opening remarks on this rule, and to rise in strong support of this rule and urge my colleagues to vote in favor of it.

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, 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 (Mr. CAMP). The question is on the resolution.

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5, rule I, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

CONGRATULATIONS TO FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA ON 50TH ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Pleasant Hill Chapter of the Future Farmers of America for the celebration of their 50th anniversary this past August 19th.

The goal of this organization is to train and develop future leaders in the agricultural community, a very valuable commodity in the 20th Congressional District of Illinois. The work of the FFA has not just turned high school kids into agricultural leaders but also into leaders of our communities.

One way that I am trying to assure that the FFA has a market is by encouraging the use of bio-diesel fuel, which is made with soybeans. Again, I congratulate the Pleasant Hill Chapter of the Future Farmers of America for reaching its 50th year anniversary and wish them all the success in their future endeavors.

DEMOCRATS NOT USING HONEST ARGUMENTS REGARDING SOCIAL SECURITY TRUST FUND

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

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, I often have discussions, serious discussions, with Democrats who have a point of view that I do not agree with. It is always a healthy thing to have an honest debate with another person, for there are usually two sides to every story and every issue. But it is also frustrating to debate someone who is not using honest arguments.

The other side has charged repeatedly that the tax cut package promoted by the Ways and Means chairman, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARCHER), is a raid on the Social Security Trust Fund.

If my colleagues believe that, look at this chart. The absurdity of the allegation becomes quite obvious. If the raid is so, then how can $9.6 trillion in spending over 5 years not be a threat to Social Security, while this little $80 billion right here in tax cuts are not a threat?

Then, to add insult to injury, the Democrats did not put one dime aside for Social Security during the 40 years they were in control. And now Republicans are putting aside $1.4 trillion for Social Security and we get blamed for attacking Social Security.

Mr. Speaker, this is what liberalism has become.

DEMOCRATS DEMAGOGUING SOCIAL SECURITY ISSUE DUE TO EMBARRASSMENT

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, how big is $80 billion? We have this chart right here that shows, over a 5-year period, $9.6 trillion of expenditures. It is obviously a little tiny sliver. When we compare it to the size of the Federal Government, $1.7 trillion in spending last time I checked, we realize that the Republican tax cut package, alas, is quite modest indeed.

A liberal could spend $80 billion by lunch, but $80 billion over 5 years is considered a threat to the Social Security Trust Fund. Why spending is not a threat to the Social Security Trust Fund but tax cuts are is anybody's guess, but that is what the liberals are trying to say.

Just take a look at this chart and try to put things in perspective. Republicans are putting aside $1.4 trillion to save the Social Security Trust Fund, but the Democrats are strangely silent about that. But that is not surprising, given how much money they put aside during the four long decades they were in the majority. Right here. A great big zero. Zero versus $1.4 trillion. That is pretty embarrassing, and maybe that is why they are trying to change the subject and demagogue on this issue.

First, it was Mediscare, now it is frightening nonsense about Social Security.

□ 0930

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CAMP). Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 30 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess, subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1250

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DICKEY) at 12 o'clock and 50 minutes p.m.

RULE ON LABOR-HHS APPROPRIATIONS BILL SHOULD NOT BE ADOPTED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) is recognized for 40 minutes as the designee of the minority leader, without prejudice to the presumption of business.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I am taking this special order because earlier today, without notice to anyone on our side of the aisle, the House considered the rule under which the Labor, Health, Education appropriations bill would be brought to the floor. I believe that that issue should be discussed before the House votes, because I think it is ridiculous for any Member of this House to vote for a rule that makes this bill in order.

I want to make clear, first of all, that the bill this rule would make in order is going absolutely nowhere. The bill that comes to the floor makes huge reductions in education, in job training, in a number of health programs that both parties claim that they are for. And yet at the very time that we are supposed to be debating this bill, the conferees, the lead conferees, have already been meeting in Senator SPECTER's office yesterday, and I participated in those meetings for over 3 hours.

We are in the process of putting together a different bill, which will be at least $3 billion above the bill being brought to the floor and, in my judgment, considerably above that level before we are done. So this is a sham bill. If it is brought up it will be merely to take up time that would more usefully be used for other purposes.

Secondly, I would point out that if this rule is adopted, a vote for this rule will simply be an endorsement for a bill that fails our children and hurts workers to an extreme degree. This bill, for instance, eliminates the Low Income Heating Assistance Program, which is the key program that helps low-income seniors avoid having to choose between heating their houses and eating. This bill would eliminate the summer jobs program that gives some young people in this country their first experience at dealing with the world of work.

This bill slashes the President's request for new funding for after-school centers to try to give young people a useful place to go, recognizing that the vast majority of juvenile crime occurs in after-school hours, and many times before parents get home and can have a place for their kids to come home to. It cuts reading and math help for 520,000

Title I kids below the President's budget. It denies anti-drug coordinators for 6,500 middle schools with the worst drug and violence problems. It block grants, and then cuts by $300 million, Eisenhower teacher training programs and Goals 2000 programs. It cuts OSHA workplace safety enforcement and undermines worker protections. It does absolutely nothing to lower class size in the first three grades, one of the President's top initiatives.

So, in my view, there is absolutely no substantive reason to bring this bill to the floor, because this bill is so bad and guts so many national priorities that even the Republican allies of House Members on the other side of the Capitol, in the Senate, recognize that this bill is so extreme that they will not even bring it to the Senate floor for a vote.

So a vote for this rule today is a vote for extremism on these issues. It will be taken seriously by nobody because this bill is going nowhere. It is a simple waste of our time.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the distinguished gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY).

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, last year I was proud to stand on the House floor and work hard with our distinguished chairman, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JOHN PORTER), to pass a bipartisan Labor, HHS, Education spending bill. I am disappointed and sad this year, however, that the bill has become a partisan vehicle to satisfy the right wing of the Republican Party. While the bill contains very necessary increases in certain health programs such as the NIH, I must reluctantly urge my colleagues to vote against the rule and final passage.

We must defeat the rule before us today because it protects anti-worker provisions while at the same time denies the House a clean, fair vote on family planning. The rule also fails to protect another key women's health provision which would have given women in HMOs direct access to their OB-GYN. This OB-GYN provision is in the bipartisan and Republican managed care bills which have stalled. By failing to protect it from a point of order, the leadership is sacrificing a valuable opportunity to enact this provision into law.

The rule reported out last night allows family planning opponents an opportunity to offer a second degree to the Greenwood-Castle substitute. Those of us who support family planning sought and were entitled to receive a clean up or down vote on the Greenwood-Castle substitute.

The bill contains the same language restricting teenagers' access to Title X family planning services which was defeated on the House floor last year. This parental consent restriction will deny vulnerable teens the contraceptive services they need to avoid pregnancy, HIV and STDs.

Last year's attack on the Title X program failed because a majority of Members understood that denying teens' access to family planning does not promote abstinence. I only wish it were that simple. Instead, it increases STDs and HIV infections, unintended pregnancies and abortions.

The bill also shortchanges students who are hoping to pursue the American dream. Everyone in this Chamber understands that a college education is as necessary today as a high school education was just a generation ago.

In April the House overwhelmingly passed a Higher Education Act bill that increases and expands Pell Grants, preserving the Perkins Loan, SSIG, TRIO and SEOG programs. Only four Members of Congress voted against this bill.

Fast forward, and we have before us a bill that provides additional funding to strengthen Pell and TRIO programs. At the same time, however, the bill eliminates SSIG and provides no capital contributions to Perkins.

Three-quarters of a million low-income students depend on the Perkins program, including 60,000 New Yorkers. Nearly all of them come from families with incomes of $50,000 or below. These families need more, not less, to send their kids to college and to reach for the dream.

I am equally concerned about the elimination of the SSIG program. This program serves needy students, not affluent ones. My colleagues, we have a strong economy but too many people are shut out.

This is the time to invest in education, not cut back.

The bill also cuts funding to senior programs by $10 million. Funds that are used to prevent elder abuse, help families locate long-term care, and provide pension counseling have been zeroed out. These cuts are unnecessary and destructive.

The bill also grossly underfunds the National Labor Relations Board which is already stretched to the breaking point. This independent law enforcement agency was created to carry out a vital law of this land. Without this law and the Board which oversees it, labor disputes between private employers and employees would grow out of control. Productivity in our nation's workplaces would plummet dramatically.

My colleagues, the NIH increases in this bill should be applauded. However, on balance the bill severely shortchanges education, our seniors and hard-working Americans. We can and must do better.

Let us vote down this rule and come back with a bill that reflects our values, our priorities.

□ 1300

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the distinguished gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) for arranging for us to have this opportunity to talk about the Labor-Health and Human Services-Education bill. I want to voice my strong opposition to this rule and to this bill.

The Labor-Health and Human Services-Education appropriations bill has always been known as the people's bill, the bill that reflects our priorities as a Nation. Unfortunately, this bill funds only a few important programs at the expense of education and job training for some of our neediest citizens. And while I am pleased that we are increasing our much-needed investment in biomedical research, we cannot do so at the expense of the most vulnerable members of our country.

There are so many problems in this bill, I do not think I can cover them in the short time that I have. Let me just give my colleagues a couple of examples.

It eliminates LIHEAP, the low-income heating energy assistance program that provides heating assistance to low-income seniors, including more than 75,000 families in my State of Connecticut. Across the Nation, millions of seniors and families with small children depend on this program to pay their heating bills in the coldest months of the winter. Without this kind of assistance, many will be forced to choose between heating their homes and buying the food and the medicine that they need to stay healthy.

This bill wipes out summer jobs which provide career opportunities for disadvantaged youth, including more than 4,000 young people in my State. I visited a summer jobs program in West Haven, Connecticut. The students there use the money they earn to help their parents pay the bills. It is an opportunity for them to learn skills that will help them in the future.

I understand that there will be a token amendment to put small amounts of money into LIHEAP and summer jobs. We need more than tokens. These are investments which in the long run pay off.

This bill also cuts $2 billion out of the President's education initiatives. It cuts Goals 2000, the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund, Title I grants, Eisenhower Professional Development State Grants, Safe and Drug Free Schools. Cutting these programs means fewer teachers will have access to training programs, fewer students will have access to computers in their schools, and fewer districts will receive grants to help their students achieve high standards.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this rule, vote against the bill. Let us go back and draft legislation that makes a strong investment in education and other programs that our families depend on.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, could I ask how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DICKEY). The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) has 30 minutes remaining.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. PORTER) be allowed to allocate 15 minutes of the 30 minutes remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is with the concurrence of the Minority

Leader, and the gentleman from Wisconsin must remain on the floor. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ).

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, this particular bill is an attack on our educational system in the country. At a time when we should be concentrating on making sure that we take care of our youngsters, at the present time this particular bill will cut $160 million from the administration's proposal on Head Start, at a time when we need those resources to assure that those youngsters have that Head Start in order to be able to start at school.

This particular piece of legislation cuts the funding for bilingual education by $25 million. This is not the time to be doing this kind of activity, and we should be moving forward.

This particular piece of legislation also denies $237 million sought by the administration for three higher education initiatives, including the High Hopes initiatives that would have provided new funds for mentoring, tutoring, college and various other programs.

One of the other things that this particular bill does is hit at the most important aspect in education, that is, after-school learning programs. It cuts $140 million below the administration's request in denying over 3,000 communities the opportunity to be able to provide after-school programs.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I ask that we look seriously and we reconsider what we are doing with this particular piece of legislation. I would ask that we vote against this particular rule.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL).

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), the distinguished ranking member of the Committee on Appropriations, for taking this special order to allow us to debate this most important bill, as it may be the only time, likely will be the only time we will have to debate this issue.

I rise in opposition to the rule and the bill because of its threat to the health and safety and welfare of our coal miners who are suffering from the crippling disease known as pneumonoconiosis or black lung.

Over the history of the Appalachian coal fields, we have seen many atrocities invoked among our coal miners. Even today, we are left with a legacy of abandoned coal mine lands and abandoned coal miners. Indeed, as it stands now, we are now experiencing less than a 10 percent approval rate on claims for black lung benefits, even after the appeals, and this figure does not attest to any unreasonable and unbiased comportment of the facts.

We have seen delays in the promulgation of new rules as proposed by the Department of Labor, for which I highly commend them. Yet there is a provision in this legislation that constitutes a vicious assault on black lung victims. This provision, while falling short of placing an outright moratorium on the promulgation of these rules by the Department of Labor, does seek to create further delays and place roadblocks in the way of the publication of the new rules.

I, therefore, urge defeat of this legislation.

Recognizing this, on January 22, 1997, the Labor Department proposed rules aimed at making the black lung program more receptive to the thousands of miners, their widows and families who are being victimized by the current procedures. Public comment opportunities were extensive, including two lengthy hearings during the summer of 1997. Yet, today, final rules have yet to be promulgated.

This delay is of concern. Even more troubling is a provision contained in H.R. 4274 which constitutes a vicious assault on black lung victims.

Specifically, instead of allowing the Labor Department to proceed with this rulemaking under those laws normally applicable to the promulgation of Federal regulations, the provision forbids the rule from being finalized until certain certifications are made by SBA and OMB. Under current law, SBA is to be consulted but has no ''certification'' role. Further, after these so-called certifications, the provision requires an additional 60-day comment period.

I would submit that these proposed rules have now been published for almost 1 year and 9 months. That is ample time for review and comment. There is simply no need for this provision except as a delaying tactic aimed at killing this rulemaking. And let us be perfectly clear. Further delay is the death knell for those coal miners seeking the benefits they so justly deserve under this program.

Coal miners have suffered enough without being subjected to this type of abuse. For my part, I will not stand idle during consideration of amendments to this bill and will seek to strike this onerous provision.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. TIERNEY).

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) for yielding.

In 2 minutes it is difficult to speak fully to this particular rule and to the bill that underlies it. But let me just say that I thought we all came here to Congress understanding what the needs and concerns were of our various constituents.

Fundamental among them was a good educational background for all of our students, the opportunity to rise no matter what their situation in life or their family situation; an ability to help people in the workplace, to make sure that if they were displaced or if they were just entering the market, that they would have the skills and the education they need to succeed.

All of these things are fundamental to this particular bill that underlies this rule. And yet, I think very unwisely, we are cutting program after program that are necessities.

The School to Work Program, important in my district, helps work-based learning experiences for high school students. Yet this bill will cut $250 million or up to 63 percent of that program. How are students supposed to understand the connection between what they learn in the classroom and what their opportunities in life are without programs like this?

We try to encourage college participation. Yet we are going to cut, through this bill, if the majority has its way, substantial funds, making sure 120,000 deserving postsecondary students do not get campus-based low interest loans.

At a time when all people believe that teachers have to have more development and more training for their skills and work in the classroom, this would not only block grant Eisenhower but do what most block grants do, eventually end up defunding that particular program. One hundred thousand teachers will be without the training they need to educate our children.

Literacy, an issue where there has been considerable time spent in my district developing so that this cycle of illiteracy does not continue, is attacked in this bill. The America Reads program is entirely eliminated.

After-school learning programs, as we talk about getting children off the streets to continue their learning during the day, to have supervision, is attacked in this bill.

Head Start, a tremendously successful program helping children get the nutrition and the learning skills and the societal skills they need to do well, to hold their grade level, to improve their IQ and to succeed in school, is being cut.

College work-study programs, students that are trying hard and desperately to work their way through school, to contribute in that way, is cut in this program; and technologies and so on.

I think we are making a serious mistake here. I urge Members to vote against the rule and against the bill in its current form.

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, while this technically is a special order that the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) has called, it really amounts to general debate on the bill, and it has given an opportunity for many on the opposite side to demagogue the funding levels in the bill.

Let me respond to all of them at the same time. A year ago, the President and the Congress came to an agreement to work over a 5-year period to bring the budget into balance. As part of that agreement, the President insisted that the funding in areas that were of priorities to the White House be increased in the first year, and that was done.

The bill funding the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education was increased by $5 billion last year, and many of the programs that have been mentioned today

and many others were increased very substantially, and I supported that. We passed that bill on the House floor overwhelmingly.

The second year and the outyears of the agreement called for fiscal restraint on discretionary spending. The spending levels were agreed to by the White House and by the Congress together, and the allocations that were given to our subcommittee and others this year reflected the caps on spending that were necessary to help bring the budget into balance.

So when we marked up this bill in subcommittee and in full committee, we operated under the budget caps that restrained spending very significantly. In fact, we had to work with $500 million less in outlays than we had in the past fiscal year. So our job was a tough job and we approached it, I think, responsibly.

The Senate, when they marked up their bill in subcommittee and full committee, were not held to the same restraints. They used $4 billion of forward funding so that their numbers appear higher. I am very proud that our subcommittee and our full committee approached their job differently and lived within the budget caps. We did what we are charged to do as appropriators: look at every single program and decide which ones are the best ones, those most deserving of funding, and provide for those. Conversely, those that are less effective and less needed are cut.

What did we do? Well, we increased biomedical research with a 9 percent increase, even with less money to work with. We gave a substantial increase to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, public health. We increased up the Job Corps, a very effective program for the very poorest and most at-risk youth in our society. We increased Pell grants for needy college students. We increased the TRIO Program that serves many minority students and others in need in our country. Trio is a very important college program that gives an opportunity to people who would not otherwise have it.

We plussed up community health centers who help needy Americans with health care. We gave more money to impact aid, a Federal obligation to assist communities and schools that are impacted by Federal facilities. We gave a very substantial increase to special education, IDEA, that helps local school districts cope with the problems of disabled students.

We gave more money for the health professions so that young people could be trained as health professionals and receive help in their education. We gave more money for Ryan White AIDS treatment because we know of the need in that area. We plussed up the substance abuse block grant so that we can work harder to solve our drug abuse problems in this country.

These may not be the priorities on the minority's side of the aisle, but these are some of the priorities on our side of the aisle, and we did them within the budget caps that we have to live under.

□ 1315

Now, the gentleman from Wisconsin asked, a moment ago, for what purpose do we take up this bill? Well, let me say that the purpose is democracy. The purpose is to give the House a chance to shape a bill that ultimately the House is going to be responsible for.

Sure, he and I and our Senate counterparts can sit down alone and we can work out the numbers and we do not have to listen to anyone else. But I did not come here to do that. I came here to work through a process where we could have the participation of everyone. We all have an equal chance to shape the bill and to make it a bill that guides us in our negotiations with the Senate and not simply by our own proclivities.

So for what purpose do we take up this bill? To try to get the House's guidance before we come to final closure with the Senate on any negotiations, because that is what is really important in the long term.

This bill must pass. It is an appropriations bill. We must pass them all. I believe very strongly that what we do in respect to this bill is incredibly important to how the final product comes out, and that is the purpose to which all of us ought to lend ourselves: to do the people's work and to allow the process to work to shape the legislation that we ultimately are going to be responsible for.

You may disagree with our priorities. You have a chance to change them on the House floor. You may disagree with legislative provisions that are placed in the bill, I disagree with some of them, but we will have a chance to address them on the House floor.

So I have pressed very hard for a long time that the impasse that we have had over parental notification under title X, family planning, might be resolved and this bill might be brought to the House floor. Yes, it is late. I regret that there has been a serious disagreement on that issue. It has prevented us from going forward. But if that has been resolved, it is our responsibility to go forward and to allow the House to do its will in respect to this legislation.

So I would say to the gentleman from Wisconsin, I think it is very important that this bill go forward. I am glad that these things have been resolved. If the gentleman and his side disagrees with the priorities in the bill, they should have a chance to shape them differently. Yes, it is going to come out different in the conference, conference bills always do, but all of this, it seems to me, is to be serving the very purposes for which we were sent here. That is for all of us to participate in shaping legislation for which we are responsible.

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

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield three minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the proposed rule. I did so last night as well. I indicated last night that the Treasury-Postal bill was a good bill in terms of the numbers, the dollars that were appropriated. I rise today in saying that I do not believe this bill is such a bill.

One of the aspects of serving on the Committee on Appropriations is the pride that I think all of us have in the ability and integrity of the chairman of this committee. I say that as a minority member. I cannot think of a chairman who I do not have great respect for.

The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. PORTER), the chairman of our committee, is one of those for whom I have unrestrained respect, admiration, and, yes, affection. He is a good Member of this Congress and he acts in the best interests of America as he sees it. His priorities that he articulated just recently I think we share.

However, when we talk about increasing, what we have done is we have zero-funded LIHEAP. I was at the home of Susan Smith in Prince George's County, 20 minutes from this floor. Susan Smith is 85 years of age. She and her husband built a home in 1937. Her husband died 24 years ago, and she still lives in that home.

Governor Glendening and I were there to say that we were not going to allow this LIHEAP to take the money away from her Social Security revenue, obviously as we all know, relatively small, and put her in the position of having to choose between her energy and heating her home or oil heat and her food and prescription drugs. That is a choice that we should not make her make.

So, yes, it is good to say we have increased NIH by 9 percent, but Susan Smith ought not to pay for that. And those youth, frankly, who are looking to have a summer job experience so they can partake of the opportunities America has to offer, are not funded, so there are no summer jobs for youth in this bill.

Mr. Speaker, this rule should be defeated. This rule should be defeated, that brings a $291 billion bill to the floor of the House after having been reported weeks ago, weeks ago, not only out of the subcommittee but full committee, with only eight days left to go, presumably, in this session, and say take it or leave it.

This bill took 40 hours of debate last time. I say to my Republican friends, you would have savaged Democratic leadership for doing this. You would have savaged us, and in fact did. Not the gentlemen that are on the floor. As a matter of fact, a member not even in the Congress any more, used to stand at that podium and give us the devil for not operating efficiently. We are not operating efficiently. We ought to reject this rule and we ought to forge a bill that speaks to America's needs.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose H.R. 4274, the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill for fiscal year 1999, and its rule.

This bill cuts $2 billion out of the President's education agenda to improve public schools. The former chairman of the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations, William Natcher, used to say, ''If we continue to educate our children and take care of the health of our people, we will continue to live in the greatest Nation on the face of the Earth.'' Mr. Speaker, we fail to do so in this bill.

By eliminating the LIHEAP Program, we fail to help 4.4 million of the poorest households in the country pay their heating bills. Two-thirds of LIHEAP recipients earn less than $8,000 a year and many are elderly, disabled or are struggling to raise young children in poverty. Yesterday, I visited one of these courageous people, 85-year-old Susan Smith, whose husband built her house in Lanham, Maryland in 1937. If she did not receive LIHEAP funds, she would have to choose between heating her house, buying food, or purchasing her medication. We should not be eliminating funding that assists those most in need, those like Susan Smith.

We live in a great Nation because we give people the opportunity to make a better life for themselves and their children through public education. By not including the President's school construction initiative in this bill, we fail to respond to the urgent need for school renovation and additional classrooms in communities across the Nation. In fact, we fail to respond to research that shows that reducing class size to 15 to 18 students in the early grades improves student achievement, particularly among low-income and minority students in inner cities. And by eliminating funding for the America reads challenge, we will not only break last year's bipartisan budget agreement that protected this program, but we will fail to reach 450,000 at-risk first, second, and third graders who desperately need this assistance.

The American people believe that we should invest more, not less, money to improve public education. This bill goes against the very core of what this Nation believes. Mr. Speaker, when expectations are raised, students rise to meet them. This bill, however, has very low expectations and fails to provide the framework in which our Nation's youth can develop and flourish. I urge my colleagues to oppose this bill and vote against the rule.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman from Maryland that he had ample opportunity in the subcommittee and ample opportunity in the full committee to offer amendments that would have made adjustments where adjustments may have been needed in his judgment. What he did not have an opportunity to do was to break the budget caps under which we are living. No amendments were offered in either of those venues. The opportunity will appear on the floor to do the same thing.

I will tell the gentleman right now that I think I have the LIHEAP problem solved to his satisfaction, and I made a lot of progress on summer youth as well. But let me say, again, if those were problems, if any of the cuts were problems and the priorities were not right, the gentleman has had, and his side has had, ample time to address that.

What the gentleman is really saying is there is not enough money in the bill. He wants more money in the bill. But the gentleman and his side and the president all agreed last year that we would live under these budget caps, and that is exactly what we are doing.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. PORTER. I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, if my friend would yield for another mild compliment, I want to say to my friend, frankly, I am absolutely confident if the chairman had the votes on your side in large numbers that we would forge a bill that was a bill that we would all be proud of. I understand the chairman's problems, and I understand what the chairman is saying about the constraints.

But I will tell my friend, both in subcommittee and committee we raised the same issues, and we really have not had an opportunity to address them. I am pleased that at this late moment, and I am pleased, I am not surprised, the chairman is trying to solve the LIHEAP problem which we raised in subcommittee, committee, and we have been raising ever since. We should not have done what we did, and I am pleased that the chairman perhaps is going to correct that in his manager's amendment.

But I say to my friend, there are still problems, of course, with things that are in the bill that should not be in the bill.

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield three minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM).

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, one of the things we have done in this bill, which is very important to me as a cancer survivor, is since we took the majority in 1994 we have increased biomedical research by over 24 percent, and the Speaker is committed to doubling biomedical research. That is very important for us.

For example, for care of diabetes, diabetes takes up about 23 percent of the Medicare bill. Just by early detection we can save two-thirds of the amputations, two-thirds of blindness. That not only means quality of life, or life, but it means money that we can use in other fields.

Cancer research has more than doubled, but yet prostate cancer has mortality for men and among especially African Americans higher second only to AIDS, but yet it is one of the lowest funded.

Now, another area I would like to speak on, I am pro-life, and I am not here to convince people for pro-life or pro-choice, but I had a very interesting perception of family planning units. That perception was wrong, and I speak as a pro-life member.

I went to a family planning center in San Diego and I saw women's health care where we should at least come together on family planning. I saw women there that in some cases would not receive health care in any other areas. I saw them getting mammograms. I saw them getting pap smears. I saw them getting doctors' evaluations, x-rays for lung cancer, and many were indigent people coming across the border. It is going to save a lot of people's lives, and a lot of people from even becoming exposed to cancer.

I think another area we need to come together in the family planning issue as pro-life and pro-choice is to support family planning's methods which prevent unwanted pregnancies. Federal dollars are not used for abortions by family planning. It is all private. At least we ought to be able to come together on those issues that are for women's health care and those issues that stop and eliminate unwanted pregnancies. I say that again as a pro-life member.

Secondly, biomedical research to me is one of the most important things that this body can invest in. There are a lot of things. LIHEAP, I will be frank, was established when fuel costs were very, very high. You cannot get rid of a Federal program. Whether the fuel prices are low, whether they are high or whatever, as long as you have money going out to a certain group. I am convinced it is very difficult to stop it here in this body.

LIHEAP is one that I think should be totally eliminated, just like the National Endowment for the Arts. Some of the people on the other side disagree and think there are other cuts. But as the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. PORTER) said, we are operating under a budget, and the priorities I think that he listed, I believe that every single Member on your side of the aisle would support those priorities. But we cannot have the funds under a balanced budget to meet all the priorities.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield two minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), a member of the subcommittee.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished ranking member of the committee for yielding me time and for his leadership on this bill.

As anyone knows who has ever served on this committee, it is indeed a privilege that we share with the distinguished Speaker, Mr. DICKEY, because this is a bill about the strength of our country. The health, the education and the well-being of the American people should certainly be a measure of the strength of our country. It is a privilege to serve with our distinguished chairman, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. PORTER), and with our ranking member, Mr. OBEY.

I want to focus on our ranking member for a moment though, because tomorrow is his birthday, I want to thank him for being born because of his extraordinary leadership in this House

of Representatives. Of course, I am getting no credit for saying this about him right now because he is not paying attention to me, but I did want to wish him happy birthday, which is tomorrow. Again I thank him for being born and for his extraordinary leadership, especially in this committee.

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I know this committee best because this is one of my primary committees of service in this Congress.

What I am afraid of about this bill, despite the valiant efforts of our distinguished chairman, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. PORTER), I am afraid this is a bill about missed opportunities. It is about sending a mixed message to America's children. My colleagues have spoken to the specifics of this bill and what it is lacking. In addition the overall message of this bill is that we say to children that education is very, very important to them and that it is central to their success in life and our competitiveness as a country, and yet this bill misses opportunities to include the Clinton administration agenda for smaller classes with well prepared teachers where children can learn, teachers can teach and parents can participate.

This bill, instead of modernizing schools for the 21st century, helping local communities modernize and build 5,000 schools nationwide, enough though this bill can not do the interest-free bonds, it could help in modernizing schools. Instead, the Republican Labor-HHS bill chops $2 billion out of the administration request, cuts the safe school and drug-free schools by $50 million, slashes investments in education technology, and eliminates funding for America Reads. It sends a mixed message to American children that education is important, but that we do not value it in this bill.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond to something my good friend from Illinois said a couple minutes earlier. He indicated that the reason that we are stuck with this miserable bill is because both parties agreed to the limitations that have produced this bill. That is not correct.

It is true that the leaders of both parties voted for a budget last year which imposed limits, of course. But then, under the process when the appropriation bills came to the floor this year, the Republican committee leadership chose, alone, without consulting us on this side of the aisle, how they would divide that money between the 13 subcommittees, and it is clear that the committee leadership on the Republican side of the aisle decided to take money out of this bill and give it to other subcommittees so that they would have an easier time passing bills favored by the majority leadership, leaving this bill holding the bag. That is why we are now stuck with a bill which even the Republican leadership in the Senate says is at least $3 billion below where it should be.

Now, we know that. We heard them say that just yesterday. So it is not just us saying that this bill is inadequate; your own party brethren in the Senate are saying the same thing.

So all I would say is that we need to recognize the fact that we did not agree on this side of the aisle to cut education $2 billion below the President's level. We did not agree that we should eliminate funding for low income heating assistance and summer jobs programs, the 2 programs that deal most directly with the least fortunate people in this society. Those decisions were made unilaterally on the other side of the aisle, and those are the decisions to which we object.

That is why, while I have great respect and affection for the gentleman from Illinois, I think he has done the very best job he can defending a very bad case. It seems to me that a vote for this rule is an endorsement of each and every one of the cuts in this bill which I predict will be repudiated on both sides of the aisle within the next 2 weeks. There is no reason to bring this charade to the floor, and I urge a ''no'' vote on the rule.

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman from Wisconsin, he had a chance also in respect to the allocations to offer an amendment. I heard of no amendment being offered. The gentleman had a chance to shape within the budget allocations and the spending for each account and no amendments were forthcoming.

I would also say to the gentleman, I am not so sure how he knows what is the ''proper level of spending'' for any bill, but clearly the gentleman and the people on his side of the aisle see no place ever to make any cuts in any program, regardless of what it may be, because he has had the opportunity to do so and he has not done so during the entire process.

I would suggest to the gentleman that it is not enough simply to criticize. He must participate in the process and to shape the legislation and not simply to say, ''well, it is not the way I would do it.'' If we had more money, obviously we might do it differently. But thank God, for the first time in a long time, we are living within the allocations. We are bringing down the deficits. We have brought the budget into balance. And we have done it not only with a wonderful economy, we have done it with some good fiscal discipline here in the Congress and the majority party making some tough decisions that have been needed for a long, long time in our country that were never made on the other side of the aisle.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, again, in the interest of fact, I am required to correct the gentleman's previous statements. He says that no one on this side of the aisle has tried to cut unneeded spending. It was not people on this side of the aisle who decided that we should arrange to have a new set of accounting procedures approved so that we could provide $637 million in ships that the Pentagon did not even ask for. This Member personally offered amendments in the defense appropriations bill to eliminate funding for additional C–130s, which were provided purely and simply so that the Congress could provide 7 additional aircraft again that the Pentagon did not even ask for. That decision was made by your committee leadership.

This Member certainly did not vote for the highway bill that went through here, which had 1,800 pork barrel projects. To put that in perspective, in the entire 42-year history of the highway program, up until this year, when our party was in control, in 42 years there were a total of 1,042 pork barrel projects. This bill had over 100 in one year alone, including roads to a brew pub and almost $80 million to be spent on a highway in a foreign country.

So if I were the gentleman, I would not brag too much about the discipline shown on that side of the aisle on legislation like that.

Mr. Speaker, I make no apology for saying that I believe that more funding in the Federal budget should have been put in this bill so that we did not have to cut education $2 billion below the President's level. I believe that we should have provided those after-school centers to keep juveniles out of trouble and under adult supervision. I believe we should be funding higher levels for children's mental health. When we see kids shooting each other in school yards around the country, I believe that we should not be eliminating the summer youth program that gives millions or hundreds of thousands of young people their first exposure to the world of work. And I certainly do not believe that we ought to continue to deny the President's top education priority, which is the reduction of class size by adding new teachers in the first 3 grades.

This bill does all of that, and that is why it seems to me that we should vote against the rule because a vote for this rule is a vote to endorse the bill which Senate Republicans have already indicated is at least $3 billion below where it ought to be in order to provide a balanced set of priorities for the people we are supposed to represent.

Mr. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairmen of the committee and subcommittee, the ranking member, and the committee staff for their work on this bill and for attempting to achieve a balance within the small budget allotted to the subcommittee. As you all can attest, work on this particular appropriations bill has always been a difficult task. I have been honored to contribute to these efforts. I am proud that my membership to this committee has had an influence in the human service and educational goals for which I came to Congress to fight.

I have been a longtime supporter of the High School Equivalency Program and the College Assistance Migrant Program. The HEP and CAMP programs are the only programs funded on the national level which recruit and serve the children of migrant and

seasonal farm workers. Some of you may know that I am the son of migrant workers. There were no such student programs when I was growing up. But these programs have successfully helped migrant youth complete high school or obtain their GED. This has opened the door to continuing education opportunities in institutions of higher education.

In the 104th Congress, HEP–CAMP faced the threat of large cuts in funding. I introduced an amendment to maintain funding for HEP–CAMP. I wrote letters to committee chairs in both Chambers, describing the importance of these programs and the cost-effectiveness of their success. With the support of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, funding was maintained. Since then, the programs have received increased funding. I am proud to have assisted HEP–CAMP in advancing their efforts.

Hispanic-serving institutions are another example of a critical funding stream for underrepresented minorities. These institutions carry the burden of providing higher education for Latinos, the fastest growing segment of our nation's population. Still, they are subjected to educational, economic and political discrimination. The Congressional Hispanic Caucus has been working tirelessly to increase funding for Hispanic serving institutions to meet the growing educational needs of this target population. We have been successful in doing so for fiscal year 1998 and again in this year's bill. I thank the chairmen again for this necessary increase and Congressman LEWIS for spearheading such efforts. I am pleased to acknowledge Congressman LEWIS understands this important educational need for the growing segment of his district's, California's, and our Nation's population.

While I am pleased with these increases, I am gravely disappointed in the cuts and eliminations many other critical programs have received. We speak of engaging a new generation of Americans that are prepared to succeed in the global economy and technologically advanced society of the 21st century. Yet, we stand here, as a committee, ready to vote on a bill that falls far short of such a goal. I am deeply concerned that the funding levels in this mark will not meet the challenge of our future. We can all think of reasons to blame particular districts or the public education system for the seemingly poor education standards in this country, but we offer no solution.

The population of young people today far exceeds that of the so-called baby boom generation. Congress must rise to the challenge of providing greater opportunities for the growing mass of young people in this country. We must continue to fund programs that have proven successful in these efforts. This bill will not do this. We cut summer jobs and school-to-work programs which have also made notable efforts to advance and promote youth success. We have not given the necessary increases to after school programs and mentoring proposals.

Most disappointing is the subcommittee's decision to follow a misguided, poorly developed trend from my State, to cut funding for bilingual education. The administration is meeting the challenges of the growing Latino population with a Hispanic education action plan. This is a comprehensive plan based on high standards and research-based reform. The unacceptably high Hispanic dropout rate has signaled a need that must be addressed if we are to successfully prepare our nation for the next century. Instead of meeting that need, we have turned our back on these students who want to learn English, finish high school and prepare for college.

Instead of investing in the future of this country as a whole, Congress is specifying which Americans deserve education funding, grants, and assistance. The restrictive language in this bill would impair a school district's ability to provide successful programs for their limited-English speaking students and make critical decisions that impact the education of all children. The arbitrary deadline for the acquisition of the English language prevents teachers and school administrators from doing what is best for each individual child. By basing such grants on exiting limited-English proficient children to English-only classes, without considering individual needs or academic performance, we are encouraging a debasing of standards and expectations for students.

My colleagues, I implore you to use better foresight in determining the funding levels from which we prepare Americans to meet the demands of their future. I thank the leaders who saw potential in my future and gave me the support and encouragement to continue my education and become a productive citizen of this country. Without the wisdom and vision of those people, I may not be here today. I cannot support this bill and I urge you to reject it as well. I am hopeful that we can devise a plan for a more balanced bill that does more to encourage progress rather than stifle it.

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my opposition to the proposed rule for the Labor/HHS appropriations bill and voice my concerns over the myopia that appears to plague many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

As you may recall, Mr. Speaker, yesterday we agreed to go to conference with the Senate on juvenile crime legislation. And during the brief floor debate on this matter, several of my Republican colleagues expressed their belief that reducing juvenile crime requires a two-prong approach: punishment and prevention.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I find it curious at best how Republicans honestly can contend that they believe prevention is a vital component in reducing juvenile crime, when they plan on bringing a Labor/HHS bill to the floor that drastically cuts funding for Summer Jobs, School-to-Work, and After School Learning Programs—all of which are designed to help young people on the front end, by providing them a chance to do the right thing.

I wonder, Mr. Speaker, what kind of prevention strategy could be more counterproductive than:

Summer Jobs—cutting funding by over $500 million, effectively denying 530,000 young people—over 1,500 in my district alone—the opportunity to work during the summer of 1999.

School-to-Work—cutting funding by $250 million, effectively undermining the ability to provide work-based learning experiences to more than 1 million students in over 3,000 high schools.

After-School Learning Programs—cutting funding to $140 million below the administration's request, effectively denying 3,000 communities the opportunity to provide after-school safe haven learning programs for nearly 400,000 school-age children.

How, I ask, do my colleagues on the other side of the aisle realistically expect young people in America to develop an appreciation of the value and importance of education and work, if all they see is Congress appropriating money to build more jail cells, but not to improve their schools or provide them summer jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I am also having a very difficult time understanding how the Republicans can reconcile their willingness to cut or eliminate funding for programs like Goals 2000, Star Schools, School-to-Work, and America Reads, with their professed commitment to education. In response to this criticism, I am sure many of my Republican colleagues will tout their Dollars-to-the-Classroom bill, which will block grant funding to states for education-related programs. Well, Mr. Speaker, if the funding levels in the Labor/HHS appropriations are any indication of what the Republicans plan on investing in, then America's young people and our Nation's public education system are in serious jeopardy.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say to every single Member of this body, if you believe in giving young people a chance at success, and truly want to see the juvenile crime rate go down in America—as opposed to just looking tough on crime—then you cannot in good conscience support the rule or underlying Labor/HHS appropriations bill.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4101, AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

Mr. SKEEN (during the special order of Mr. OBEY) submitted the following conference report and statement on the bill (H.R. 4101) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes.

CONFERENCE REPORT (H. REPT. 105–763)

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 4101) ''making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes'', having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses as follows:

That the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate, and agree to the same with an amendment, as follows:

In lieu of the matter stricken and inserted by said amendment, insert:

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, 1999, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I

AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS

PRODUCTION, PROCESSING, AND MARKETING

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Secretary of Agriculture, and not to exceed