, his wife Debbie and company employees created Max Brake Controllers several years ago. McDaniel is also the owner of Mac's Classic Muscle Cars, a supplier of Max Brakes. Because of his experience in this field, McDaniel was able to play a key role in creating the Max Brake technology. Max Brake Company uses Louisiana parts as much as possible, with about half of the components bought locally including brass stock, electrical parts and hardware from local companies.

Max Brake Controllers uses a braking system for trucks and big rigs to carry large loads. An electrical display presents hydraulic vehicle brake pressure and helps to control electric trailer brakes. The brake pressure is monitored by a pressure sensor in the vehicle master cylinder.

McDaniel is a member of the Cameron Parish Police Jury. He is also an avid supporter of South Cameron High School and a member of the Volunteer Fire Department, Recreation Department and Water District.

It goes without saying that Max Brake Controllers is very deserving of the honor of being given the 2011 Lantern Award. McDaniel and the other staff at Max Brake Controllers are innovative and effective in what they do, and I am honored to serve as their member of Congress. I wholeheartedly thank Max Brake Controllers for their service to the Cameron Parish and the state of Louisiana, and I congratulate the company on this award.

CONGRATULATING THE JET PROPULSION LABORATORY ON THE COMPLETION OF THE SPIRIT ROVER MISSION

HON. DAVID DREIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the La Canada Flintridge based Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), its director, Dr. Charles Elachi and all of the JPL employees, on successfully completing the mission of Spirit, a Mars Exploration Rover. Spirit was designed, built and operated by JPL.

In the summer of 2003, NASA launched Spirit along with its twin, Opportunity, from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. After traveling for six months and more than a quarter million miles, Spirit landed on Mars on January 3, 2004. The Mars Exploration Rover mission sought to expand our understanding of Mars' geological history and find evidence of water. One of the mission's greatest achievements was Spirit's discovery of minerals indicating that Mars was once a wet environment with hot springs and steam vents. These conditions may have been favorable for microbial life. In addition, Spirit provided us with thousands of breathtaking images of Mars' surface. While Spirit's mission was only planned for three months, it showed amazing resiliency and continued to operate for six years. After surviving three Martian winters, countless dust storms and a broken wheel, NASA lost contact with Spirit last March. Opportunity continues to explore the Martian surface.

Mr. Speaker, the success of Spirit's mission, and JPL's scientific accomplishments, demonstrate the need to continue strong support for Mars exploration missions. As you may know, the Mars Science Laboratory is scheduled to launch at the end of this year. It will expand upon the discoveries made by Spirit and provide new insight into Mars' past. Its primary purpose is to determine if Mars was ever capable of supporting microbial life. To accomplish this, the mission will carry the most advanced instruments ever sent to Mars and have the capability to travel farther than past rovers.

Mankind has always yearned to explore what is beyond the horizon. However, space exploration does more than inspire our imagination. It provides measurable benefits here at

home. From new medical treatments to developing new energy solutions, NASA technology has made our world better. In addition, NASA's research centers, such as JPL, enhance communities, including my own district, by providing high-paying, highly-skilled jobs. Lastly, these projects provide inspiration to the next generation of engineers and scientists who will develop our future industries.

Mr. Speaker, I commend JPL and its employees whose tireless work has made Spirit's mission such a tremendous success. I wish JPL the best of luck as it embarks on future projects and continues to expand our knowledge of Mars.

RECOGNIZING THE VCU BASKETBALL TEAM'S ADVANCEMENT TO THE NCAA BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT'S FINAL FOUR

HON. ERIC CANTOR

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a historic accomplishment for the Richmond region. On March 27, 2011, the Virginia Commonwealth University's basketball team defeated the University of Kansas 71-61 and for the first time in history advanced to the NCAA Basketball Tournament's Final Four.

Led by Coach Shaka Smart, the Rams had a terrific season and finished sixth in the final ESPN/USA Today Coaches poll, which is the highest finish in school and CAA history. The Rams ended the season by tying their record of 28 wins.

The Rams set a number of new records for VCU and the CAA including total points scored with 2,864 and total three-pointers with 339, a mark which ranked second in the nation. The fourteen home games of the 2010–11 season set a new average attendance record with 6,645 fans per game. The average attendance for all forty games was 8,742, which is also a school record.

The team has brought the City of Richmond and the entire Commonwealth of Virginia much pride. Their strong teamwork and spirit were evident, and they brought an excitement to our community that has rarely been seen before. VCU pride was displayed in store fronts, restaurants, local businesses and in people's homes. We were all proud to share the magic of VCU's Cinderella season with the country.

I offer sincere congratulations to VCU President Michael Rao for his vision and outstanding leadership, Coach Smart for his contagious enthusiasm and tenacity, the Ram basketball team for their exceptional play and inspiring team spirit, and all of the students and fans that supported the team throughout the season.

I commend the Rams on their successful season and ask you to join me in celebrating their historic run.

DIA DE PORTUGAL RECOGNITION

HON. DENNIS A. CARDOZA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today along with my colleagues Mr. Costa of California, Mr. McGovern of Massachusetts, and Mr. Cicilline of Rhode Island to recognize Dia de Portugal, and reiterate the strong bond between the United States and Portugal. Celebrated around the world on June 10th, Dia de Portugal recognizes the magnificent heritage of the Portuguese people and their descendents.

Contributing to the strong ties between the United States and Portugal are the sizable Portuguese communities in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, California, and Hawaii. The latest census estimates that 1.3 million individuals living in the United States are of Portuguese ancestry. There are also about 20,000 Americans living in Portugal.

A large percentage of Portuguese-Americans are descendents of immigrants who came from the Azores in the late 1950's after the islands experienced several volcanic eruptions and earthquakes, leaving many without homes. Thousands of victims were in need of aid, and the United States, in a gesture of international goodwill, allocated visas to the people of the Azores to find work and rebuild their lives in America. Since the Azores are known for their rich soil and temperate climate, many of the Portuguese refugees settled in regions of the United States that supported agriculture and dairy, such as the San Joaquin Valley in Central California. Many other Portuguese from the Azores settled in parts of the nation with burgeoning fishing industries, particularly in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New York where they continued to diversify and contribute to the nation's economy and common heritage.

Modern day Portugal has been an integral member of the European Union (EU) and is a strong proponent of European integration. While Portugal held the presidency of the EU Council for the third time during the latter half of 2007, Portugal oversaw the signing of a new EU reform treaty, staged EU summits with Russia, India, and China, and held a second EU-Africa summit. Furthermore, Portugal is a founding member of NATO and continues to be an active member of the alliance.

Lastly, the defense relationship between the United States and Portugal is excellent, centered on the 1995 Agreement on Cooperation and Defense (ACD). For 50 years, Lajes Air Base in the Azores has played an important role in supporting U.S. military aircraft. Past missions have engaged in counter-terrorism and humanitarian efforts, including operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Portugal often emphasizes its support for strong European ties with the United States, particularly on defense and security issues. Portugal sees its role as host of NATO's "Joint Command Lisbon," located near Lisbon, as an important sign of alliance interest in transatlantic security issues.

Mr. Speaker, we celebrate all the accomplishments of the Portuguese and Portuguese Americans on this occasion, and wish everyone celebrating worldwide a joyous Dia de Portugal.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I missed a round of votes in order to attend the remembrance services of a friend who passed away in Buffalo over the weekend. Because the votes I missed dealt with important questions of labor policy, foreign policy and funding for our veterans, I would like to enter into the record how I would have voted had I been present.

On Rollcall 413, the LaTourette Amendment, I would have voted "aye."

On Rollcall 414, the Amash Amendment, I would have voted "no."

On Rollcall 415, the Sherman Amendment, I would have voted "no."

On Rollcall 416, retaining Title II (Department of Veterans Affairs), I would have voted "aye."

PASSING OF THE HONORABLE JUAN FRANCISCO LUIS, THIRD ELECTED GOVERNOR OF THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. I rise today to commemorate the life of the Honorable Juan Francisco Luis, the third elected Governor of the U.S. Virgin Islands who passed away on June 4, 2011, at the age of 70. In office from 1979 through 1986, Governor Luis was the longest serving elected chief executive of our island territory.

Governor Luis served at a time of growth and change in the Virgin Islands. He was a popular governor known as a leader who was responsive to the needs of ordinary citizens, who was always willing to listen to their individual concerns. According to Profiles of Outstanding Virgin Islanders, he will be remembered for significant infrastructure development in the islands, in particular, the establishment of modern health care facilities on all three islands, the initial expansion and financing of the airports on St. Thomas and St. Croix, the construction of a new container port on St. Croix, acquisition of land on St. Croix for homeownership and agriculture and several capital construction projects.

Mr. Speaker, Governor Luis first ran for public office in 1972, when he was elected to the Tenth Legislature of the U.S. Virgin Islands and served as chairman of the Legislative Housing and Planning Committee, Vice Chairman of the Recreation Committee and member of the Committees on Finance, Public Safety, Health and Welfare, Labor and Veterans Affairs.

He was chosen by the late Governor Cyril King to be his running mate in the 1974 gubernatorial election. The two won, and when Governor King died unexpectedly in 1978, Luis became Governor of the Virgin Islands. Originally a member of the Independent Citizens Movement, and later as an independent, Luis was elected in his own right in 1978 and again in 1982.

Born on the neighboring island of Vieques, Puerto Rico, he moved with his family to St. Croix when he was two months old. He was the valedictorian of the then Christiansted High School in 1958 and went on to attend Inter-American University in Puerto Rico. He served in the U.S. Army and was honorably discharged in 1968 as a sergeant. He later taught at the then Christiansted Grammar School and worked for the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

I have two special recollections of personal interactions with him as Governor. He made time to meet with me when there was a controversy surrounding the naming of the park in Frederiksted. Several of us had decided to ask him to consider vetoing the bill as passed by the Legislature and he did. I don't exactly remember the details of his negotiations with the HESS refinery. But at the time it seemed to me that he was not getting the support he needed and so in an attempt to rise above party politics, I secured the signatures to call a special meeting to urge the Territorial Committee of the Democratic Party to support him during the negotiations. My efforts were not successful, but I know he appreciated the attempt.

I believe that history will be exceedingly kind to the memory of Governor Luis as we can see his contributions in the health care system, in education, in the economy and in other aspects that affect the daily lives of Virgin Islanders. His efforts were sincere and those of us in office today build on the foundations that were set during his tenure. With the passage of time people have the chance to assess the contributions of those who live their lives in service to the public. It can be said of Governor Juan Luis that he had a clear vision and that he worked diligently to accomplish his intended goals and that we the people, were better off for it.

Mr. Speaker, my family, staff and I extend our sincere condolences to his wife, Mrs. Luz Luis and his children Juan, Jr. and Carlota Amalia. May Governor Juan Francisco Luis rest in peace.

HONORING DYERSBURG SUPERINTENDENT LLOYD RAMER

HON. STEPHEN LEE FINCHER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. FINCHER. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to rise today to honor and thank Mr. Lloyd Ramer for an outstanding 42-year career of serving in public education as Superintendent of the Dyersburg City Schools. Mr. Ramer will retire from service as Superintendent on June 7, 2011. We celebrate his accomplishments and wish him well in his future endeavors.

As an exceptional leader and education advocate, Mr. Ramer began with the Dyersburg School System in 1969. He has functioned in numerous roles ranging from a contemporary studies teacher, acting director, basketball coach, curriculum coordinator, and assistant superintendent. In 1994, Mr. Ramer accepted the responsibility of Superintendent, demonstrating what a colleague calls his "driving commitment to excellence and his continued quest for quality educational opportunities for our students." His commitment has been proven by spending all 42 years of his career working for the Dyersburg City Schools. His years of working with the city schools prove his tremendous commitment to public education.

On behalf of the House of Representatives, I want to thank Mr. Ramer for encouraging thousands of young Americans to achieve their fullest potential.

Please join me in honoring Mr. Lloyd Ramer upon his retirement from public education.

HONORING MS. PATRICIA WOJCIK

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today I pause to remember the great life and work of Patricia Wojcik the longtime director of the Department of Senior Services in Cheektowaga, New York.

For nearly two and a half decades Pat dedicated her life to making the lives of seniors in Western New York healthier, happier and more fulfilled.

Upon first assuming her leadership role in town government in 1980, Pat made it her mission to give local seniors a place to gather, learn, have fun and build friendships.

Two short years later the Cheektowaga Senior Center opened its doors and over the years since, thousands of seniors were greeted at those doors by Pat's smiling face and kind words.

The many ways Pat touched the lives of others is far too great to mention here but her commitment is demonstrated in the respect she had for the commitment of those she served. Each year one of her trademark events was a ceremony which included a splendid celebration for Cheektowaga couples celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary.

Her devotion to her work didn't go unrecognized. She received citizen of the year awards from the Am Pol Eagle and Zonta Club, was recognized by the St. Joseph Hospital Foundation and in 2005 I was honored to nominate her to represent our area for the White House Conference on the Aging.

That same year, 25 years after she first started, Pat turned over her duties at Cheektowaga's Senior Center and began a well-deserved retirement.

On June 10, 2011 I will join long-time Cheektowaga leader Assemblyman Dennis Gabryszak, Pat's friends, family and co-workers to plant a tree in Pat Wojcik's honor in front of the building where she spent so many years.

Her memory will live on with this tree as well as in the hearts of all of us who knew and loved her.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 2, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2055) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes:

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of the LaTourette amendment and of the thousands of American workers, contractors and small businesses that benefit from the use of Project Labor Agreements.

Created by the National Labor Relations Act of 1935, Project Labor Agreements, or PLAs, allow construction workers to enter into a collective bargaining agreement that establishes the terms and conditions of employment for all workers on a construction project.

Project Labor Agreements are cost effective and pro-business. They are used in every State on private- and public-sector construction projects. Fortune 500 companies such as Wal-Mart, Toyota, and Boeing praise and use PLAs because they provide contractors with a reliable and uninterrupted supply of trained workers at predictable costs for wages and benefits.

PLAs provide uniform working conditions and rules on construction sites, thereby making the work site safer while businesses benefit by paying less in worker compensation and avoid project delays due to the lessened risk of job site accidents.

PLAs encourage the employment of local residents, ensuring that these workers' paychecks will be spent in the local community. PLAs can also be used as a way to enhance the work opportunities of military veterans and underrepresented communities.

PLAs have been used for the construction of some of our Nation's most iconic building projects, including the Coulee Dam in Washington State, the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, and the Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

PLAs represent the best of what can happen when labor and business come together.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support American workers and businesses and vote in favor of the LaTourette amendment.

MARTIN VAN BUREN NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

HON. CHRISTOPHER P. GIBSON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. GIBSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the people of New York's 20th District to express our sincere appreciation for the Open Space Institute's continued preservation and protection of the Martin Van Buren National Historic Site in my hometown of Kinderhook, NY.

The Martin Van Buren National Historic Site was established by Congress in 1974 in order to commemorate the life and work of President Martin Van Buren through the preservation and interpretation of Lindenwald, his home and farm. When the site was established, Kinderhook was a rural farming community, like many towns in the Mid-Hudson River Valley. Over the years, new homes and the loss of agricultural land began to threaten the area surrounding the park. These changes compromised the historic integrity of the property.

The Open Space Institute (OSI) is a nonprofit organization that has worked for over 30 years to conserve land in eastern New York, New England, and New Jersey. The primary geographic focus of OSI's program has been the Hudson River Valley. To date, OSI has protected nearly 90,000 acres for parks, farmland preservation, historic sites, and other conservation purposes. In partnership with the National Park Service (NPS), the Columbia Land Conservancy, the Town of Kinderhook, and others, OSI identified a ''Kinderhook Creek Conservation Corridor.'' Within this area lie two significant historic sites: Martin Van Buren National Historic Site and the Columbia County Historical Society's Van Alen House. In addition, this land encompasses a largely unspoiled agricultural landscape and a creek that is popular with fishermen, swimmers, and boaters. Over the years, OSI has helped protect nearly 1,000 acres of open space and working farmland within this corridor.

Addressing the concerns of citizens and the National Park Service at a critical time, Open Space Institute purchased a large tract of Van Buren farmland, including the historic Lindenwald farm cottage. OSI worked with the NPS to establish easements protecting Van Buren resources, and held those until such time as citizens and public organizations, including the Friends of Lindenwald, could request and achieve congressional approval for a boundary expansion in 2009.

In order to keep the farmland in agricultural use, Open Space sold a 101-acre parcel to Roxbury Farm, a community-supported cooperative organic farm. Roxbury Farm agreed to the easement stipulations suggested by the National Park Service protecting historic resources. This year, OSI donated 26 acres of land within the historic core of Lindenwald, including a Van Buren era farm cottage, to the National Park Service to benefit the people of the United States.

In addition to protecting Lindenwald in its historic agricultural setting, OSI has worked with the NPS to create a trail easement that will offer increased opportunities for public enjoyment of the park and surrounding land as part of an overall plan that was developed in concert with local landowners, citizens, and governments.

The unique partnership between OSI, Roxbury Farm, Friends of Lindenwald, and the NPS has created new opportunities to help visitors understand the importance of agriculture in President Van Buren's life, the role of the changing agricultural economy before the Civil War, and the value of agriculture to America's future.

HONORING MR. GEORGE MARTIN

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 90th birthday of a proud son of the city of Buffalo and an ardent believer in the Jesuit educational tradition—George Martin.

When I think of George Martin, I think of a man of deep faith, commitment to public service, and a man who most of all places tremendous value in quality education. George Martin is one of the proudest Buffalonians I have ever had the pleasure to know. His commitment to education is so vast, so complete, that these words hardly live up to the record he has compiled.

A proud alumnus of St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute, George's service to that institution is unparalleled. A longtime board chair, George was designated an Affiliate Christian Brother due to his faithful service to St. Joe's and to the wider LaSallian community.

George has demonstrated as deep a commitment to Canisius College, where he is accurately regarded as a living legend. George was the very first lay Executive Vice President of Canisius College, where he blazed a trail and set an example for literally thousands of impressionable students. Today, a dormitory and an academic award are named in his honor, and an endowed scholarship fund exists in his name, demonstrating all the more the deep and abiding commitment George has to the college itself and to education in general.

George has a great history in public service as well. A veteran of the Sedita administration in Buffalo City Government, George was also a friend and confidant to Governor Hugh Carey. George also served with honor and distinction for many years in leadership of the New York State Council of Parks, where he worked tirelessly to maintain the New York State Park system's preeminent position as among the very best state systems in the nation.

Hailing from the proud neighborhoods of South Buffalo, George served his country with honor and bravery in World War II, and is patriarch to many nieces and nephews—many themselves alumni of Canisius. Our community is fortunate that this proud family shared their uncle with us, to dedicate so very much to the growth and success of these important Jesuit institutions.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join with me and with the membership of the House to honor the dedicated service of Buffalo's George Martin, and to wish good health and Godspeed to him upon the occasion of his 90th birthday.

PAUL MADAY RETIREMENT

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I congratulate Mr. Paul M. Maday on his retirement from his position as Business Manager/Secretary-Treasurer for the Boilermakers Local 374, as well as his position as Recording Secretary-Treasurer for the Northwestern Indiana Building and Construction Trades Council. Paul, a member of the Boilermakers Local 374 for many years, has dedicated his life to the interests of his fellow tradespeople and the entire community in Northwest Indiana. For his lifetime of service to the Boilermakers, Paul was honored at a retirement dinner that took place at Avalon Manor in Merrillville, Indiana, on Friday, June 10, 2011.

Paul Maday has been a member of the Boilermakers Local 374 for 34 years. During his tenure, he has held numerous positions. After four years as an apprentice, Paul became a journeyman, a general foreman, and a union steward. Paul's career continued to advance, and he was named Assistant Business Manager in 1995, a position he held for ten years. Because of his hard work and tremendous leadership skills, Paul went on to become Business Manager/Secretary-Treasurer in 2005 and was reelected to this position in 2008. Paul also has served as Recording Secretary-Treasurer for the Northwestern Indiana Building Trades Council since 2005. For his noteworthy level of skill and commitment, Paul was appointed to the Indiana State Pressure Vessel Board in 2002, 2005, and 2008. Additionally, he has served as chairman of the Boilermakers National Pension Trust and the National Annuity Trust and also served as chairman of the Tripartite Committee for U.S. Steel, ArcelorMittal Indiana Harbor and Burns Harbor, representing the Northwestern Indiana Building Trades Council. Paul's passion, devotion, and continuous support to the Building Trades is truly remarkable, and for this he is worthy of the highest praise.

Northwest Indiana has a rich history of excellence in the craftsmanship and loyalty of tradespeople. For many years, Paul Maday has displayed unwavering dedication to the members of the Building Trades, and his various positions have allowed him the opportunity to touch the lives of countless individuals. Not only has Paul selflessly served his local members, but through his work with the Building Trades, he has been a remarkable example of just how much good a dedicated individual can do for a community. When it comes to serving those in need, Paul Maday has been a leader of his members and the Northwestern Indiana Building and Construction Trades Council to ensure that innumerable good works are done. Paul also selflessly gives of his time to many charitable organizations. He has been involved in the Alzheimer's Association walk-a-thon fundraiser and has served on the executive board for the American Heart Association of Northwest Indiana, as well as the Northwest Indiana Workforce Investment board. Although Paul has served the Building Trades and his community with complete dedication, it is his commitment to his family that is most impressive. Paul and his wonderful wife, Terry, have two beloved children and one grandchild.

Mr. Speaker, Paul Maday has given his time and efforts selflessly to the union members he has worked so tirelessly with and represented so well. He has given to the people of Northwest Indiana personally and through his work with the Building Trades Council. He has been a true role model to his peers and a true friend to Northwest Indiana. I respectfully ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in commending Paul for his outstanding contributions and in wishing him well upon his retirement.

IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 2055

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, today, with passage of the FY 2012 Military Construction/Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill, we renew our

commitment to keep our promise to our nation's more than 2 million military personnel and their families, reservists, and 23 million veterans.

I have said it before, but I am proud to note again that this committee has a strong history of working in a bipartisan way to produce a bill that recognizes and supports the needs of our active duty service members and our veterans.

The legislation includes a total of $127.8 billion in both discretionary and mandatory funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs—an increase of $8.7 billion over last year's level. In this bill, discretionary funding alone equals $58.3 billion, which is $1.85 billion above the FY 2011 enacted level. This bill also provides full funding of $69.5 billion for mandatory VA programs.

Since January 2007, Congress has increased funding for veterans' health care and other services by $30 billion (over 70%). While I would like to give more resources to Veterans Affairs, even in these tough economic times, I am pleased that we are building on the progress made by the Democratic Majority in the last two Congresses. Importantly, this bill also includes provisions to increase spending oversight at the VA—making sure that the VA uses their increase in funding responsibly and appropriately is critically important for our nation's veterans and their families.

The bill protects the health and well being of our veterans by preserving the advance appropriations for medical care already provided for fiscal year 2012 and providing the mandatory funding for disability, rehabilitation, education, and housing benefits. This bill also includes sufficient resources to fully implement VA homeless assistance programs, including the Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem, the Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development—Department of Veterans Affairs Supported Housing programs.

I commend the Chairman and Ranking Member for their hard work in ensuring that this bill is another significant step in fulfilling the promise our country made to leave no veteran behind.

I urge my colleagues to support final passage of H.R. 2055.

IN RECOGNITION OF PARMA COMMUNITY GENERAL HOSPITAL

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Parma Community General Hospital. In June 2011, Parma Community General Hospital will be celebrating 50 years of service. Their mission has been to provide excellent, personalized care incorporating their core values of integrity, community partnership, commitment and stewardship, collaboration and teamwork and individual growth and development.

In August 1961 the hospital was founded. Within a few years it was fully accredited and joined the Cleveland Hospital Council. Parma Community General Hospital is a successful, not-for-profit, community hospital. It is a state-of-the-art facility in a close-to-home, friendly, community setting.

The hospital has grown extensively, adding floors and new Intensive Care and Coronary Care units in the 1970s and several medical office buildings in the 1980s and 1990s. In 1982 the hospital expanded health education programs by opening the Health Education Center. In the 1990s they added the ElderCenter Adult Day Care which was designed as an alternative to nursing homes and a Child Care Center for hospital employees and the public. It has an award-winning Home Health Care program, and an EMS Education Program that has endeavored to meet the region's safety needs for the past 25 years.

In the 1990s, Parma Hospital grew further, adding the Pain Center, expanding the inpatient Acute Rehabilitation Center, modernizing the Small Wonders Maternity Center and adding the Behavioral Center for Older Adults, a geriatric psychiatric unit. Parma Hospital won its first of numerous awards for excellence in orthopedics the year before the 1999 opening of The Heart Center, a cardiovascular intensive care unit that would garner its own array of awards, including the 100 Top Hospitals for Cardiovascular Care more than once and the fastest heart attack care in the region throughout the Code STEMI program.

The past decade brought the addition of outpatient oncology care in a community setting and the opening of Residential Seasons of Life Hospice on Pleasant Valley Lake. Parma Hospital also enlarged its Emergency Department, adding an innovative Doc at the Door program for efficient triage, and built a new Intensive Care Unit. Outpatient radiology services were brought to both Ridge Park Square in Brooklyn and WellPointe Pavilion, offering outpatient services. Other specialized patient care areas include: physical, occupational, speech and respiratory therapies, laboratory and radiology, the Bariatric Center, inpatient and outpatient care and surgery, inpatient care floors including oncology, medical and surgical, inpatient rehabilitation unit, diabetic counseling and sports medicine.

In 2010 Parma Community General Hospital President and CEO Terrence G. Deis was named to the list of top Hospital and Healthcare Industry Leaders to Know. Mr. Deis is proud that the hospital, with nearly 2,000 employees, has flourished as a community partner and credits the hard work and integrity of the employees, management and medical staff with the success of Parma Community General Hospital.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in recognition of Parma Community General Hospital's 50th anniversary and in honor of those past and present whose unwavering dedicated service will be the legacy of Parma Community General Hospital.

COMMENTS ON H.R. 3, NO TAXPAYER FUNDING ABORTION

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 3, the No Taxpayer Funding Abortion bill. This bill prevents women who have private insurance plans from receiving comprehensive sexual health coverage even in cases when their health is in danger.

It is extremely clear that Republicans are waging a war against women's rights by pushing a radical agenda that will primarily hurt poor and low-income women. An agenda like this only further proves that the Republicans are not interested in jobs and repairing our economy but instead more interested in divisive social issues that will not move this economy forward.

Women and families need affordable and accessible health care more than ever before. This blatant assault on women's health needs to stop. As elected officials, it is our duty to ensure that all rights, including women's rights, are not violated through policies that only further limit access. We have to stand up and fight for the preservation of the rights for all women by defeating this bill.

QUICK FACTS FROM ACLU

Who does H.R. 3 penalize? Bearing in mind the rationale underlying the tax code's treatment of medical expenses, as described above, a close examination of the Smith bill's tax provisions reveals that it serves to punish certain segments of the population.

Women: It should go without saying that the effects of the Smith bill will disproportionately fall on women, as women are the ones who are most likely to spend funds on abortion procedures. However, the Smith bill does not punish women exclusively. Many men purchase insurance policies that cover their spouses and dependents, and many use the funds considered in the Smith bill to pay expenses for abortion procedures for their spouses and dependents.

Low and middle-income people: The Smith bill would penalize low- and middle-income taxpayers. As described below, taxpayers who would be entitled to a subsidy for insurance purchased on an exchange would not be eligible for such a subsidy if the insurance plan offered on the exchange included coverage for abortion procedures. Thus, while wealthier taxpayers whose employers provide insurance premium subsidies would likely suffer no penalty to enroll in a plan that includes coverage for abortion procedures, taxpayers who must buy insurance on an exchange would lose a significant subsidy, and in all likelihood be effectively precluded from obtaining insurance with coverage for abortion procedures.

Small businesses: The Affordable Care Act provides for a tax credit for small businesses (businesses with 25 or fewer full-time employees) to encourage the provision of health insurance for their employees. The Smith bill's provisions would deny small businesses this tax credit if they were to offer insurance policies that covered abortion procedures. In all likelihood, this would have the effect of eliminating coverage for abortion for employees of small businesses.

Tax-Exempt Organizations: As described below, tax-exempt organizations are also eligible to receive the small business credit for the provision of health insurance (the credit is taken against employment tax payments). At a time when individuals are scaling back on charitable giving, small charities that would be eligible for the small business tax credit can use all the help they can get. The Smith bill would deny these organizations a crucial tax incentive, without which many of these charities would not likely be able to bear the cost of providing health insurance to their employees. Such a crucial incentive should not be dependent upon whether the organization provides insurance coverage that covers abortion procedures.

H.R. 3 rewrites long-standing tax laws and policies to impose a new penalty on millions of Americans (Section 303): H.R. 3 rewrites long-standing tax laws to penalize a single,

legal, medical procedure: abortion. It would end certain preferential tax treatment for medical expenses and insurance premiums where abortion is involved.

Specifically, under the bill: Individuals eligible for the health coverage tax credit or who receive benefits from the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation would not receive a credit on the premiums paid for insurance that covered abortion; small business employers who make a qualified nonelective contribution to purchase a health insurance plan that includes coverage for abortion would not receive a small business tax credit provided under the health care law; individuals could no longer claim the itemized deduction for unreimbursed medical expenses that exceed 7.5% of their adjusted gross income; individuals who make tax deductible contributions to a health savings account (HSA) would be required to include in income any amounts paid out of an HSA when those proceeds are used for expenses relating to an abortion; any individual who uses funds from a health Flexible Spending Arrangement (FSA) for an abortion would now be required to include those funds in their gross income for the taxable year; amounts distributed to an employee from a Health Reimbursement Arrangements (HRA) account for purposes of reimbursing the employee for funds spent for abortion would be included in the employee's taxable income;

IN HONOR OF MR. MICHAEL CATANZARITE

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Mr. Michael Catanzarite, a prominent businessman, community leader, and a proud father. Mr. Catanzarite is being honored as a 2011 Father of the Year nominee by the Father's Day Council of Northeastern Ohio and the American Diabetes Association.

Mike Catan is a successful businessman, born and raised in northeast Ohio. His father, Pat Catan, was an entrepreneur who began both the Darice craft products company and a chain of Pat Catan's craft stores. Mike has followed in his father's footsteps and serves as Co-Chief Executive Officer of Darice Inc.

Mr. Catan has also been an active community leader. In 2002, when he found out that Strongsville High School's athletic field had fallen into disrepair, he spearheaded efforts to raise money to build a brand new stadium. Pat Catan Stadium opened only 83 days after ground was broken, and the facility is a boon to the community. Mr. Catan has also been known for his volunteer work; in 2009, he led a team including family and friends in building a new home for a Strongsville family whose two young daughters had been diagnosed with a very rare genetic condition. Mike Catan, along with many other volunteers and donors, worked to create a home that would meet the life-long needs of the two young girls. These are only a few examples of Mr. Catan's commitment to improving the community.

Mr. Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in recognizing Mr. Michael Catan, whose children nominated him 2011 Father of the Year. His dedication to improving the community for his children and all citizens of northeast Ohio is awe-inspiring. I wish Mike Catan the best in all of his future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF CITY OF LAS VEGAS COUNCILMAN GARY REESE

HON. SHELLEY BERKLEY

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, today I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the achievements of the mayor Pro Tem of the City of Las Vegas, Nevada, Gary Reese.

Gary Reese was first elected to the Las Vegas City Council representing Ward 3 on June 6, 1995, and is currently serving his fourth term. Councilman Reese was appointed Mayor Pro Tem on November 16, 2000.

Councilman Reese has accomplished many things for the City of Las Vegas. From 1995–2011, Councilman Reese facilitated 19 community and recreational centers, 10 transportation projects, eight fire stations, eight expansion and beautification projects, the Fremont Street Experience, Neon Sign Museum, a water reclamation center, and a police area command station.

As the owner of the Plaza Barber Shop and former chairman of the Las Vegas Planning Commission, Gary Reese is a well-known figure in the Las Vegas community. Prior to establishing the Plaza Barber Shop, which has been in operation since 1963, Councilman Reese worked at the Nevada Test Site.

Councilman Reese currently serves as a vice chairman on the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department's Committee on Fiscal Affairs. He is also a member of the Las Vegas Centennial Board of Directors and Executive Committee and was recently appointed to the board of the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority. He has also served on the Southern Nevada Health District Board for more than 13 years.

In addition to his work on the Planning Commission, Councilman Reese has served on the City's Board of Zoning Adjustment, Southern Nevada Enterprise Consortium and the Real Estate and Recommending Committees. His concern for citizen interest is manifested through his past involvement with the City's Citizens Advisory Committee on Downtown Development and the Senior Citizens Advisory Board. Councilman Reese has also served as a member of the City's Liquor/Tavern License Committee and the Economic Opportunity Board of Clark County.

As the Representative for Nevada's First Congressional District, it gives me immense pride to recognize the accomplishments of Councilman Gary Reese.

IN HONOR AND REMEMBRANCE OF JOHN MICHAEL KICK

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and remembrance of Officer John Michael Kick, the first Cleveland police officer to lose his life in the line of duty.

Officer Kick was a lifelong Clevelander of German descent. He joined the Cleveland Police Department upon its formation in 1866. His colleagues described Officer Kick as a "quiet, faithful, brave and fearless officer."

On the night of May 13th, 1875, Officer Kick accompanied his fellow officers as they investigated a suspicious group who were thought to be behind several robberies that occurred in Cleveland. Officer Kick located the perpetrators and began to follow them, along with some fellow police officers and eventually tracked them down. The officers were outnumbered three to six, yet they continued on with their duties.

Officer Kick and his fellow colleagues confronted the suspects, inquiring about their names and occupations. After a loud shouting match, the group of criminals quickly drew their revolvers and began to open fire. The officers, including Officer Kick, drew their weapons and returned fire. During the crossfire, one round shot by the criminals struck Officer Kick in the chest and wounded him. Doctors attempted to save his life, to no avail. On May 15th, Officer Kick passed away. He left everything he owned to his mother, his wife and his three children.

Officer Kick will be remembered by the Cleveland community and the Nation. His name is inscribed on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Wall in Washington, DC.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in remembering the sacrifice that Officer John Kick made to ensure that Cleveland would remain a safe city.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to state that had I been present on June 13, 2011, for the vote series, I would have voted against the LaTourette and Sherman amendments and voted for the Amash amendment as well as the Veterans' Affairs Title. I was unable to be in Washington for the votes as I was attending the visitation service of a close family friend.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. STEVE CHARLES POPOVICH

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mr. Steve Popovich, a man of immense generosity, endless energy and a lifelong passion for music. This passion led him to play a vital role in launching the careers of The Jacksons, Michael Jackson, Santana, Bruce Springsteen, Mac Davis, Paul Simon, Engelbert Humperdinck, Tom Jones, Boston, Ted Nugent, Cheap Trick, Frankie Yankovic and Meat Loaf.

Mr. Popovich, who was born on July 6, 1942 in Nemacolin, Pennsylvania, moved to Cleveland, Ohio as a teenager. While he was considered a music-industry insider, he also continually reached beyond the mainstream to promote the music and musicians he knew

had great promise, even when others chose to ignore them. He founded his own label, Cleveland International Records, which promoted one of the industry's biggest selling albums, Bat Out of Hell by Meat Loaf. The album was released in 1977 and remains the fifth best selling album worldwide.

Mr. Popovich has been described by his colleagues and those who knew him best as "a man with a big heart," " a kind and generous man who was a mentor to so many," " a man who would literally give you the shirt off his back," " a man with a rare enthusiasm that made things happen" and a man whose passing "marks the end of an era."

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in recognition of Mr. Steve Popovich, a man who spent a lifetime giving of himself, leaving behind a legacy of music that will be enjoyed for years to come and many, many friends who will miss his energy and creative enthusiasm.

RECOGNIZING THE 2010 FAIRFAX COUNTY FEDERATION OF CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION AWARD RECIPIENTS

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the honorees of the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens' Association Awards Banquet.

The Fairfax County Federation of Citizens' Associations is a coalition of civic and homeowners associations from throughout Fairfax County. Through the Federation, individual communities can join with other associations to ensure that their voices are heard and that their communities stay strong. Each year, the Federation honors a select few individuals for extraordinary contributions to the community that have resulted in tangible improvements in our neighborhoods, schools, businesses and local government. This is the 61st Annual Awards Banquet, and this year's honorees have each dedicated years of service to the residents and communities of Fairfax County.

It is my pleasure to recognize the following individuals for their service to the community:

2010 Citizen of the Year: Mollie Morrison-Loeffler for her efforts in the revitalization of Parklawn and the surrounding communities in the Mason District.

2010 Citation of Merit: Dr. Charles Dane for his long history of public and community service, especially in the area of public education

2010 Special Gratitude Award: Anthony H. Griffin for his visionary leadership which has resulted in Fairfax County being named "one of the best managed jurisdictions in America"

2010 Special Gratitude Award: William D. Lecos for his innovative approach in the areas of public-private partnerships and promotion of economic competitiveness and sustainability

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking these individuals and in congratulating them on being honored by the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens' Associations. Civic engagement defines a community, and it is thanks to these individuals that Fairfax County residents enjoy such an excellent quality of life. The contributions and leadership of these honorees have been a great benefit to our community and truly merit our highest praise.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 2, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2055) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes:

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment to the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act that exempts various agencies from Section 526 of the Energy Independence and Security Act, a critical provision for our national security.

This exemption will derail the government's efforts to strengthen national security through greenhouse gas reduction. Furthermore, many senior defense leaders do not want such provisions. During recent testimony before Energy & Commerce, Navy Deputy Assistant Secretary Tom Hicks stated the Defense Department was comfortable with Section 526 and that the provision was an effective policy tool. Furthermore, it is important to note Section 526 actually supports the development of alternative domestic fuels; a point that many critics of this provision do not fully understand or articulate in their arguments against it.

Allowing this amendment to become law will ultimately endanger our national security. I hope my colleagues can work together to reach a compromise to strengthen this energy security provision as this bill moves through the legislative process.

RECOGNIZING THE 30 YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF SHELTER HOUSE AND THE RECIPIENTS OF THE 2011 SHELTER HOUSE, INC. VOLUNTEER AWARDS

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 30th Anniversary of Shelter House, Inc., (Shelter House) and to congratulate the recipients of the 2011 volunteer awards.

Shelter House is a community-based, nonprofit organization founded 1981 by several ecumenical groups, which came together to better serve low-income individuals and families. The mission of Shelter House is to break the cycle of homelessness for families and victims of domestic violence in Fairfax County by providing crisis intervention, temporary housing, and supportive services to promote self sufficiency.

Shelter House operates three shelters: The Katherine K. Hanley and the Patrick Henry family shelters, which provide temporary housing for families in our community who find themselves homeless, and Artemis House, which provides temporary housing for victims of domestic violence. Shelter House also offers transitional housing services and ongoing supportive services for those who have entered permanent housing.

Volunteers and community partners are the cornerstone of this organization. These relationships are critical assets to Shelter House and a leading cause for its successes. Each year, Shelter House honors those volunteers and partners who have demonstrated exceptional dedication and commitment to ending homelessness.

The following individuals are being recognized with 2011 Shelter House, Inc. Volunteer Awards:

Ending Homelessness Award: Nicole Larese of the Junior League of Northern Virginia,

Friend of Shelter House Kids Award: The Reading Connection,

Faith Community Award: Emmaus United Church of Christ,

Youth Volunteer Award: Jessica Woolson,

Unsung Hero Award: Erica Stewart,

Special Event Volunteer Award: Sarah Bock.

The following individuals and organizations are being recognized as 2011 Community Champions:

Annandale Christian Community for Action (ACCA); AKA Phi Nu Omega Chapter; Balfour Beatty Construction; Capital One; Fairfax County Board of Supervisors; Donna Fleming; Freddie Mac Foundation; Great Falls Women's Club; The Honorable Kate Hanley; Verdia Haywood; HomeAid NoVA; Junior League of Northern Virginia; Old Dominion Cotillion; Sidley Austin LLP; and, Versivo.

The outstanding efforts of the above-mentioned individuals and organizations merit special recognition, but one must acknowledge the impact of all Shelter House volunteers who work to provide secure and structured environments for families in need. These volunteers and community partners make Shelter House one of the most effective organizations in the battle to end homelessness by empowering families to reach their full potential.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Shelter House, Inc. for thirty years of service in the battle to end homelessness and also in expressing our sincere appreciation to all of the volunteers and community partners for their selfless dedication to this worthy cause.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I was not present during the rollcall vote No. 413–416, on June 13, 2011. On rollcall vote No. 413 I would have voted "yes"; on rollcall vote No. 414 I would have voted "no"; on rollcall vote No. 415 I would have voted "no"; on rollcall vote No. 416 I would have voted "yes."

PRINCE WILLIAM NAACP ''SALUTE TO VETERANS''

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Prince William County Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and its 2011 ''Salute to Veterans'' Freedom Fund Banquet. U.S. Army Major General (Retired) Robert C. Gaskill and U.S. Marine Corps Master Gunnery Sergeant (Retired) John W. Jones Jr. will receive special recognition at the banquet for their service to our nation.

The NAACP was established in 1909 to eliminate racial prejudice and remove barriers of racial discrimination that prevent equal opportunity for all members of society. The Prince William County Chapter seeks to implement outreach initiatives, educational programs and victim services that address issues of discrimination in the local community. The local chapter hosts an annual Freedom Fund Banquet to raise funds to support the chapter's activities. This year, the program will honor veterans of the United States armed forces.

It is my honor to join the Prince William County Chapter of the NAACP in giving special recognition to two veterans and residents of Prince William County, Major General Gaskill and Master Gunnery Sergeant Jones.

General Gaskill was born in Yonkers, N.Y., on April 12, 1931, to John and Armania Gaskill. The Gaskill family later moved to Arlington, Va. General Gaskill completed Reserve Officer Training as a Distinguished Military Graduate, and received a bachelor of science in business administration from Howard University in 1952. He was commissioned into one of the last all-black battalions in the United States Army. General Gaskill had a distinguished and decorated career in the Army before his retirement in 1981, to which he credits the support of his late wife Erotida Gaskill. General Gaskill is a Life Member of the NAACP, member of Unity in the Community, and an elder at his church.

Sergeant Jones was born in Memphis, Tenn., on September 3, 1930, to Mattie and John W. Jones, Sr. Sergeant Jones' mother passed away when he was nine, and he was raised by Laura Belle Jones, his father's second wife. In 1956, Sergeant Jones joined the United State Marine Corps. While in the Marine Corps, Sergeant Jones went to night school to complete his high school degree and enrolled in college courses. His service in the Corps included tours in the 1958 Lebanon Crisis and the Vietnam War. Sergeant Jones is married to the former Anne Tankins of Quantico. He is active in the NAACP and volunteers in his church, First Mount Zion Baptist Church, where he serves as Deacon Emeritus and sings in the choir.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing the Prince William County Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and its 2011 ''Salute to Veterans'' Freedom Fund Banquet. I extend my personal appreciation to Major General U.S.A (Retired) Robert C. Gaskill and Master Gunnery Sergeant U.S.M.C. (Retired) John W. Jones, Jr. for their service and sacrifice on behalf of our country.

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY FLYING TEAM

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the exceptional accomplishments of the Flying Salukis, the flying team at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois. Under the direction of Coach Nathan Lincoln, on May 21, 2011, the Flying Salukis won the 2011 National Intercollegiate Flying Association championship, concluding a weeklong competition at the Ohio State University Airport. The Flying Salukis edged out 26 teams from across the Nation to capture the championship title, which is the eighth in the history of Southern Illinois University's aviation program, and the first since 1985.

With 10 team members scoring a total of 414 points, the Flying Salukis won the title by nine points over the University of North Dakota, a two-time defending champion. The team placed in all 11 events, demonstrating a very well-rounded lineup in both flight and ground events at the competition. Michael Carroll, from Normal, Ill., and one of three team captains, gave a truly exceptional performance, scoring 121 points to become the top-scoring pilot in the Nation and finishing second for the national top pilot award.

In addition, the team won three individual titles. Taylor Bream, from Lake Villa, Ill., won the short-field approach and landing; Ryan Veldman, from Lexington, Ky., won the power-off landing event; and co-captain Daniel Harrington, from Monee, Ill., won the SCAN title. Other team members who scored in events were Scott Blair, from Bloomington, Ill.; David Brown, from Chicago, Ill.; Ryan Buttney, from Lemont, Ill.; Daniel McMahon, from Edina, Mo.; Joshua Mech, from Sheboygan, Wis.; and Samuel Oas, from Villa Park, Ill.

Additional members of the Flying Salukis for the 2011 spring semester include: Courtney Copping, from St. Charles, Ill.; Kyle Hayes, from Bourbonnais, Ill.; Justin Lopez, also from Bourbonnais; Michael Szemplinski, from Geneva, Ill.; and George ''Rusty'' Wharton, III, from Goodfield.

I also want to recognize the Flying Salukis' assistant coaches: senior lecturer Bryan Harrison, assistant instructors Jeffrey Jaynes, Kevin Krongos and Sabrina Zwego, and also Kim Carter, a senior lecturer and academic adviser. In addition to teaching as faculty members in the aviation flight program, these individuals dedicate a great deal of time after classes to assist Coach Lincoln and the team members, and we appreciate their hard work.

Mr. Speaker, Southern Illinois University has a proud tradition in teaching, research and public service, and it is also very well known for its nationally competitive athletic and extracurricular teams. The Flying Salukis have once again demonstrated exactly why this university's aviation program continually ranks as one of the best in the nation. I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Flying Salukis and their coaches, as well as the faculty and students at Southern Illinois University for their continuing commitment to excellence.

RECOGNIZING RECIPIENTS OF THE 2011 BEAT THE ODDS AWARDS

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the recipients of the 2011 Beat the Odds Awards. These awards are sponsored by the Prince William County Bar Foundation and are presented to extraordinary youth who have exhibited exceptional determination to overcome adversity and lead full, productive lives.

The narrative of these awards is truly compelling; to qualify for a Beat the Odds award, a youth must have come into contact with the juvenile justice system. Despite this potential obstacle, Beat the Odds Award recipients have overcome abuse, neglect or juvenile delinquency with an earnest effort to realize a successful future.

It is my great honor to commend the following individuals who have risen above substantial negative influences and are now being recognized as community success stories:

Recipients of the 2010 Beat the Odds Phoenix Award: Victoria Rose, Jacob Whitfield, Martha Vasquez-Quintanilla, Benjamin Dinarte, Eduardo Silva Ostos, Shahnewaz Bhuiyan, Mark Johnson, Jr., and Curtis Moore, Jr.

Recipients of the 2010 Beat the Odds Scholarship Award: Mariam Sankoh, Vanessa Monserrat Rodriguez, Tanya Donangmaye, Anthony Harris, Taylor Katherine Peevy, Indiana Sommer Anderson, Kelly Renee Teboe, Jennifer Salas, Maria Sisson, and Caleb Daniel Foster.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating these young people for the positive example they set for their peers. Our community sends a powerful message to our youth when we encourage them to triumph over setbacks and to gain strength from hardship. Beat the Odds scholarships totaling more than $100,000 from the Prince William Bar Foundation are a resounding endorsement of that message, and I thank the Foundation for its dedication and generosity to youth in our community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN SULLIVAN

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to state for the record that I intended to vote ''aye'' on rollcall vote 414 to H.R. 2055 taken on June 13, 2011. The CONGRESSIONAL RECORD currently lists me as a ''nay'' vote on this measure. I firmly support the prohibition on Davis-Bacon prevailing wage requirements for construction projects funded by the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act because this dated policy inflates the cost of construction and restricts competition that could save taxpayers billions.

COMMENDING THE HUNTERDON CENTRAL SOFTBALL TEAM ON THEIR CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON

HON. LEONARD LANCE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Hunterdon Central Regional High School's Softball Team on its outstanding victory this past weekend in the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association's Blue Ribbon Awards Group 4 Championship. Hunterdon Central had previously been given the state ranking of fourth by the Newark Star Ledger and earned this title after compiling an astounding 31–2 record for the season. Hunterdon Central had previously won the Group 4 championship in 1999. Hunterdon Central prides itself on fundamentals and execution and the team's skills and experience demonstrate a mastery of the sport. The hard work of the Lady Red Devils shows determination and teamwork.

I also congratulate Hunterdon Central coach Pete Fick who has now achieved a career record of 699–227–1.

I commend the entire team on its hard work and congratulate all of the players on their stellar season and well deserved championship.

I am also pleased to praise the team's accomplishments with my colleagues in the House of Representatives and with the American people.

RECOGNIZING THE PRINCE WILLIAM CLEAN COMMUNITY COUNCIL AND ITS 2010 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Prince William Clean Community Council (PWCCC) and its 2010 Volunteer of the Year, Walter Skaja. With the help of dedicated volunteers like Mr. Skaja, the Council works to eliminate litter and graffiti in our Prince William neighborhoods and commercial centers.

The idea of forming an organization in Prince William County aimed at addressing environmental issues was conceived in 1982 during a spring cleanup effort led by a group of concerned local citizens. These individuals, who later became the founding members of PWCCC, immediately recognized the importance of litter prevention education as a way to long-term environmental cleanliness. In 1986, the Prince William County Litter Control Council was born. The organization later came to be known as the Clean Community Council and became an affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, a nationwide non-profit that uses education and hands-on stewardship to advocate litter control, waste reduction, and community beautification.

The Council's litter prevention and graffiti abatement efforts have not gone unnoticed. The Council's accolades include a 1994 Governors Award for Volunteering Excellence. The Council was a 2000 Virginia Stewardship Award Winner in the Communication/Education Category and received the Prince William County 2001 Partners for the Potomac Environmental Patron Award, 2000 and 2002 Keep America Beautiful National Awards and a 2008 Keep America Beautiful President's Circle Recognition Award.

The Council's volunteers always have been essential to its success and the Volunteer of the Year Award is a way to recognize their invaluable support.

The 2010 recipient, Walter Skaja, has been a volunteer with PWCCC since 2009. He started working with PWCCC through its Adopt-A-Spot program, where volunteers adopt an area of Prince William County and agree to remove litter and debris throughout the year. Shortly after adopting two neighborhood parks, Walter also adopted Cedar Point Elementary School. In the past two years, Walter has not been alone in his work for a clean environment. He has had help from Cub Scout Pack 1384. Walter routinely has 100 or more scouts to help him with his beautification efforts. They have transformed Cedar Point Elementary School with landscaping improvements that have included mulching and planting trees, shrubs and flowers. In addition to his volunteer work with the Adopt-A-Spot and Adopt-A-School programs, Walter spent time during the major snow storms in 2009 and 2010 removing snow from fire hydrants and clearing snow at Cedar Point Elementary School. His tireless efforts helped students, parents, and staff make it to school safely.

Mr. Speaker, we create safer, cleaner neighborhoods when residents take ownership for their communities. The Clean Community Council asks Prince William residents to take pride in their county. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the successes of the Prince William Clean Community Council as well as in congratulating Walter Skaja on being named the recipient of the 2010 Prince William Clean Community Council Volunteer of the Year Award.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF DR. NANCY GRASMICK, SUPERINTENDENT OF MARYLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HON. JOHN P. SARBANES

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Dr. Nancy Grasmick for her years of outstanding service to the people of Maryland, including her twenty year leadership role as Superintendent of Maryland public schools, the longest serving appointed school chief in the United States. Dr. Grasmick began her career as a teacher of deaf children at William S. Baer School in Baltimore City. In her years as an educator in Maryland public schools, Dr. Grasmick has served as a resource teacher, principal, supervisor, assistant superintendent, and associate superintendent in Baltimore County. In 1989, Dr. Grasmick was appointed by Governor William Donald Schaefer to act as the Special Secretary for Children, Youth, and Families and in 1991, the Maryland State Board of Education appointed her to be the first female Maryland State Superintendent of Schools. All of these achievements are the culmination of many years of hard work, strong dedication, and commitment to the people of Maryland. This commitment has been recognized many times over through many awards, including her induction into the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame in 2004.

Dr. Nancy Grasmick has been known for her emphasis on student achievement, teacher quality, parental involvement, and early childhood education. Under her leadership, Maryland has been recognized for its achievements in education, having been named as "the most consistently high performing state" by Education Week. Dr. Grasmick has made an enormous impact on Maryland public schools and has changed the lives of countless families in the State of Maryland and beyond.

I was my special privilege to work with Dr. Grasmick for seven years as liaison to the Baltimore City Public Schools. I saw firsthand the amazing work of a leader motivated by compassion and a burning determination to give every child the chance to succeed. Dr. Grasmick's commitment to excellence is unrivaled. She is relentless in demanding the very best of those around her, while always offering the kind word and gesture. In that way and so many others, she is a natural born leader. I could not have had a better mentor or friend. My congratulations to Dr. Grasmick on a brilliant career. We look forward to her continued contributions to the State of Maryland and to our nation.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 2, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2055) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes:

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chair, I want to thank Chairman CULBERSON and Ranking Member BISHOP for agreeing to offer my amendment en bloc to H.R. 2055—Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. My amendment simply removes funding from the VA Medical Support and Compliance Account and replaces it back in the very same account. My intent in doing this is to highlight an issue for my colleagues and for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

I believe that the VA needs to comprehensively examine its wait times for processing requests for mental health services from veterans and that the VA should submit a report to Congress no later than January 1 of 2012 on changes they intend to make to ensure that veterans needing mental health services receive those services in a timely and efficacious manner.

Veterans in my district often wait years for a resolution of their cases with the VA. My office works closely with veterans, assisting

many of them in expediting their requests for the benefits to which they are entitled, including mental health benefits. Unfortunately, many of these veterans still wait years for a resolution of their cases. This is simply unacceptable. These men and women have sacrificed their health, well-being, and, in some cases, their livelihoods, for this country.

The excessively long wait times at the VA are unjust and un-American. The wait times for veterans who are suicidal or suffering from mental health illnesses, including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), are especially troubling.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support timely mental health services for our veterans by voting ''yes'' on this amendment.

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF CITY OF LAS VEGAS MAYOR OSCAR GOODMAN

HON. SHELLEY BERKLEY

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, today I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the achievements of the Mayor of the City of Las Vegas, Nevada, Oscar Goodman.

Mayor Goodman has worked tirelessly for the City of Las Vegas. From 1999 to 2011, the Mayor facilitated 19 community and recreational centers, eight transportation projects, eight fire stations, seven expansion and beautification projects, a water reclamation center, and a police area command station.

Mayor Goodman has been responsible for many great accomplishments in the heart of downtown. As Mayor, he was successful in acquiring a large piece of urban real estate in the City without resorting to eminent domain. Symphony Park will include the Lou Ruvo Brain Institute, Performing Arts Center, business, medical, and retail opportunities.

Mayor Goodman also managed to acquire a historic downtown post office from the General Services Administration. The building is being converted to a state-of-the-art museum capturing the excitement and notoriety of the history of Las Vegas. Also in the center of Las Vegas, an intellectual marketplace is being designed and will be home to the University of Nevada Las Vegas' (UNLV) School of Architecture, UNLV Modern Letters Program, and the Nevada School of the Arts.

Mayor Goodman serves as the Chairman of the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority and works non-stop to raise support for cultural programs and charities of Las Vegas.

Oscar Goodman first ran for Mayor of Las Vegas in 1999. By his third reelection bid in April 2007, Mayor Goodman captured 84 percent of the vote.

As the Congresswoman for the people of Las Vegas, it gives me great pleasure to recognize the achievements of the self-proclaimed ''Happiest Mayor in the Universe,'' Mayor Oscar Goodman.

COMMENDING THE GRADUATES OF ROBINSON SECONDARY SCHOOL ON THEIR ENLISTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize nine graduating seniors in my community for their record of academic and athletic accomplishment and their admirable decision to enlist in the United States Armed Forces.

With graduation season upon us, thousands of young people in my community, and millions across the nation, are preparing for the next chapter in their lives. Some will pursue higher education or vocational training, others will seek to enter the workforce immediately, and many will answer the call to serve their community and their country.

I join with their families and friends in congratulating and commending the following Robinson Secondary School graduates on their enlistment:

United States Marines: Philipp Zinser, Daniel Kellam, Sam Lausier, Ji Jong Lee, Won Gyu Lee and Junsuk Choi

United States Navy: David Maeng

United States Air Force: Jade Vitali and Kevin Haas

At a time of great uncertainty both at home and abroad, these young people have stepped forward to follow in a long line of distinguished Virginians who selflessly volunteered to defend our nation and its ideals. In fact, these graduates hail from a school named for Sgt. James W. Robinson Jr., who was the first Virginian to receive the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry and heroism during the Vietnam War. Sgt. Robinson's accomplishments continue to serve as a model for character and leadership not only for the students at the school bearing his name, but also for all those who seek to follow in his footsteps.

The Northern Virginia Chapter of Our Community Salutes will host a ceremony Thursday, June 9, to recognize these young people and their families and to wish them safety and success as they pursue a career in the Armed Forces.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding the courage and dedication of these graduates and in assuring them and their families that the full support and resources of the U.S. Congress and the American people will be behind them every step of their journey in defense our nation's freedom.

INTRODUCTION OF THE REGULATORY BALANCE ACT

HON. STEPHEN LEE FINCHER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. FINCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss an issue of great importance to family farmers and agricultural businesses. The regulatory burdens placed on family farmers and the agriculture business hinder job creation, job retention, and innovative breakthroughs in technology and crop production. Family farmers across the country lead the world in the production of a safe, secure food supply and provide a multi-billion dollar economic impact. In order for family farmers and the agriculture community to continue to prosper, the regulatory process must follow common sense and not be unduly burdensome.

That is why I am pleased to introduce the Regulatory Balance Act, which codifies into federal statute the cost benefit analysis required by Executive Order 12866. Simply put, any regulation with a significant economic impact of $100 million or more proposed by the United States Department of Agriculture, USDA, the Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, and the Food and Drug Administration, FDA, must perform a cost-benefit analysis and report the same to Congress before the regulation takes effect A cost-benefit analysis would determine whether a proposed regulation would have a negative economic impact on our Nation's economy.

As a farmer, I understand the costs associated with many of the regulations placed upon the agriculture community. By guaranteeing a more transparent, efficient regulatory process that works for family farmers instead of against them, the rural areas of my district and this country will thrive. Family farmers and the agriculture community will continue to be the best in the world as long as federal agriculture regulations are evenly balanced between cost and benefit.

Creating a stable regulatory environment, where balance between the cost to family farmers and the agriculture community is balanced with the benefit of the regulation, allows family farms and the agriculture community to invest and grow their business without added costs due to regulations that fly in the face of common sense.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues in the House (and Senate) to support me in passing the Regulatory Balance Act and bring stability and balance to the regulatory process.

THE STATE OF TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES H.R. NO. 1955

HON. K. MICHAEL CONAWAY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following:

H.R. NO. 1955

RESOLUTION

Whereas, The United States Fish and Wildlife Service has proposed granting endangered species status to the dunes sagebrush lizard, a measure that would have a significant negative impact on the Lone Star State; and

Whereas, The business climate in Texas has been consistently ranked as the nation's best, and the oil and gas sector is crucial to its continued vitality; Texas is the nation's leading producer of oil and natural gas, and it holds 30 percent of the nation's natural gas reserves and almost a quarter of its oil reserves; the oil and gas industry contributes $30 billion annually to the Texas economy and employs more than 315,000 Texans at some of the highest salaries in the state; and

Whereas, Despite its resilience, the Texas economy has not been immune to the global economic recession; there have been significant job losses over the past two years, and

recently high gas prices have posed new challenges; the Fish and Wildlife Service failed to take these factors into account in its proposal to grant endangered species status to the dunes sagebrush lizard in southeastern New Mexico and adjacent oil-producing areas of West Texas; and

Whereas, In addition, the service has failed to consider that approximately 75,000 acres identified as habitat for the lizard are owned and managed by The University of Texas for the benefit of higher education; university officials have estimated that the listing could stop the drilling of approximately 1,000 oil and gas wells and eliminate the production of seven million barrels of oil equivalent annually; and

Whereas, The Texas Legislature and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department have traditionally recognized the private landowner as the primary steward of our state's natural resources, but the Fish and Wildlife Service has not adequately consulted with the State of Texas, Texas landowners, or other stakeholders; moreover, the service has failed to fully consider issues unique to species protection and habitat conservation in Texas; and

Whereas, Listing the dunes sagebrush lizard as an endangered species would inflict severe economic damage, harm property owners, and undermine higher education in the Lone Star State; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the house of representatives of the 82nd Texas Legislature hereby respectfully urge the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to withdraw its proposal to list the dunes sagebrush lizard under the Endangered Species Act of 1973; and, be it further

Resolved, That the house of representatives direct the agencies of the State of Texas to cooperate with the efforts of the Texas Endangered Species Task Force to investigate the scientific basis of the proposed listing and the potential burdens on private property rights and economic development in the state; and, be it further

Resolved, That the chief clerk of the Texas House of Representatives forward official copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, the acting director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States Congress, and all the members of the Texas delegation to Congress with the request that this resolution be entered in the Congressional Record as a memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.

JOE STRAUS,
Speaker of the House.

I certify that H.R. No. 1955 was adopted by the House on May 25, 2011, by a non-record vote.

ROBERT HANEY,
Chief Clerk of the House.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM T. NOONAN

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a public servant who has dedicated most of his career to making my hometown a better place. William T. Noonan, known to his friends as Bill, has served for the last 21 years as the Administrator of Sumter County, South Carolina. That 21-year tenure has earned him the distinction of being the longest serving Administrator in Sumter County's history.

A native of Silver Spring, Maryland, Bill received his bachelor's degree from Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina in 1963 and a master's degree from Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina, in 1970.

Following a 15-year career in education, serving as a teacher, coach and administrator, Bill joined the management team at Campbell Soup Company, Sumter Plant, as its Human Resources Director in 1978. He held that position until 1985, when he was promoted to Regional Risk Manager, Southern Division (six plants in GA, SC, NC, and MD). Following a 12-year career and the restructuring of Campbell's Poultry Division, he accepted the position of Chief Administrative Officer for Sumter County rather than relocating his family to Campbell's headquarters in Camden, New Jersey.

Bill's involvement in community organizations has included the Greater Sumter Chamber of Commerce, the United Way of Sumter, Clarendon and Lee Counties (Board of Directors/Past President), the Governor's Initiative for Work Force Excellence, Leadership South Carolina, Leadership Sumter, and the South Carolina Executive Leadership Program. He served as a member of the Sumter School District Seventeen Board of Trustees from 1984 to 1990. Throughout his career, Bill has been selected by his peers to numerous positions of distinction and honor. Currently, he serves as Secretary for the Board of Directors for the South Carolina Association of Counties, and is a Trustee of the South Carolina Association of Counties Workers' Compensation and Liability Trust Funds. Bill is a past President of the South Carolina Association of Counties Managers, Administrators, and Supervisors Association.

Bill is married to the former Sandy Andrews of Sumter. Together they have four children and five grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in applauding the wonderful work of Bill Noonan. He has been a leader in Sumter County for his entire career and is a vital part of this vibrant community. I wish him well in his future endeavors and thank him for his dedication to Sumter County.

CONGRATULATING ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY'S WOMEN'S SOFTBALL TEAM, WINNER OF THE NCAA 2011 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. ED PASTOR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. PASTOR of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Arizona State University's (ASU) women's softball team in winning the NCAA 2011 championship title. The Sun Devils swept the University of Florida Gators on June 7, 2011 in a best-of-three series, winning the final game by a score of 7–2. This accomplishment marks the Sun Devil's second national championship in four seasons, placing them among an elite group of just four teams who have won multiple NCAA titles in softball, with ASU also winning the title in 2008.

The team's success is undoubtedly attributed to the extraordinary leadership of Head Coach Clint Myers, the hard work and dedication of the players, and the efforts of supporting staff and loyal fans alike. Especially impressive was the stellar performance of freshman Dallas Escobedo and senior Kaylyn Castillo. Their teamwork and close collaboration was integral in leading ASU to victory. Escobedo won her 19th consecutive decision while becoming the first freshman pitcher to be credited with a national championship since 1990. Castillo's strong defensive stance as catcher, her ability to guide and mentor Escobedo, and her impressive .429 average also greatly contributed to the team's championship win.

Additionally notable, in seven seasons of the best-of-three championship series format, no winning team has compiled a larger cumulative margin of victory than ASU's 15 runs, and in this past season alone, the Sun Devils won 23 of 24 games and recorded a perfect 10-game winning streak in the tournament.

I want to congratulate Head Coach Clint Myers, Assistant Coach Chuck D'Arcy, Associate Head Coach Robert Wagner, and all the players on the championship team: Nikole Afusia, Lucy Aubrecht, Hillary Bach, Katelyn Boyd, Kaylyn Castillo, Krista Donnenwirth, Jessica Donovan, Lindsey Edgerton, Dallas Escobedo, Lacy Goodman, Talor Haro, Alix Johnson, Breanna Kaye, Kayla Ketchum, Annie Lockwood, Dani Rae Lougheed, Michelle Nulliner, Sam Parlich, Mackenzie Popescue, Sarah Rice, Lesley Rogers, Mary Spiel, Mandy Urfer, Bailey Wigness, and Christina Zambrana.

In considering all of these achievements, I ask that you join me in recognizing Arizona State University's softball team in winning the NCAA 2011 championship title.

THE ANNIVERSARY OF FLAG DAY AND THE FOUNDING OF HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heartfelt sense of patriotism that I rise to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Flag Day, as well as the 375th anniversary of Hartford, Connecticut.

The concept of "Flag Day" actually originated in Hartford. Just before the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, Hartford resident George Morris imagined Flag Day as an opportunity to promote the idea of a strong union in the face of a looming conflict. Later that year the Hartford Daily Courant newspaper endorsed Morris' idea, and in 1862 the General Assembly in Hartford made Connecticut the first State to recognize June 14th as Flag Day.

The great city of Hartford was founded 375 years ago by Reverend Thomas Hooker and has played an instrumental role in our Nation's history throughout the years. Whether it was laying the foundation for the United States Constitution or being the home to distinguished citizens such as Mark Twain, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Sam Colt, Hartford's history has forever been interwoven with that of our great country.

Given that the City of Hartford has played such a historic role in shaping the United

States, it is no surprise that the idea of Flag Day originated there.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. MAZIE K. HIRONO

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 2, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2055) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes:

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of H.R. 2055, the Military Construction-Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2012. This bipartisan bill passed the Appropriations Committee by unanimous voice vote, and I urge my colleagues to support it on the House floor today.

To support those who have put their lives on the line for our country, this bill provides disability payments, pensions, survivors' benefits, and education benefits under the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill.

The ward in Iraq and Afghanistan have taken a major toll on our brave men and women in uniform. We must take care of our veterans' mental and physical health needs as they return home and transition to civilian life.

Today's bill provides $129.7 billion for the Veterans Affairs Department for Fiscal Year 2012. The Veterans Health Administration serves over 4 million patients. Continuing the practice the Democratic Congress started in 2009, the bill provides advance appropriations for VA medical accounts for both the next and the following fiscal years. Our veterans deserve the certainty of knowing there will be enough funds, in advance, for the care they have earned and deserve.

Of the more than 50,000 veterans in my district—rural Oahu and the Neighbor Islands—many live in rural areas. The veterans I have met with cite difficulty in getting to medical care in Honolulu from the Neighbor Islands, as well as not enough services on their own islands. Today's bill includes $250 million for innovations to improve health care assess for rural veterans. These include providing VA outpatient care through community-based outpatient clinics and completing a feasibility study on mobile health services, home-based care, and telemedicine.

Today's bill also provides $11.5 billion for military construction, a 4 percent increase over current levels. Hawaii has many military bases, and this bill will support the construction of housing and other facilities on our bases, sending a positive ripple effect throughout Hawaii's economy.

Today I am voting for the LaTourette amendment on Project Labor Agreements. This amendment would restore President Obama's executive order encouraging Federal agencies to consider requiring Project Labor Agreements for construction contracts. Project Labor Agreements are short-term agreements for the length of a project that can reduce projects' costs and duration. Project Labor Agreements strengthen project quality by helping the Federal Government specify the project requirements in advance. This is the third time this year that this Congress has tried to undermine Project Labor Agreements. Fortunately, amendments to preserve Project Labor Agreements passed the last two times; I hope the LaTourette amendment will also pass.

I am opposing the Amash amendment that would try yet again to eliminate Davis-Bacon prevailing wage protections. This is yet another attack on working families. The Davis-Bacon Act prevents contractors from driving down wages and benefits in an area. Amendments to eliminate Davis-Bacon protections have failed again and again this year, and I hope the Amash amendment will meet the same fate.

Overall, the underlying bill supports our veterans and military construction in Hawaii, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

OMARSKA

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, some of us in this chamber today were here 20 years ago when the conflicts associated with Yugoslavia's demise began, and we heard the reports of horrible atrocities as they were taking place. I followed the situation closely as a member of the Helsinki Commission, which I chair today. The names of many of the villages, towns and even cities mentioned were new to our ears then, but they have since been etched into our minds and hearts by the savage acts that were committed in or near them.

One such place is Omarska, in northwestern Bosnia near Prijedor. We first heard of it in the summer of 1992. That is when Roy Gutman, a foreign correspondent working for Newsday, reported on the existence, at a mining complex, of a camp run by Bosnian Serb militants that held several thousand non-Serb prisoners, primarily Bosniaks but also Croats. Based on the later reports of the detainees who survived their ordeal at Omarska, Gutman called it a "death camp" and reported on the appalling conditions and the rape, torture and execution of detainees there as well as at other camps in the vicinity. International reporting, especially by British journalists Ed Vulliamy, Penny Marshall and Ian Williams, exposed the horrors of Omarska and ultimately forced the camp to close.

Before Omarska, Mr. Speaker, many commentators on the Balkan conflicts which began in Slovenia and Croatia before moving to Bosnia tried to explain away an unpleasant but allegedly unavoidable and manageable reality.

After Omarska, it became clear to many people that, in Bosnia, we were dealing with evil on such a scale that can neither be explained away nor ignored. Eventually, the internationally community organized an international tribunal to prosecute war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide in the former Yugoslavia. The tribunal convicted several of the camp guards, commandants and associated others for crimes committed at Omarska.

In late May, Omarska survivors and families of victims were able to gather at the site of the camp, both to remember and to remind. They were joined by senior Bosnian officials, representatives of the international community including the US Embassy, and supportive nongovernmental organizations from Serbia. The survivors, however, want an appropriate memorial that would protect the site and to which there could be public access not just for one day, but regularly throughout the year. As those gathered in Omarska themselves declared, "we deem that the sufferings of civilians in Omarska concentration camp, as well as in other concentration camps formed during the wars in the Nineties, must be honorably commemorated so as to become part of public memory, on the path towards establishment of the co-habitation in the areas of the former Yugoslavia."

The horrors that took place at Omarska and their lasting impact on Bosnian society certainly warrant such a memorial. It would provides some closure to victims, and it would counter those who are still unwilling to acknowledge the horrific crimes that, in undeniable fact, were committed there in 1992. It would also serve as a lasting reminder to us all. If atrocites on the scale of those at the Omarska camp are not appropriately remembered, they are more likely to be repeated, in some other distant town or village presently unknown to us. That is why we have these memorials: in the hope we will never forget nor ever allow such crimes to be repeated.

As the Chairman of the Bosnian Caucus, I encourage the present owners of the mining complex to permit and support the establishment of a permanent memorial at Omarska. I bring this issue to the attention of my colleagues in the hope they can join me in this call.

CORRECTION

Daily Digest

Highlights

The House passed H.R. 2055, Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2012.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S3741–S3786

Measures Introduced: Nine bills and one resolution were introduced, as follows: S. 1188–1196, and S.J. Res. 19. **Page S3773**

Measures Considered:

Economic Development Revitalization Act: Senate resumed consideration of S. 782, to amend the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 to reauthorize that Act, taking action on the following amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S3752–54**

Pending:

DeMint Amendment No. 394, to repeal the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. **Page S3752**

Paul Amendment No. 414, to implement the President's request to increase the statutory limit on the public debt. **Page S3752**

Cardin Amendment No. 407, to require the FHA to equitably treat homebuyers who have repaid in full their FHA-insured mortgages. **Page S3752**

Merkley/Snowe Amendment No. 428, to establish clear regulatory standards for mortgage servicers. **Page S3752**

Kohl Amendment No. 389, to amend the Sherman Act to make oil-producing and exporting cartels illegal. **Page S3752**

Hutchison Amendment No. 423, to delay the implementation of the health reform law in the United States until there is final resolution in pending lawsuits. **Page S3752**

Portman Amendment No. 417, to provide for the inclusion of independent regulatory agencies in the application of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.). **Page S3752**

Portman Amendment No. 418, to amend the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.) to strengthen the economic impact analyses for major rules, require agencies to analyze the effect of major rules on jobs, and require adoption of the least burdensome regulatory means. **Page S3752**

McCain Amendment No. 411, to prohibit the use of Federal funds to construct ethanol blender pumps or ethanol storage facilities. **Page S3752**

McCain Amendment No. 412, to repeal the wage rate requirements commonly known as the Davis-Beacon Act. **Page S3752**

Merkley Amendment No. 440, to require the Secretary of Energy to establish an Energy Efficiency Loan Program under which the Secretary shall make funds available to States to support financial assistance provided by qualified financing entities for making qualified energy efficiency or renewable efficiency improvements. **Page S3752**

Coburn Modified Amendment No. 436, to repeal the Volumetric Ethanol Excise Tax Credit. **Page S3752**

Brown (MA)/Snowe Amendment No. 405, to repeal the imposition of withholding on certain payments made to vendors by government entities. **Page S3752**

Inhofe Amendment No. 430, to reduce amounts authorized to be appropriated. **Page S3752**

Inhofe Amendment No. 438, to provide for the establishment of a committee to assess the effects of certain Federal regulatory mandates. **Page S3752**

Merkley Amendment No. 427, to make a technical correction to the HUBZone designation process. **Page S3752**

McCain Amendment No. 441 (to Coburn Modified Amendment No. 436), to prohibit the use of Federal funds to construct ethanol blender pumps or ethanol storage facilities. **Page S3752**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

By 40 yeas to 59 nays (Vote No. 89), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, not having voted in the affirmative, Senate rejected the motion to close further debate on the Coburn Modified

Amendment No. 436, to repeal the Volumetric Ethanol Excise Tax Credit. **Page S3754**

Message from the President: Senate received the following message from the President of the United States:

Transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the continuation of the national emergency that was originally declared in Executive Order 13405 of June 16, 2006, with respect to Belarus; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. (PM–10) **Pages S3770–71**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

By a unanimous vote of 98 yeas (Vote No. EX. 88), Claire C. Cecchi, of New Jersey, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey. **Pages S3749–52**

Esther Salas, of New Jersey, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey. **Pages S3749–52**

Executive Communications: **Page S3771**

Petitions and Memorials: **Pages S3771–73**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Page S3773**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page S3773**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S3773–84**

Additional Statements: **Page S3770**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S3784–85**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Pages S3785–86**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S3786**

Record Votes: Two record votes were taken today. (Total—89) **Pages S3752, S3754**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 6:58 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, June 15, 2011. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S3786.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

AUTHORIZATION: DEFENSE

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Airland met in closed session and approved for full committee consideration, those provisions which fall within the jurisdiction of the subcommittee, of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2012.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Armed Services: Committee ordered favorably reported the nomination of Leon E. Panetta, of California, to be Secretary of Defense.

AUTHORIZATION: DEFENSE

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Strategic Forces met in closed session and approved for full committee consideration, those provisions which fall within the jurisdiction of the subcommittee, of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2012.

AUTHORIZATION: DEFENSE

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on SeaPower met in closed session and approved for full committee consideration, those provisions which fall within the jurisdiction of the subcommittee, of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2012.

AUTHORIZATION: DEFENSE

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support met and approved for full committee consideration, those provisions which fall within the jurisdiction of the subcommittee, of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2012.

AUTHORIZATION: DEFENSE

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Personnel met in closed session and approved for full committee consideration, those provisions which fall within the jurisdiction of the subcommittee, of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2012.

NOMINATIONS

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nominations of Luis A. Aguilar, of Georgia, and Daniel M. Gallagher, Jr., of Maryland, both to be a Member of the Securities and Exchange Commission, and Anthony Frank D'Agostino, of Maryland, and Gregory Karawan, of Virginia, both to be a Director of the Securities Investor Protection Corporation, after the nominees testified and answered questions in their own behalf.

RAIL SECURITY

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee concluded a hearing to examine emerging threats to rail security, focusing on comprehensive risk assessments for transportation, technology to enhance security, and rail security training, after

receiving testimony from John S. Pistole, Administrator, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security; Steve Lord, Director, Homeland Security and Justice Issues, Government Accountability Office; and John O'Connor, National Railroad Passenger Corporation Amtrak Police Department, Washington, DC.

WILDFIRE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee concluded a hearing to examine wildfire management programs of the Federal land management agencies, after receiving testimony from Senator Kyl; Thomas Tidwell, Chief, Forest Service, Department of Agriculture; and Kim Thorsen, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Law Enforcement, Security, and Emergency Management.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee held closed hearings on intelligence matters, receiving testimony from officials of the intelligence community.

Committee recessed subject to the call.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 23 public bills, H.R. 2159–2181; and 3 resolutions, H. Res. 303–305 were introduced. **Pages H4185–86**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H4187–88**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

Report on the Revised Suballocation of Budget Allocations for Fiscal Year 2012 (Rept. 112–104);

H.R. 1934, to improve certain administrative operations of the Library of Congress, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 112–105); and

H.R. 1891, to repeal ineffective or unnecessary education programs in order to restore the focus of Federal programs on quality elementary and secondary education programs for disadvantaged students, with an amendment (H. Rept. 112–106). **Page H4185**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Webster to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H4079**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:30 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H4083**

Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the guest chaplain, Reverend Dr. Mark Smith, Ohio Christian University, Circleville, OH. **Page H4093**

Mexico-United States Interparliamentary Group—Appointment: The Chair announced the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the Mexico-United States Interparliamentary Group: Representatives Mack, Nunes, Bilbray, and Canseco. **Page H4096**

Reception in the House Chamber of Former Members of Congress: Agreed by unanimous consent that the proceedings had during the former Members program held earlier in the day be printed in the Congressional Record and that all Members and former Members who spoke during the program have the privilege of revising and extending their remarks. **Pages H4083–93**

Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2012: The House passed H.R. 2055, making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, by a yea-and-nay vote of 411 yeas to 5 nays, Roll No. 418. Consideration of the measure began on Thursday, June 2nd. **Pages H4104–07**

Rejected the Owens motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Appropriations with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with an amendment, by a yea-and-nay vote of 184 yeas to 234 nays, Roll No. 417. **Pages H4104–06**

H. Res. 288, the rule providing for consideration of the bill, was agreed to on June 2nd.

Committee Elections: The House agreed to H. Res. 303, electing Members to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives. **Page H4108**

Committee Resignation: Read a letter from Representative Reed, wherein he resigned from the Committee on Rules, effective immediately. **Page H4108**

Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2012: The House began consideration of H.R. 2112, making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012. Consideration is expected to resume tomorrow, June 15th. **Pages H4096–H4104, H4107–83**

Agreed to:

DeLauro amendment that redirects $136,070,000 in funding with respect to the Office of the Secretary of Agriculture; **Pages H4152–64**

Fortenberry amendment that increases funding, by offset, for the Rural Energy for America Program by $1 million; **Pages H4166–68**

Clarke (MI) amendment that increases funding, by offset, for the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program by $5 million; **Pages H4170–71**

Young (IN) amendment that decreases funding for Departmental Administration by $2,390,000 and applies the savings to the spending reduction account; and **Page H4171**

Nugent amendment that increases funding, by offset, for the Agricultural Research Service by $2 million. **Page H4175**

Point of order sustained against:

Jackson Lee amendment that sought to increase funding, by offset, for the Office of the Secretary of Agriculture by $25 million and **Pages H4165–66**

Jackson Lee amendment that sought to increase funding, by offset, for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children by $681,750,000. **Pages H4175–79**

Proceedings Postponed:

DeLauro amendment that seeks to increase funding, by offset, for the Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition by $1 million; **Pages H4164–65**

Sessions amendment that seeks to strike the proviso on page 3, beginning on line 22, relating to FAIR Act or Circular A–76 activities; **Pages H4168–69**

Farr amendment that seeks to increase funding, by offset, for the Agricultural Marketing Service by $300,000; **Page H4169**

Broun (GA) amendment (No. 8 printed in the Congressional Record of June 13, 2011) that seeks to reduce funding for Agricultural Buildings and Facilities and Rental Payments by $20,900,000 and apply the savings to the spending reduction account; **Pages H4169–70**

Chaffetz amendment that seeks to reduce funding for the Economic Research Service by $43 million; reduce funding for the National Agricultural Statistics Service by $85 million; reduce funding for the Agricultural Research Service by $650 million; reduce funding for Food for Peace Title II Grants by $1,040,198,000 and to apply $1,818,198,000 to the spending reduction account; **Pages H4171–74**

Broun (GA) amendment (No. 4 printed in the Congressional Record of June 13, 2011) that seeks to reduce funding for the Economic Research Service by $7 million and apply the savings to the spending reduction account; **Pages H4174–75**

Clarke (MI) amendment that seeks to increase funding, by offset, for the Agricultural Marketing Service by $1 million; **Pages H4179–80**

Broun (GA) amendment (No. 9 printed in the Congressional Record of June 13, 2011) that seeks to reduce funding for the Agricultural Marketing Service by $7,750,000 and apply the savings to the spending reduction account; and **Pages H4180–81**

Richardson amendment that seeks to increase funding, by offset, for the Commodity Assistance Program by $10 million. **Pages H4181–83**

H. Res. 300, the rule providing for consideration of the bill, was agreed to by a yea-and-nay vote of 235 yeas to 180 nays, Roll No. 419, after the previous question was ordered without objection. **Page H4107**

Presidential Message: Read a message from the President wherein he notified Congress that the national emergency and related measures blocking the property of certain persons undermining democratic processes or institutions in Belarus are to continue in effect beyond June 16, 2011—referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered printed (H. Doc. 112–35). **Page H4096**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appears on page H4096.

Amendments: Amendments ordered printed pursuant to the rule appear on page H4188.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H4106, H4106–07, H4107. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 11:39 p.m.

Committee Meetings

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Appropriations: Full Committee held a markup on the Report on the Revised Suballocation of Budget Allocations for Fiscal Year 2012; and the Defense Appropriations Bill, FY 2012. A bill making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes was ordered reported, as amended.

RETIREMENT SECURITY

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions held a hearing entitled "Retirement Security: Challenges Confronting Pension Plan Sponsors, Workers, and Retirees." Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

YUCCA MOUNTAIN REPOSITORY LICENSE APPLICATION

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy held a hearing entitled ''The NRC Inspector General Report on the 'NRC Chairman's Unilateral Decision to Terminate NRC's Review of the DOE Yucca Mountain Repository License Application.' '' Testimony was heard from Hubert T. Bell, Inspector General, Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

DOES THE DODD FRANK ACT END ''TOO BIG TO FAIL''?

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit held a hearing entitled ''Does the Dodd Frank Act End 'Too Big to Fail'?'' Testimony was heard from Michael H. Krimminger, General Counsel, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation; Christy Romero, Acting Special Inspector General, Office of the Special Inspector General, Troubled Asset Relief Program; and public witnesses.

ROLE OF THE U.S. IN THE WORLD BANK AND MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT BANKS

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on International Monetary Policy and Trade held a hearing entitled ''The Role of the U.S. in the World Bank and Multilateral Development Banks: Bank Oversight and Requested Capital Increases.'' Testimony was heard from Lael Brainard, Under Secretary for International Affairs, Department of the Treasury.

HOLDING HONDURAS HOSTAGE

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere held a hearing on Holding Honduras Hostage: Revoked Visas and U.S. Policy. Testimony was heard from Roberto Micheletti Baín, former President of Honduras, (via video conference); and Cresencio S. Arcos, Jr., Senior Political Advisor, National Defense University's Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies, former U.S. Ambassador to Honduras.

COAST GUARD POST 9/11 HOMELAND SECURITY MISSIONS

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security held a hearing entitled ''Securing the Nation's Ports and Maritime Border—A Review of the Coast Guard Post 9/11 Homeland Security Missions.'' Testimony was heard from ADM Robert J. Papp, Jr., Commandant USCG.

FOREIGN CORRUPT PRACTICES ACT

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security held a hearing on the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. Testimony was heard from Greg Anders, Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, DOJ; and public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans, and Insular Affairs held a hearing on H.R. 946, the ''Endangered Salmon Predation Prevention Act.'' Testimony was heard from Jim Lecky, Director of the Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service; Guy Norman, Southwest Regional Director, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; Robin Brown, Program Leader, Marine Mammal Research, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife; and public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands held a hearing on the following bills: H.R. 1904, the Southeast Arizona Land Exchange and Conservation Act of 2011; H.R. 869, to clarify the definition of flood control operations for the purposes of the operation and maintenance of Project No. 2179 on the Lower Merced River; H.R. 1258, the Box Elder Utah Land Conveyance Act; H.R. 1545, the Waco Mammoth National Monument Establishment Act of 2011; H.R. 473, the HALE Scouts Act; and H.R. 1740, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate a segment of Illabot Creek in Skagit County, Washington, as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. 10 a.m., 1334 Longworth. Testimony was heard from Rep. Larsen, Mary Wagner, Associate Chief, U.S. Forest Service, Department of Agriculture; Marcilynn Burke, Deputy Director, Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior; Larry Groth, City Manager, City of Waco, Texas; Michael Hing, Mayor, City of Superior, Arizona; and public witnesses.

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN FEDERAL SPENDING

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Achieving Transparency and Accountability in Federal Spending.'' Testimony was heard from Earl Devaney, Chairman, Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board; Kim Wallin, Controller, State of Nevada; and public witnesses.

TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH PRIORITIES

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Subcommittee on Technology and Innovation, hearing on Transportation Research Priorities: Maximizing Return on Investment of Taxpayer Dollars. Testimony was heard from: Peter Appel, Administrator, Research and Innovative Technology Administration, Department of Transportation; Lynn Peterson, Transportation Policy Advisor, Office of Governor John Kitzhaber; and public witnesses.

FEDERAL PERSPECTIVE ON A NATIONAL CRITICAL MATERIALS STRATEGY

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Subcommittee on Investigations and Oversight held a hearing on The Federal Perspective on a National Critical Materials Strategy. Testimony was heard from John P. Holdren, Director, Office of Science & Technology Policy; David Sandalow, Assistant Secretary for Policy and International Affairs, Department of Energy; and Jeff L. Doebrich, Program Coordinator (Acting), Mineral Resources Program, Geological Survey.

HOW PROPOSED HOURS OF SERVICE TRUCKING RULES ARE A DEAD END FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Committee on Small Business: Subcommittee on Investigations, Oversight and Regulations held a hearing entitled ''Do Not Enter: How Proposed Hours of Service Trucking Rules are a Dead End for Small Businesses.'' Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

CREATING JOBS AND INCREASING U.S. EXPORTS BY ENHANCING THE MARINE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation held a hearing entitled ''Creating Jobs and Increasing U.S. Exports by Enhancing the Marine Transportation System.'' Testimony was heard from David Matsuda, Administrator, Maritime Administration; and public witnesses.

MENTAL HEALTH: BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN CARE AND COMPENSATION FOR VETERANS

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing on Mental Health: Bridging the Gap between Care and Compensation for Veterans. Testimony was heard from Karen H. Seal, M.D., Department of Medicine and Psychiatry, San Francisco Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; Antonette Zeiss, Acting Deputy Patient Care Services Officer for Mental Health, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; and public witnesses.

ACCURACY OF PAYMENTS MADE BY THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Oversight and Subcommittee on Social Security held a joint hearing on the accuracy of payments made by the Social Security Administration (SSA). Testimony was heard from Carolyn Colvin, Deputy Commissioner, Social Security Administration; Patrick P. O'Carroll Jr., Inspector General, Social Security Administration; Dan Bertoni, Director, Education, Workforce, and Income Security Issues, GAO; and public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

MOLDOVA'S CONFLICT IN TRANSNISTRIA

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Commission received a briefing on prospects for unfreezing Moldova's frozen conflict in Transnistria, focusing on examining how the existing security and governance conditions in the region affect the human rights and humanitarian situations on the ground from Igor Munteanu, Ambassador of Moldova to the United States, Department of State; Vladimir Socor, Jamestown Foundation, Berlin, Germany; and Vlad Spanu, Moldova Foundation, and Lyndon Allin, both of Washington, DC.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, 2011

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, to hold hearings to examine the ''Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act'' and implementation of Title VII one year later, 9:30 a.m., SR–328A.

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Department of Defense, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2012 for the Department of Defense, 11 a.m., SD–192.

Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, closed business meeting to mark up those provisions which fall under the subcommittee's jurisdiction of the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2012, 9:30 a.m., SR–232A.

Full Committee, closed business meeting to mark up the proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2012, 2:30 p.m., SR–232A.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Protection, to hold hearings to examine enhancing safety and

soundness, focusing on lessons learned and opportunities for continued improvement, 10 a.m., SD–538.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: to hold hearings to examine the ''Clean Air Act'' and public health, 10 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Jennifer A. Di Toro, Donna Mary Murphy, and Yvonne M. Williams, all to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, 2:30 p.m., SD–342.

United States Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control, to hold hearings to examine the continued construction of illegal tunnels on the southwest border of the United States and the role these tunnels may play in the transport of drugs, weapons and human beings, 2:30 p.m., SD–562.

House

Committee on Appropriations, Full Committee, markup of the Energy and Water Appropriations, FY 2012, 9:30 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, Full Committee, markup of H.R. 1217, to prohibit the Department of Education from overreaching into academic affairs and program eligibility under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965. 10 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Energy and Power, markup of the following: H.R. 1938, the North American-Made Energy Security Act; and H.R. 2054, the Energy and Revenue Enrichment Act of 2011. 9 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade, hearing on legislation to require greater protection for sensitive consumer data and timely notification in case of breach. 10 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Health, reconvene hearing from June 2, entitled ''PPACA's Effects on Maintaining Health Coverage and Jobs: A Review of the Health Care Law's Regulatory Burden.'' 3 p.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade, hearing on Global Maritime Piracy: Fueling Terrorism, Harming Trade, 2 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The Threat of Muslim-American Radicalization in U.S. Prisons.'' 9:30 a.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Immigration Policy and Enforcement, hearing on legislation regarding the Legal Workforce Act, 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Full Committee, markup of H.J. Res. 1, Proposing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States. 1 p.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Full Committee, markup of the following: H.R. 258, the Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act of 2011; H.R. 295, to amend the Hydrographic Services Improvement Act of 1998 to authorize funds to acquire hydrographic data and provide hydrographic services specific to the Arctic for safe navigation, delineating the United States extended continental shelf, and the monitoring and description of coastal changes; H.R. 320, the Distinguished Flying Cross National Memorial Act; H.R. 441, the Kantishna Hills Renewable Energy Act of 2010; H.R. 470, the Hoover Power Allocation Act of 2011; H.R. 489, to clarify the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior with respect to the C.C. Cragin Dam and Reservoir, and for other purposes; H.R. 643, the Sugar Loaf Fire Protection District Land Exchange Act; H.R. 670, to convey certain submerged lands to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in order to give that territory the same benefits in its submerged lands as Guam, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa have in their submerged lands; H.R. 686, the Utah National Guard Readiness Act; H.R. 765, the Ski Area Recreational Opportunity Enhancement Act of 2011; H.R. 944, to eliminate an unused lighthouse reservation, provide management consistency by incorporating the rocks and small islands along the coast of Orange County, California, into the California Coastal National Monument managed by the Bureau of Land Management, and meet the original Congressional intent of preserving Orange County's rocks and small islands, and for other purposes; H.R. 1022, Buffalo Soldiers in the National Parks Study Act; H.R. 1141, the Rota Cultural and Natural Resources Study Act; H.R. 1160, the McKinney Lake National Fish Hatchery Conveyance Act; and S. 266, to redesignate the Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge as the Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge. 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Operation Fast and Furious: Reckless Decisions, Tragic Outcomes.'' 9:30 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, U.S. Postal Service and Labor Policy, hearing entitled ''Postal Infrastructure: How Much Can We Afford?'' 1:30 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Subcommittee on Energy and Environment, hearing on An Examination of DOE's Clean Technology Programs, 2 p.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Lifting the Weight of Regulations: Growing Jobs by Reducing Regulatory Burdens.'' The focus of the hearing is on the following bills: H.R. 527, the Regulatory Flexibility Improvements Act of 2011; and H.R. 585, the Small Business Size Standard Flexibility Act of 2011. 1 p.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Wednesday, June 15

Senate Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Senate will be in a period of morning business until 2 p.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Wednesday, June 15

House Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Continue consideration of H.R. 2112—Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2012.

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