

HONORING THE CIVIL AIR PATROL

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Civil Air Patrol and the contributions this civilian auxiliary makes to our great nation. The Civil Air Patrol supports America's communities with emergency response; diverse aviation and ground services; youth development; and promotion of air, space, and cyber power.

The Civil Air Patrol consists of 1,445 squadrons and approximately 58,000 volunteer youth and adult members nationwide. It is congressionally chartered and operates as a nonprofit organization. It is made up of 8 geographic regions, consisting of 52 wings throughout the 50 States, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia.

Mr. Speaker, on Saturday evening, I had the honor of speaking at the Pennsylvania Wing Civil Air Patrol's 2018 Conference in Grantville, Pennsylvania. More than 400 Civil Air Patrol members and cadets throughout the Commonwealth will gather there this weekend to celebrate this outstanding civilian auxiliary. Colonel Gary L. Fleming is the wing commander.

Mr. Speaker, this year, the Civil Air Patrol is celebrating its 70-year association with the U.S. Air Force. Congress passed a law on May 26, 1948, designating the Civil Air Patrol as the official Air Force auxiliary. The Civil Air Patrol cadet program has been in existence for more than 75 years. Cadet programs throughout the country are making incredible impacts. Cadet programs attract more than 25,000 members, ages 12 through 20.

The program educates youth in four main program areas: leadership, aerospace, fitness, and character development. It enriches the school curriculum through after-school programs. Programs offer orientation flights in powered and glider aircraft, as well as flight training scholarships. Activities and competitions are available for cadets at local, State, regional, and national levels. Opportunities for community development are available through the color guard and drill team, as well as emergency service missions.

The Civil Air Patrol makes up about 10 percent of each of the U.S. Air Force Academy's classes. The cadets who have earned the General Billy Mitchell Award enlist in the Air Force, U.S. Army, and U.S. Coast Guard at higher pay grades.

Mr. Speaker, the cadet program also offers college scholarships in several different disciplines, as well as an international air cadet exchange program.

The Civil Air Patrol cadet program truly encourages our youth to reach great heights. They have been building leaders for more than 75 years, and I am so proud of the Pennsylvania Wing

Civil Air Patrol Cadet Advisory Council for its incredible commitment to our youth. I wish them the best in advance of the annual conference later this week, and I look forward to joining them at that celebration as well.

DRAFT FARM BILL

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, this week, the House Committee on Agriculture will be marking up the most important bill that almost no one pays attention to, rolled out with very little fanfare. And actually, we can kind of understand why it has been sort of played down a little bit. The draft farm bill makes it more difficult to get SNAP benefits, while weakening the meager limits for farm subsidies and while cutting investments in conservation and innovative programs which people care deeply about.

The draft bill cuts billions from those SNAP benefits. It creates burdensome work requirements for caretakers of children over 6 and people between the ages of 50 and 59. Under this provision, people would have to find work or attend job training for at least 20 hours per week. The provisions won't do anything at all to address poverty. Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that, even for those in the general population, securing a job within 3 months is virtually unattainable.

There will be a spirited debate about whether we ought to reduce nutrition for low-income people, but there are a whole range of other items that need to have attention.

The commodities programs that channel 94 percent of the subsidies in the farm bill to people who grow six commodities. This bill will exempt most corporate farms from payment limits and make it easier for large agriculture entities to call themselves family farms and get even more subsidies. It gets rid of payment limits for marketing loan gains and loan deficiency payments and exempts partnerships, joint ventures, LLCs, and Subchapter S corporations from means testing, opening the loopholes wider.

In the area of conservation, which matters deeply to Americans across the country and makes a big difference to farmers and ranchers in Oregon, this bill gets rid of the Conservation Stewardship Program, one of the largest conservation programs in the farm bill. It cuts the conservation title by \$1 billion over 10 years and cuts funding for the working lands program by nearly \$5 billion over 10 years, and it weakens the Endangered Species Act by allowing pesticides to be approved without considering the impact on endangered species.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most important areas that needs our attention deals with local food and regional infrastructure to promote local sustain-

able agriculture. It effectively eliminates funding for farmers markets, value-added producer grants, and cost-sharing programs for organic certification by failing to reauthorize mandatory funding for these programs.

Mr. Speaker, I spent the better part of 2½ years traveling Oregon after the last farm bill asking people what they wanted. And I will tell you, people in Oregon—farmers and ranchers, people who eat, sports people, people who are involved with food production and nutrition—this is not the approach that people in our community want, nor, frankly, by all available evidence, the vast majority of farmers and ranchers.

They want to see reforms. They want to have a crop insurance program that isn't wasteful support for large commodity producers, but actually is available for people who grow food, specialty crops for nursery, and the wine industry. It ought to be helping beginning farmers and ranchers get a toehold. It ought to deal with the efforts to cut down food waste, to provide protection for animal welfare.

Mr. Speaker, the draft proposal that has been released is a missed opportunity, a missed opportunity for the committee. But I am hopeful that Congress, as this process works out, will step up and do its part to make it better, to focus on people who eat; people who care about clean air, clean water; people who want to protect animal welfare; people who want to have a vibrant, thriving local food scene; and to be able to provide food security for people who are at risk.

Mr. Speaker, we can do better. I strongly urge my colleagues to take a hard look at this proposal and think about what a farm bill would look like for their community. I think they will find this bill falls far, far short.

RECOGNIZING THE MIRACLE LEAGUE OF NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an organization in my district that strives to empower individuals with special needs as well as their families.

The Miracle League of Northampton Township fosters both social and educational growth through sports and recreation. Along with buddy programs and coaching opportunities, Miracle League offers those with special needs the ability to participate in baseball, basketball, bowling, and soccer leagues.

On May 5, this organization will be holding its first annual charity wiffle ball tournament. The Miracle League of Northampton Township Wiffle Ball Classic will take place at Miracle League Fields in Churchville, and will feature a single elimination bracket along with awards for best team name and best uniforms.