

The government and its lawmakers should do everything in their power to cultivate an ideal environment for small businesses to grow and prosper by removing roadblocks to growth and by building economic certainty. We need to keep the focus on the American worker and on small businesses. We need to remember that every week is small business week.

THE FARM BILL—A PARTISAN PRODUCT

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

Mr. GALLEGO. I rise reluctantly to express my disappointment in today's proceedings. I am one of those Democrats who voted for a bipartisan product coming out of committee; but unfortunately, today, the bill that we saw come out of committee became an extremely partisan product towards the end.

One of the challenges for me was that I am a firm believer in the SNAP program. It's an anti-hunger safety net that serves vulnerable children and seniors across our country. The average benefit is \$4.50 a day. That's a lifeline. That's not a luxury. In 2010, SNAP helped more than 3.6 million people in Texas afford food. It's critical to children and seniors. In the 23rd Congressional District, there are 36,000 households receiving SNAP. The vast majority is of households with working class families and working class families with young kids.

Today was a disappointment. I was perfectly prepared to work for a product that we could get to conference—I had my card to vote green—but it seemed, in watching the debate here and the finger-pointing immediately—the blame of who did what to whom—was just so frustrating.

The truth is that we've got to get somewhere in the middle. When you continually offer these amendments that move us further and further off the middle and that move us further and further and further to the right, it makes it increasingly difficult to support what should be a bipartisan product.

DON'T TAKE FOOD FROM ME

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Most of America would ask the question: What happened here today?

I can probably say that what happened here today is a little hand of a hungry child that was raised up, and the child said: What about me?

You can talk about farms—little ones and big ones. I am a big supporter of our agricultural production in this Nation—it is from the soil—but I am very glad that we stood up for the children who are faced and confronted with \$20

billion in cuts from something that stamps out hunger. Households with children receive about 75 percent of all food stamp benefits.

Mr. Speaker, we didn't want to just stop there.

We didn't want to just take food from 200,000 hungry children. We wanted to make sure that, if you are a disabled parent with a young child—and if you don't have child care and if you can't find a job—your SNAP money would not be given to you by the State, and the State would be able to keep it. We didn't just want to take food out of a hungry child's mouth. We wanted to slap him down. We wanted to make sure that the State would be grinning by saying, Ha, ha, ha, not only do you not get food, but—in the same breath—we get to keep the money.

We are better than this as America. We can do better. This bill was defeated because the hand of a hungry child was able to be heard on the floor of this House. I am glad that I stood with the hungry child and stamped out hunger in that child's heart, stomach and mind. Today, a child's voice, as sweet and quiet as it is, Mr. Speaker, was loud and clear: don't take food from me.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.

□ 1440

JUNETEENTH AND SNAP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, it's not often that one is able to come back to the podium as soon as I have, and I thank the gentleman for his courtesy.

I started to speak about unfinished business, but first I want to celebrate and acknowledge a day this week that many of us commemorate. In fact, it is moving to become nationally recognized. It's something that is called "Juneteenth."

Today is June 20. So yesterday, June 19, was Juneteenth. I didn't get a chance to explain what Juneteenth meant on the floor of the House, and I wanted to do so.

In 1865, the captain of a Union army arose and arrived on the shores of Galveston, Texas, to let the then slaves who had not been notified, who had not been freed in 1863, on January 1 when President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, finally the Union came to our shores in Texas and let a whole swath of slaves who were still working and toiling unpaid in conditions that were obviously unsatisfactory, because no one should hold

slaves. Finally, in 1865, on June 19, those in Texas and places to the west were freed. So it is a day of freedom.

When I talk to children about Juneteenth, I say it is living freedom. It is accepting the values of this great Nation that has turned, I hope, forever against the idea of holding others as slaves. And it moved this Nation forward, even in difficulty, with women not being able to vote and African Americans moving from Reconstruction into Jim Crowism and the terrible times of the 1900s and, as well, moving into the time of second-class citizenship all the way through World War II as President Truman integrated the United States military. But it moved the country to a lust and a desire for freedom and opportunity.

So Juneteenth is a day of jubilation. It is a day when families gather together. But it is a very important historic time. It is a historic time, if you will, to be able to, in fact, acknowledge that what has been wrong can be fixed. It wasn't a pleasant time to, in essence, work as a slave, to be held as a slave, to be captured as a slave some 18 months to almost 2 years after the Emancipation Proclamation.

I say that because I wanted to explain further why something that had traditionally been bipartisan—we love the farm life for those who have experienced it, those who read about it. Often in my tenure here in the United States Congress, urban Members and rural Members came together to pass a bill that generated not only food for America but food for the world. Let it be very clear that we took pride today to vote "no," because sometimes you have to listen and understand that there are things greater than your own interests.

I don't know what reason caused the implementation or the addition of a \$20 billion cut to the SNAP program. Who had to be satisfied to put that gigantic, unsympathetic, cruel taking of food from the plates of Americans on the floor? SNAP has no region, it has no racial identity, it has no age identity. It is, frankly, Americans who are in need.

Let me share with you some numbers. Households with children receive about 75 percent of all food stamp benefits. That immediately quashes the stereotype that deadbeats get food stamps. Twenty-three percent of households include a disabled person. Eighteen percent of households include an elderly person. The food stamp program increases household spending. The increase is greater than would occur with an equal benefit in cash. These people are not asking for cash. They're asking for you to allow them to be able to buy decent food so there is nutrition and nourishment.

But again, what motivated a \$20 billion cut that had never been implemented in an agricultural bill that many of us voted on in a bipartisan manner? Did anybody listen to the chairman of the Federal Reserve? The