June 26, 2001

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE

their resources to help in the disaster efforts. From the Red Cross and Salvation Army, to local Harris County Police and Fire Department, to the Texas Medical Center, to the United States Coast Guard, to the dedicated elected officials, to name just a few; they all made special efforts and sacrifices and today, we honor them for their self-sacrifice and dedication to their fellow citizens. The pending resolution calls our attention to our recent failure to ensure that we will be able to aid victims of Allison and future disasters. Just last week, while the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was working diligently to help the victims of Tropical Storm Allison, the House passed H.R. 2216, the FY2001 Supplemental Appropriations Act, containing a provision, which many of us strongly opposed, to rescind $389 million in disaster relief funds from FEMA.

Currently, FEMA is assessing the impact of Tropical Storm Allison on Texas, Louisiana, and Florida, and it expects to request additional funds to address these pressing needs. More than 25,000 flood insurance claims are expected from this region of the country and FEMA is projecting the flood insurance claims for Tropical Storm Allison in Texas and Louisiana alone will exceed $350 million. The proposed rescission could preclude FEMA's ability to pay these claims and it might limit assistance to future victims of disasters and necessitate another supplemental spending bill. The rescission eliminates much of the funding needed by the agency to provide quick and effective assistance to disaster-stricken communities and victims. The most recent disasters highlight the fact that these funds could be needed by FEMA to pay for natural disasters occurring in FY2001. They should not be rescinded.

Moreover, with the increases in climate change brought on by global warming, we should be bracing for more natural disasters. According to recent data, in 1999, the United States experienced the warmest January-March period since we began keeping these records 106 years ago. Climate change and these patterns are costly to the United States, and the Nation. This temperature changes can lead to more extreme weather events, including droughts, floods, and hurricanes.

Over the past decade we have seen a marked increase in natural disasters and this trend is expected to continue. FEMA data show that more frequent and severe weather calamities and other natural phenomena during the past decade required 460 major disasters declarations, nearly double the 237 declarations from the previous ten-year period, and more than any other decade on record. The increased number and severity of natural disasters has huge economic impacts on the United States. Comparing the three-year periods of 1989 through 1991, and 1997 through 1999, the federal cost of severe weather disasters increased by 337 percent in less than ten years. Of the $35 billion that FEMA has spent in the last 20 years for disaster relief, $28 billion, or 80 percent, has occurred in the last seven years alone (1993–2000). In addition, the insurance industry has paid more than $13 billion in insured losses in these seven years.

Fortunately, the Senate Appropriations Committee has reported its Supplemental Appropriations bill and it does not contain the $389 million rescission from FEMA's contingency fund. I am hopeful that the conference report on this bill will not accept the House provision on FEMA's rescission. We are all aware of the critical and fundamental support that FEMA provides for the victims of natural disasters. It is essential that we do not hinder FEMA's mission by allowing unwarranted rescissions or cuts to FEMA's budget.

Again, I commend the numerous individuals, government agencies, and groups of people in Texas who heroically gave of themselves and assisted their fellow citizens through a major storm. They serve as an inspiration to us all and I pledge to work together with FEMA and other agencies on behalf of these victims to help them rebuild their lives and renew their spirits.

I urge all Members to support H. Res. 166. Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 166, which honors the men and women, community organizations and businesses, and the government entities that provided relief and assistance to the people of Texas in the wake of Tropical Storm Allison.

It is truly times like these, when Mother Nature strikes suddenly and strongly, that communities must come together to help people whose homes and businesses are damaged or destroyed and who might have suffered loss of life within their families. It is a true testament to the spirit of community to see neighbors selflessly helping neighbor in these circumstances, and I commend the men and women who lent of their time, energy, money, resources, and friendship to make the flooding in Houston and its suburbs less painful for their neighbors.

While the damage was not nearly so severe, I would be remiss if I did not mention the community spirit of Floridians who helped to reduce the pain and suffering that tropical storm Allison brought to the people of Florida. For instance, local fire and rescue workers attempted to save swimmers who regretfully drowned off of Florida Panhandle beaches in the storm-tossed waters of the Gulf. They also worked to save hundreds of people caught off guard by the flooding in Tallahassee and elsewhere in North Florida. Also, electric company and utility employees worked to keep power, water, and information flowing into people's homes and businesses as North Florida was pelted with heavy rain, 40–55 mile-per-hour winds, and 15-foot waves.

It is in their honor, as well, that I ask my colleagues to support this resolution.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in support of H. Res. 166 and applaud Ms. JACKSON-LEE for introducing this resolution. H. Res. 166 commends the many volunteers, public safety officials, agencies, and businesses that rose to the challenge of tropical storm Allison. The storm took 22 lives and caused at least $4.8 billion in property damage.

In the aftermath of Tropical Storm Allison, in an area that is prone to natural disasters, I appreciate the commitment and heroism shown by so many people in the wake of a major natural disaster. Thanks to many brave and generous individuals, Houston and the communities around it pulled through the storm and are on the road to recovery.

I came back this morning from Houston, where I had the great pleasure of meeting my 6th grandchild, who was born on Sunday. While the damage in the area is clearly visible, so are the signs of healing. For my own family and all the people who call Houston home, I was pleased to see the recovery already under way. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. COOKSEY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 166.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, on that demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COOKSEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include therein extraneous material on H. Res. 166.

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

There was no objection.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR ON H.R. 2149

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 2149.

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

There was no objection.

2001 CROP YEAR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE ACT

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2213) to respond to the continuing economic crisis adversely affecting American agricultural producers, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2213

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

SECTION 1. MARKET LOSS ASSISTANCE.

(a) Assistance Authorized.—The Secretary of Agriculture (referred to in this Act as the “Secretary”) shall, to the maximum extent practicable, use $1,622,240,000 of funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation to make a market loss assistance payment to owners and producers on a farm that are eligible for a final payment for fiscal year 2001
under a production flexibility contract for the 2000 marketing year. The Secretary of Agriculture, Rural Development, Food, and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001 (7 U.S.C. 1421 note), is amended to read as follows:

"(1) contributes $5,000,000 to the indemnity fund and agrees to expend all amounts in the indemnity fund by not later than January 1, 2002 (or as soon as administratively practical thereafter), to provide compensation to cotton producers as provided in such subchapter;

"(2) requires the recipient of a payment from the indemnity fund for repayment to the State, for deposit in the indemnity fund, the amount of any duplicate payment the recipient otherwise recovers for such loss of cotton, or the loss of proceeds from the sale of cotton, up to the amount of the payment from the indemnity fund; and

"(3) agrees to deposit in the indemnity fund the proceeds of any bond collected by the State for the benefit of recipients of payments from the indemnity fund, to the extent of such payments.

SEC. 8. ADDITIONAL DISBURSEMENTS FROM THE INDEMNITY FUND.—Subsection (d) of such section is amended to read as follows:

"(d) ADDITIONAL DISBURSEMENT TO COTTON GINNERS.—The State of Georgia shall use funds remaining in the indemnity fund, after the provision of compensation to cotton producers in Georgia under subsection (a) (including cotton producers who file a contingent claim, as defined and provided in section 5.1 of chapter 19 of title 2 of the Official Code of Georgia), to compensate cotton ginner (as defined and provided in such section) that—

"(1) incurred a loss as the result of—

"(A) the business failure of a cotton buyer doing business in Georgia; or

"(B) the failure or refusal of any such cotton buyer to pay the contracted price that had been agreed upon by the producer and the buyer for cotton grown in Georgia on or after January 1, 1997, and had been purchased or contracted by the ginner from cotton producers in Georgia;

"(2) paid cotton producers the amount which the cotton ginner had agreed to pay for such cotton received from such cotton producers in Georgia;

"(3) satisfy the procedural requirements and deadlines specified in chapter 19 of title 2 of the Official Code of Georgia applicable to cotton ginner claims.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Subsection (c) of such section is amended by striking "Upon the establishment of the indemnity fund, and not later than October 1, 1999, the" and inserting "The".

SEC. 9. INCREASE IN PAYMENT LIMITATIONS REGARDING IMPROVEMENTS AND MARKETING LOAN GAINS.

Notwithstanding section 1001(2) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1301(2)), the total amount of the payments specified in section 1001(3) of that Act that a person...
shall be entitled to receive for one or more contracts and oIsuction under the Agricultural Market Transition Act (7 U.S.C. 7201 et seq.) during the 2001 crop year may not exceed $500,000,000.

SEC. 11. TIMING OF, AND LIMITATION ON, EXPENDITURES.

(a) DEADLINE FOR EXPENDITURES.—All expenditures required by this Act shall be made not later than September 30, 2001. Any funds made available by this Act and remaining unexpended by October 1, 2001, shall be deemed to be unexpended, and the authority provided by this Act to expend such funds is rescinded effective on that date.

(b) TOTAL AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURES.—The total amount expended under this Act may not exceed $5,500,000,000. If the payments required by this Act would result in expenditures in excess of such amount, the Secretary shall reduce such payments on a pro rata basis as necessary to ensure that such expenditures do not exceed such amount.

SEC. 12. REGULATIONS.

(a) PROMULGATION.—As soon as practicable after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary and the Commodity Credit Corporation, as appropriate, shall promulgate such regulations as are necessary to implement this Act and the amendments made by this Act. The promulgation of the regulations and administration of this Act shall be made without regard to—

1. Antiterrorism provisions of section 523 of title 5, United States Code;
2. the Statement of Policy of the Secretary of Agriculture effective July 24, 1971 (36 Fed. Reg. 13804), relating to notices of proposed rulemaking and public participation in rulemaking; and
3. chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code (commonly known as the “Paperwork Reduction Act”).

(b) CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OF AGENCY RULEMAKING.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall use the authority provided under section 808 of title 5, United States Code.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. COMBEST) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. COMBEST).

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to advocate passage of H.R. 2213, a bill to provide economic assistance to farmers for the 2001 crop year. The current farm recession, in its 4th year, ranks among the deepest in our Nation’s history, along with the Great Depression, the post-World War I and II recessions and the financial ruin of the 1980s.

There are many factors that contribute to this dismal situation. First, energy prices have skyrocketed, pushing up fuel and fertilizer to more than twice last year’s prices. Second, overseas markets continue the slump that started with the Asian financial crisis, and that has been compounded by the steadily increasing strength of the dollar.

USDA estimates that the value of the dollar is up to 25 percent relative to our customers’ currencies and up 40 percent relative to our competitors’ currencies, making our farm commodities significantly less marketable in overseas markets. Finally, tariff charged and less agricultural exports remain high, averaging 5 times those levied by the U.S.

Clearly, additional assistance for our farmers is needed. H.R. 2213 makes a good start in providing such assistance. With the help of the Committee on the Budget, the gentleman from Iowa (Chairman NUSLLE), in this year’s budget, Congress made available funding for fiscal year 2001 and fiscal year 2002 specifically to address the need for the assistance in the 2001 crop year.

The legislation before us today makes $5.5 billion available for that purpose. In my opinion, this amount is not sufficient to meet the needs of our producers, and I intend to work further as this bill moves forward through the legislative process to improve that message. But today the important point is to move the process along, because the fiscal year 2001 funds will expire unless delivered to hard-pressed farmers by the end of September, it is imperative that a bill be sent to the President for signature before the August recess.

To ensure that outcome, the House must move the legislation this week. Despite its current imperfections, farmers need House passage of H.R. 2213 today.

The Committee on Agriculture is now in the process of writing a new multiyear farm bill that will end the need for these annual emergency packages. We expect to bring that bill to the floor before the end of the year and hope to have it in place for next year’s crop. But today we are dealing with the immediate emergency in this year’s crop, and that is why I am asking my colleagues to support passage of H.R. 2213.

Additionally, Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that there are some misconceptions currently being spread about the bill, including one suggesting that H.R. 2213 will extend the Northeast Dairy Compact. This is simply not the case.

First of all, dairy compacts are not within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Agriculture and, therefore, are not even considered by any legislation that our committee would report. Second, there are simply no dairy provisions of any kind in H.R. 2213, as amended.

When I introduced the bill originally, it did include a simple extension of the dairy price support program due to expire at the end of this year, but even that provision has been removed from the amended version.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I support this bill even though it is not sufficient to meet the needs of our producers, and I intend to work further to move the process along, because the fiscal year 2001 funds will expire unless delivered to hard-pressed farmers by the end of September, it is imperative that a bill be sent to the President for signature before the August recess.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I support this bill even though I, too, wished we could do more. At the outset, let me recognize the work of the gentleman from Texas (Chairman COMBEST) and state for the record that American agriculture is in need of immediate assistance, and that producers of our food and fiber are at risk.

Last year crop prices were at a 27-year low for soybeans, a 25-year low for cotton, a 14-year low for wheat and corn and an 8-year low for rice. Very little recovery has occurred since that time. The need for the $5.5 billion in assistance provided by this bill is so great that a doubling of this amount could easily be utilized.

Because this is the fourth year in a row that we have provided ad hoc assistance to compensate for low commodity prices, however, I consider it crucial that we provide aid with a view toward the end of the fiscal year.

While the budget should provide us the authority to improve our commodity programs, there are a couple of reasons why the amount made available in the budget will soon appear insufficient. First, as of the amounts in the bill before us, the budget provides $73.4 billion to add to our baseline over 10 years. During the course of the Committee on Agriculture’s hearings, however, representatives of agriculture have responsibly argued for several times that amount.

Second, the budget is not ironclad. The Committee on Agriculture has a budget allocation for fiscal year 2002, but not for the succeeding fiscal years.

The remaining $86 billion is only available to the extent that the on-budget surplus is greater than the Medicare surplus. Our ability to address agriculture’s long-term need is now very sensitive to any deterioration in the overall budget surplus.

In the reality of this tight budget situation we faced was recently made abundantly clear by a letter from the administration. Prior to the markup of this economic assistance, the OMB Director advised that, if the committee does not increase the amounts in the bill by $5.5 billion, he would recommend the President not sign the bill.

A bare majority of my colleagues on the Committee on Agriculture agreed with the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. Boehner) and me that we needed to save every penny we could to draft a responsible long-term farm bill.

I am proud to say that, by adopting our amendment, the Committee on Agriculture has faced its responsibility to prioritize agriculture’s needs within the budget. Our chairman presided over a full debate with the utmost fairness. For those of us who were strong advocates for agriculture, we arrived at a difficult decision.

The bill before the House today provides a reasonable response to our producers who are suffering from the continued slump in the farm economy. Assistance is provided in a very clear way that is sufficient.
way. Take the aid provided for the most recent crop and prorate the payments to equal $5.5 billion. I repeat, assistance is provided in a very clear way. Take the aid provided in the most recent crop and prorate the payments to equal $5.5 billion. Funds will be disbursed to producers quickly and simply.

While I would have preferred alternative ways to deliver this assistance, we are constrained in this manner because the assistance must be provided by September 30. We also need to analyze all fiscal year 2002 options at the same time in order to provide the right long- and short-term policy mix. Many specialty crops that desire additional assistance over that provided in the bill can only be addressed in fiscal year 2002 money. We can provide such assistance, but it must be provided fairly and consistently in keeping with our long-term strategy.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot disagree with those who say that the $5.5 billion is inadequate; however, this is all we can afford at the moment. As we pass this bill, it is crucial that we immediately move toward an improved and reliable long-term policy that benefits farmers and taxpayers alike. I urge the passage of the bill. Mr. Speaker, I support this bill even though I wish we could do more.

At the outset, let me recognize the work of Chairman COBNEST and state for the record that I agree with him that American agriculture is in need of immediate assistance and that the producers of our food and fiber are at risk. Last year, crop prices were at a 27-year low for soybeans, a 25-year low for cotton, a 14-year low for wheat and corn and an 8-year low for rice. Very little recovery has occurred since that time. The need for the $5.5 billion in assistance provided by this bill is so great that a doubling of this amount could easily be utilized.

Because this is the fourth year in a row that we have provided ad hoc assistance to compensate for low commodity prices, however, I consider it crucial that we provide aid with a view toward the long term. While the Budget should provide us the authority to improve our commodity programs, there are a couple of reasons why the amount made available will soon appear insufficient:

First, aside from amounts in the bill before us, the Budget provides $73.4 billion to add to our baseline over ten years. During the course of the Agriculture Committee’s hearings, however, representatives of agriculture have responsibly argued for several times that the on-budget surplus is able to the extent that the on-budget surplus. Funds will be disbursed to producers quickly and simply. While I would have preferred alternative ways to deliver this assistance, we are constrained in this manner because the assistance must be provided by September 30.

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Mr. Speaker, I cannot disagree with those who say that the $5.5 billion is inadequate; however, this is all we can afford at the moment. As we pass this bill, it is crucial that we immediately move toward an improved and reliable long-term policy that benefits farmers and taxpayers alike. I urge the passage of the bill. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COBNEST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSELE), the chairman of the Committee on the Budget. Mr. NUSSELE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2213, the Fiscal Year 2001 Economic Assistance Act. It provides $5.5 billion in markets loss payments and other agriculture assistance. I am pleased that the Committee on the Budget was able to work hand in hand with the Committee on Agriculture to make this bill possible. Recognizing the needs of farmers, the Committee on Budget reported and the House passed a budget resolution that revised the allocations and budgetary totals for the current fiscal year to accommodate $5.5 billion in additional emergency agricultural assistance for the crop year of 2001. We budgeted for this amount of assistance within the budget. It is responsible.

All the Committee on the Budget asked was that the Committee on Agriculture produce a straightforward bill that avoided accounting gimmicks and reserved sufficient funds to meet future crop year needs and permanently reauthorize the agricultural assistance programs so we can move away from this Band-Aid approach of the past 3 years. H.R. 2213 more than up holds the Committee on Agriculture’s part of this bargain.

As the chairman of the Committee on the Budget, I have the privilege of reporting to my colleagues that this bill is within the budget. I commend the gentleman from Texas (Chairman COBNEST), the gentleman from Georgia (Chairman CHAMBLS), the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM), ranking member, for their hard work on this and all the members of the Committee on Agriculture.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER). Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman’s courtesy in allowing me to speak on this bill. I know it has been hard for the members of the Committee on Agriculture, but I am personally disappointed that there appears to be no funding for the conservation programs in the agricultural supplemental. This is especially troubling in light of the fact that it appears that the Committee on Appropriations plans to sharply reduce funding for our major conservation program in the next fiscal year, including the Wetlands Reserve Program, the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program and Farmland Protection Program.

Only 5 percent of the USDA funding rewards voluntary efforts for protecting our drinking water supplies, to provide habitat for wildlife, protect open spaces. There are many programs where farmers voluntarily want to come forward, but as a result of declining funding levels for conservation programs, three out of four farmers, ranchers and foresters are rejected when they offer to sell development rights to help combat sprawl and protect farmland; half of our farmers and ranchers and foresters are rejected when they seek basic technical assistance. Sadly, we are not investing the critically productive farmland that surrounds our metropolitan area, the urban-influenced farmland.

Mr. Speaker, as we struggle with declining amounts of money because of some decisions that we have made in the past, frankly, I think some of us are hoping that people recognize were inappropriate, we need to make sure that we are dealing with efforts to equip and ensure that we maintain the agricultural base.

This is an opportunity for a win-win to protect the environment, to enhance the vast majority of small farmers that are at risk, and to make sure that we
are preserving water quality supplies. I am hopeful that we can do better in the future.

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS).

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for the opportunity to speak today, and I thank him for his leadership on this and other matters relative to the agriculture community in our country.

I rise in strong support of this bill. I would say to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) I share the same concerns that he does about conservation, and I hope we can address that to a greater extent in the farm bill.

But what we are doing today is coming forward with a market assistance package, and I emphasize that because it is not a disaster bill. A market assistance package is necessary for our farmers because, for the fourth year in a row, we are facing low commodity prices all across the spectrum.

The assistance package addresses the needs of producers. It puts an amount of money in the pocket of producers as quickly as we can do it. Our folks need that relief now. At the same time, if the American people are going to be assured that they are going to continue to have quality food products at low-commodity prices, we need to pass this bill today.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND).

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this measure, but I also want to express some concern that this, and any type of funding for conservation programs within this farm supplemental bill for 2001.

While there is no doubt that our Nation's farmers, ranchers and foresters are struggling financially, this measure merely continues the failed economic policies of the current farm bill, directs cash transfers that many of us believe distort the marketplace and drives commodity prices even further down.

The next farm bill, which the House is currently considering, must be more inclusive and provide creative new revenue streams to assist our Nation's family farmers. It is my hope that voluntary incentive-based conservation programs which provide landowners with much-needed revenue while also assisting them in meeting soil, air and water environmental compliance is a part of the new farm bill.

For instance, programs such as Wetlands Reserve, Wildlife Habitat Incentive Programs and the Farmland Protection Program not only help our farmers to promote preservation of open space, habitat for wildlife and improve water quality, but they also increase farm profitability.

Two-thirds of America's farmers do not benefit from any traditional income support programs under the current farm bill. Furthermore, more than 90 percent of USDA payments go to only one-third of America's farmers who produce commodity crops. For example, States such as California and Florida receive less than 3 cents from USDA for every dollar they earn. Conservation payments provide an important source of funding that allows farmers throughout all regions of the country to retain their land while providing benefits to society, including cleaner drinking water and improved recreational opportunities.

Currently, funding levels are insufficient to meet the demands of conservation programs. Three out of every four farmers, ranchers and private forest landowners are turned away when they seek to participate and help protect habitat and improve the quality of our nation's drinking water through these land conservation programs.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the conservation funding aspect becomes a major feature of the next farm bill. I look forward to working with the leadership on that.

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. REHBERG).

Mr. REHBERG. Mr. Speaker, agriculture is Montana's number one industry, but with the cost of crop production at an all-time high and farm incomes sagging, I am deeply concerned about agriculture's future in our State.

H.R. 2213 will provide much-needed help to Montana producers, but the bill fails in many ways. The assistance level provided for in this legislation is not sufficient to address needs of many families this summer.

H.R. 2213 fails to address the needs of dairy farmers, sugarcane growers, those who graze their wheat, barley, and oats, as well as producers who are denied marketing loan assistance because they do not have an AMTA contract.

Members who supported the $5.5 billion in assistance at the committee level argued that a cut in funds to producers this year was necessary to save funds for the new farm bill, but I fear that many producers in my State will now have to face the reality that they may not make it for the next farm bill.

While this bill is far from perfect, it is a first step in keeping Congress' commitment to stand by American farmers and ranchers until a permanent safety net is in place.

I want to thank the gentleman from Texas (Chairman COMBEST) and the staff for all their hard work on behalf of America's cattle.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. SHOWS).

Mr. SHOWS. Mr. Speaker, dramatic increases in energy costs have hurt everybody, especially in the agriculture industry. Today, right now, farmers in my district, a lot of them, are going bankrupt, clearly not able to keep up with their energy bills.

We need to encourage more domestic production of oil and gas, but that is for the future. We will not solve the crisis of today.

I am not really not here to point fingers, assign blame for skyrocketing energy prices, but I am here on behalf of family farmers who do seek solutions. They need our help now.

Despite repeated appeals from my colleagues and myself, this Congress, this leadership has ignored the plight of ordinary citizens who are suffering this energy crisis. Let us face the fact that some farmers and ranchers have seen their gas bills double and triple over the last year, and this is through no fault of their own.

Our economy depends on agriculture, and especially Mississippi, because we are still a rural economy.

This may not be a natural disaster like a tornado or flood, but it is a disaster just the same. It is an economic disaster that threatens the very existence of our farmers.

If we cannot see fit to address these needs through supplemental funding, I challenge the Congress to take up the issue separately.

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my support for the farmers of my home State of Mississippi and for this legislation.
Could we do more? Yes. Should we do more? I hope by the end of the day, by the time the Senate takes this up and it goes to the President, that there will be more. In terms of real dollars, Mississippi farmers are facing their 4th year of prices that have not been this low since the Great Depression. I look forward to working with the committee and the chairman to look at ways in the farm bill that we can have long-term solutions to crises that come up, not only in our commodities and crops, but for farmers who are in other areas, such as poultry. We need to find ways so that if we do have an energy crisis or spike that we can meet those needs, whether through grants or loans, so that they too can manage their farm income in a way that is predictable and gives them certainty. We need our Ag Research to our farmers avoid the bankruptcies that we are seeing today in places across my district and in the Southeast.

As we continue to get the emergency assistance and the long-term care, I look forward to working, as chairman of the Congressional Sportmen’s Caucus Waterfowl Task Force, in getting the conservation titles of the farm bill in order for the good it does both for our environment and for our farmers.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST).

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) for yielding me this time, and I want to compliment the chairman of the committee for this supplemental, which goes a long way to preserving the rural legacy of this United States, understanding the fact that every year we lose hundreds of farms all across the Nation. This injection of dollars allows us to go a long way into helping make our farms sustainable and, to a large extent, if we work the right way, making those farms profitable.

I would also ask the Chairman, as we move through the rest of this session, to understand that not only do the crisis or spike that we can meet those needs, whether through grants or loans, so that they too can manage their farm income in a way that is predictable and gives them certainty. We need our Ag Research to our farmers avoid the bankruptcies that we are seeing today in places across my district and in the Southeast.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KENNEDY).

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. TALKING TO THE MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE).

Mr. Speaker, by providing $5.5 billion in economic assistance, this farm bill represents a much-needed first step in keeping Congress’ promise to America’s farmers and ranchers, but it is only our first step.

It is said that the sower sows in expectation, and this farm bill fails to meet the expectation of American farmers in at least two respects. First, the assistance level it provides is not sufficient to address the total needs of farmers and ranchers; and, second, the bill’s scope is too narrow, leaving many needs completely unaddressed.

At a time when real net cash income on the farm is at its lowest level since the Great Depression, it is not the time to cut supplemental aid to farmers. Although I urge my colleagues to support this bill as a first step toward helping our Nation’s farmers, I am deeply disappointed that this bill leaves out $1 billion in farm aid for only a few short-term benefits.

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER).

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the agricultural assistance package, but I must state flatly for the record that I was extremely disappointed last week when this much-needed package was reduced from $3.5 billion to $2.5 billion in committee. The Chairman on Agriculture chose not to support me or the chairman in a package that was equal to last year’s assistance. This billion dollar cut will cost Oklahoma producers 18 cents a bushel for wheat and effectively kills the LDP graze-out program for 2002. That is unacceptable.

This is the worst time to be cutting funding for agricultural producers. Commodity prices remain low, input prices are increasing and continue to increase dramatically. If anything, we should be increasing our funding for these programs. Yes, this assistance package is a good first step. It is insufficient to meet the needs of agricultural producers, especially in Oklahoma, but at least it is headed in the right direction.

I want to assure my friends and colleagues here on the floor that while I think this will help producers across the country, and particularly in Oklahoma that I intend to work with the other body to ensure that the cuts made last week by the Stenholm-Boehner amendment are restored and that we provide our producers with that minimum $6.5 billion.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers at this time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE).

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I rise today for eighth dis-
We all know that we have great difficulty in ag country. We have low commodity prices, we have higher fuel costs, and the pressure is on farmers across the country and has been. Until we open more markets for our farmers, this pressure will continue to be there because our farmers continue to out-produce their competitors around the world.

There has been a lot said here about the size of this package. As the author of the amendment, along with my good friend, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), I believe that the $5.5 billion, as allocated by the budget, is a sufficient amount of money for aid now. Would I like to do more? Of course, I would like to do more. But the fact is we just went through a budget process and allocated $5.5 billion for this year's emergency assistance to farmers. To go back on that now opens the door to the other body to raise the number even higher. I think what we have done here is the fiscally responsible thing to do.

Now opens the door to the other body for this year's emergency assistance to farmers. It may well be true that some of the problems we face in agriculture today were exacerbated by the last farm bill. But the truth of the matter is what we are into now is the 4th consecutive year of worldwide record production. The second thing we have to appreciate, in Europe we see huge subsidies for agriculture. Beyond that, we have permitted, we have allowed our trading competitors to subsidize their exports to the tune of $6 billion while we limit ourselves to $200 million. We have put ourselves and our farmers behind the eight ball relative to our trade policy and relative to our agriculture policy. Ultimately that is all coming together.

There is a desperate need in agriculture today for some kind of help. We are here today, and the Committee on the Budget has responded appropriately. The bill in front of us today is the right answer. Ultimately there will be negotiations between the House and Senate and the White House, and hopefully this can be plussed up. There are serious problems in agriculture, most of which are not controllable by our farmers.

Mr. Speaker, I think this is a good bill, and I hope all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will join us in supporting this legislation today.

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

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill. I associate myself with all of the remarks saying we should do more; but I would also point out that this amount of money today is within the budget that was passed that we have agreed to live under this year. I think that is a significant point. And also, as the chairman pointed out in his opening remarks, time is of the essence.

Mr. Speaker, we must have this bill to the President for his signature by August 1 if we are to have any hope of dealing with the multitude of problems that this bill is designed to help.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to pass this bill today and move the process forward, and encourage the other body to do the same.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments of the gentleman from Texas.
Mr. TENHOLM and appreciate the good working relationship that we have. Our committee works on behalf of American agriculture, I think, on a bipartisan basis as well as any committee in the Congress.

It is vitally important, and I strongly urge my colleagues who have any reservation about the level of this funding to move forward with this suspension to allow the House to have completed its action so that we make for certain that the $5.5 billion which was established in the budget resolution is in fact eligible to be paid to farmers by the end of the fiscal year of September 30. I think it also sends a message to farmers that in fact there is some assistance on the way at a very critically needed time.

Mr. Speaker, to the Members who spoke of the committee’s action in the next few weeks in reporting a farm bill, I will say that we have heard them and all others. This will be a comprehensive farm bill. It will have a strong conservation title, as some have indicated, it is an area that we are looking at very carefully. It is something that we will be trying to craft to deal with all aspects of American agriculture, and we will be spending a great deal of time on it. It is the intent of our committee to report a bill by the beginning of the August recess so that consideration for a full farm bill in a much-needed sector of the American economy that is suffering tremendously can be moved forward; and that we will be able to send a message to American agriculture that there is help on the way.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the interest, the intensity, and passion of all of my colleagues on the committee.

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2213 will provide the much-needed help that many farmers in the Second Congressional District need today. The $5.5 billion is not sufficient to address all the farming needs, but it goes a long way in helping our family farmers. Input costs have skyrocketed for every one including our farmers in the Second Congressional District need today. The $5.5 billion is not sufficient to address all the farming needs, but it goes a long way in helping our family farmers. Input costs have skyrocketed for every one including our family farmers. Input costs have skyrocketed for everyone including our family farmers.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 178, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk reads the resolution, as follows:

H. Res. 178

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 H.R. 2213 making appropriations for the Department of Transportation and related agencies for fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, 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 chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. After general debate the bill shall be considered as read. Points of order against provisions in the bill for failure to comply with clause 2 of rule XXI are waived except as follows: on page 13, line 24, through ‘‘section 40117’’ on line 25; beginning with ‘‘Provided’’ on page 14, line 12, through page 20; beginning with ‘‘Provided’’ on page 15, line 9, through page 14; beginning with ‘‘Provided’’ on page 20, through page 24, line 2; ‘‘notwithstanding any other provision of law’’ on page 31, line 15, beginning with ‘‘together with’’ on page 36, line 15, through the closing quotation mark on line 16; page 31, line 9 through ‘‘as amended’’ on line 18; page 38, line 21, through page 45, line 2; page 50, line 22, through page 51, line 15; page 55, line 6, through line 13; page 56, line 16, through page 57, line 2. Where points of order are waived against part of a paragraph, points of order against a provision in another part of such paragraph may be made only against such provision and not against the entire paragraph. During consideration of the bill for amendment, the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether the Member of the Committee whose 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. Upon consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without out intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 426 of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, I make a point of order against consideration of the rule (H. Res. 178) because it contains an unfunded Federal mandate.

Section 426 of the Budget Act specifically states that the Rules Committee may not waive this point of order.

In the rule of H. Res. 178, and I quote: ‘‘All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived.’’ Therefore, I make a point of order that this bill may not be considered pursuant to section 426.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia makes a point of order that the resolution violates section 426(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974. According to section 426(b)(2) of the act, the gentleman must specify language in the resolution that has that effect. Having met this threshold burden to identify the specific language of the resolution under section 426(b)(2), the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN) and a Member opposed will each control 10 minutes of debate on the question of consideration under section 426(b)(4).

Following the debate, the Chair will put the question of consideration to wit: Will the House now consider the resolution?

The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I raise a point of order because section 343 of this appropriations act directs the local transit authority to change the name of its transit station at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport with local funds. The cost to comply with this provision is estimated to be $405,476; but the principle being violated is far more costly.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this year the local jurisdiction which controls the transit board elected not to change the name of the Metro station at the airport. The board determined that the estimated cost of these changes would be better spent on other priorities.

In addition to the rule that requires the request to come from the local jurisdiction in which the station is located, the regional transit board has a long-standing policy of not naming their transit stations after people, perhaps more so that they be named after the location that they are serving.

At one time many Democrats wanted the RFK Stadium stop to be named...