

in some hopefully rare cases, the manner in which it treats tax payers.

FULL-YEAR CONTINUING  
APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2011

SPEECH OF

**HON. PEDRO R. PIERLUISI**

OF PUERTO RICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 15, 2011*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1) making appropriations for the Department of Defense and the other departments and agencies of the Government for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2011, and for other purposes:

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my strong opposition to the Continuing Resolution, which would make devastating cuts to vital programs that can help America win the future.

I recognize the need to reduce our nation's deficit in a thoughtful and deliberate manner. But, as a recent editorial stated, "these are the wrong cuts, to the wrong programs, at the wrong time." To sharply scale back or to eliminate programs that are critical to our nation's future in an effort to achieve an arbitrary level of deficit reduction is unwise. Although I disagree with many of the cuts included in this bill, I will focus my remarks on three programs whose long-term benefits far outweigh their short-term costs: the Pell Grant Program, COPS funding, and the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds.

Pell Grants give nearly ten million disadvantaged students, who might otherwise be unable to afford college, the ability to obtain a university education. As the cost of college rises, and economic challenges persist, many more families are struggling to pay their child's tuition bill. Yet, the legislation we are considering today would reduce annual Pell Grant funding for students by nearly \$690 on average—and by nearly \$720 in my district, Puerto Rico. Many students who are currently attending college with the help of a Pell Grant, or who plan to attend college with the help of a Pell Grant, will be unable to do so if this cut is implemented.

Whatever one's political affiliation, it should be clear that a college education opens doors for our young men and women that would otherwise remain sealed shut. College graduates earn significantly more than those without college degrees and have a broader range of career options available to them. And when our students are better educated, our economy is more prosperous and our nation is more competitive. Our nation will not be able to keep pace with China and other countries if we do not increase the number of Americans who graduate from college. To decrease Pell Grants in the present environment is not just bitter medicine; it is bad medicine.

Another proposed funding cut that would cost our country dearly in the long term is the bill's elimination of the COPS Hiring Program. This program puts officers on the streets, protects communities, and saves lives. No matter what part of the country you are from, you deserve to feel secure in your home. As Attorney General of Puerto Rico in the 1990s, I worked with the Clinton Administration to help secure

passage of the bill that created the COPS program. Since the mid-1990s, Puerto Rico has received over \$160 million in COPS grants. This funding has translated into over 3,500 new police officers in our communities. I can attest that programs funded by COPS have been a key ingredient in Puerto Rico's fight against crime. If the COPS Hiring Program is eliminated and crime increases, it will produce economic and emotional costs that far exceed the investment we could make to COPS today. To propose the elimination of the COPS Hiring Program—especially at a time when states and territories are least able to find the funding necessary to safeguard their citizens—is profoundly irresponsible.

Finally, I have deep concerns about proposed cuts to air and water quality improvement programs administered by the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The proposed reductions to the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds will be especially difficult to bear on water and wastewater systems across the country. Reliable 24-hour delivery of safe drinking water is essential to the public health, economic opportunity, and quality of life of my constituents and all Americans. The state and tribal grants administered by the Environmental Protection Agency through these revolving funds are important investments in this infrastructure nationwide.

I am concerned not only with these reductions, but also with reductions to the part of the agency that addresses air quality. As a result of action late in the 111th Congress, Puerto Rico and the territories are—for the first time—eligible for the Diesel Emissions Reduction grants program. The program, however, would be sliced in half by this bill, limiting its reach and effect toward reducing harmful particulate matter emissions. Puerto Rico is challenged with poor air quality, and I am concerned with its linkage to asthma and other chronic respiratory illnesses. We cannot make progress toward improving respiratory health without proper funding for air quality programs.

Because H.R. 1 proposes cuts to these and many other important programs, I urge my colleagues to oppose the bill.

COMMEMORATING THE 19TH ANNI-  
VERSARY OF THE KHOJALY  
MASSACRE

**HON. STEVE COHEN**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 17, 2011*

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 19th anniversary of the Khojaly massacre by Armenian forces on February 25–26, 1992 in the town of Khojaly in the Nagorno Karabagh region of Azerbaijan. Khojaly, now under the occupation of Armenian forces, was the site of the largest killing of ethnic Azerbaijani civilians. Khojaly, once the home to 7,000 people, was completely destroyed. Six hundred thirteen people were killed, of which 106 were women, 83 were children and 56 were purported to have been killed with extreme cruelty and torture. In addition, 1,275 people were taken hostage, 150 went missing and 487 people became disabled. Also in the records maintained, 76 of the victims were teenagers, 8 families were

wiped out and 25 children lost both of their parents while 130 lost one of their parents. According to Human Rights Watch and other international observers, the Armenian armed forces were reportedly aided by the Russian 366th Motor Rifle Regiment.

At the time, Newsweek magazine reported: "Azerbaijan was a charnel house again last week: a place of mourning refugees and dozens of mangled corpses dragged to a makeshift morgue behind the mosque. They were ordinary Azerbaijani men, women and children of Khojaly, a small village in war-torn Nagorno-Karabakh overrun by Armenian forces on 25–26 February. Many were killed at close range while trying to flee; some had their faces mutilated, others were scalped."

As part of the Khojaly population that tried to escape, they encountered violent ambushes that led to abuses, torture, mutilation and death. The Russian organization, Memorial, stated that 200 Azerbaijani corpses were brought from Khojaly to Agdam within four days.

Time magazine published the following description: "While the details are argued, this much is plain: something grim and unconscionable happened in the Azerbaijani town of Khojaly 2 weeks ago. So far, some 200 dead Azerbaijanis, many of them mutilated, have been transported out of the town tucked inside the Armenian-dominated enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh for burial in neighboring Azerbaijan. The total number of deaths—the Azerbaijanis claim 1,324 civilians have been slaughtered, most of them women and children—is unknown."

The extent of the cruelty of this massacre against women, children and the elderly was unfathomable. Mr. Speaker, Azerbaijan is a strong ally of the United States in an important and complex region of the world. I ask my colleagues to join me and our Azerbaijani friends in commemorating the tragedy that occurred in the town of Khojaly.

HONORING WILLIE BUNTON

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 17, 2011*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Willie Bunton, a very instrumental person in the Mayersville community.

Mr. Bunton, Jr. was born on April 29, 1935 to Bertha and Willie Bunton, Sr. He was the son of a sharecropper who left school at the age of 15 to take care of his family because of the death of his father. Mr. Bunton worked tirelessly during the Civil Rights Era to register citizens to vote. He was also instrumental in integrating the schools in Rolling Fork and Mayersville. He met Louise Matthews, who later became his wife, and to this union were born 14 children. He and his wife owned and operated 14 & 1 Quick Stop for several years.

Prior to opening his own business, Mr. Bunton worked with the Delta Opportunity Corporation where he was a job developer and recruiter fulfilling the capacity of job placement for the unemployed. Around this time, Mr. Bunton gained an interest in politics, and then ran for Supervisor-at-Large of District 3 in Issaquena County unsuccessfully. He then