

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 6219 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work together as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,  
*Chairman.*

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 6219.

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

There was no objection.

#### REAFFIRMING THE COMMITMENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO PROMOTE FREE, FAIR, TRANSPARENT AND CREDIBLE ELECTIONS IN BANGLADESH

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Affairs be discharged from further consideration of H. Res. 1169, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

#### H. RES. 1169

Whereas Bangladesh achieved independence in 1971 and established a secular democratic state, which is home to Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, and atheists;

Whereas Bangladesh is the eighth most populous country with nearly 160,000,000 people;

Whereas according to the United States Agency for International Development maternal and child mortality rates in Bangladesh have declined by more than 60 percent, production of rice has tripled, and growth in gross domestic product has averaged more than 6 percent annually for over a decade;

Whereas Bangladesh has fulfilled the criteria to initiate graduation from the United Nations "Least Developed Country" status and could become a middle-income country within the next 3 years;

Whereas in 2017, the generous people of Bangladesh welcomed more than 700,000 Rohingya refugees following the Burmese military and security force's crimes against humanity and genocide against the Rohingya in Northern Rakhine State;

Whereas in recent years, Bangladesh's democratic system has faced challenges, including political violence, environmental strain, Islamist militancy, a refugee crisis, and challenges to freedom of speech and press;

Whereas free, fair, transparent, and credible elections are the cornerstone of every democracy;

Whereas legitimate elections that respect fundamental freedoms are characterized by transparency, accountability, security, and accessibility for all voters;

Whereas strong democracies worldwide make for better trading partners, provide new market opportunities, improve global health outcomes, and promote economic freedom and regional security;

Whereas attacks on democracy and democratic institutions undermine the sacrifices of the Bangladeshi people and the country's commitment to human rights and the rule of law;

Whereas one of Bangladesh's main political parties boycotted the 2014 general election due to concerns about the impartiality of the electoral process;

Whereas Bangladesh is scheduled to hold general elections on December 30, 2018;

Whereas democratic stability, regional security, and economic prosperity in Bangladesh and South Asia are vital to the national security interests of the United States;

Whereas the United States-Bangladesh relationship is built on a foundation of shared values and cooperation on issues including economic growth and development, labor rights, peacekeeping, counterterrorism, and the environment and climate;

Whereas the United States should more actively engage with the Government of Bangladesh with respect to their shared interests in safeguarding human rights, religious freedom, and secular democracy in Bangladesh, while preventing the growth of religious extremism and militancy; and

Whereas repeated attacks on religious minorities, expanding religious intolerance, and growing destabilization caused by radical groups undermine United States economic and strategic interests in Bangladesh: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) reaffirms the commitment of the United States to promote free, fair, transparent and credible elections in Bangladesh;

(2) calls on the Government of Bangladesh to respect the freedom of speech and of the press and to heed the Bangladesh Election Commission's request to ensure security for minorities and maintain communal harmony for a peaceful election;

(3) urges political leaders and judicial authorities in Bangladesh to respect the will of voters and ensure that all Bangladeshis will be able to participate freely in the upcoming elections, and that the elections will be impartial and inclusive; and

(4) commends the government and people of Bangladesh for their generosity in hosting Rohingya refugees despite the hardships associated with responding to this man-made humanitarian disaster created by the Burmese military and security force's crimes against humanity and genocide against the Rohingya in Northern Rakhine State.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2, AGRICULTURE AND NUTRITION ACT OF 2018

##### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the conference report to accompany H.R. 2.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 1176, I call up

the conference report on the bill (H.R. 2) to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purpose, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1176, the conference report is considered read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of December 10, 2018, Book II at page H9823.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the conference report to H.R. 2, the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018.

It is fitting that the House today consider that farm bill because, 28 years ago, another proud Texan, President George H.W. Bush, signed into law the 1990 farm bill.

For the first time since 1990, Congress is poised to pass a new farm bill in the same year that the legislation was first introduced.

In many ways, the 1990 farm bill laid the groundwork for today's U.S. farm policy. The U.S. farm policy is no longer the old command and control policies of the New Deal, but, rather, a market-oriented, risk management approach that helps America's farmers and ranchers survive natural disasters and the predatory trade practices of foreign countries like China.

Our Nation's farmers and ranchers are the very best in the world, but they cannot compete alone against a sea of high and rising foreign subsidies, tariffs, and nontariff trade barriers, nor can they survive alone in the face of record droughts, hurricanes, wildfires, and other natural disasters. That is why we have a farm bill.

Mr. Speaker, not since the early 2000s has a farm bill been more desperately needed than it is today. Our farmers and ranchers are going through a very difficult recession right now. Net farm income is down 50 percent from where it stood just 5 years ago, the largest drop since the Great Depression. And farm bankruptcies are more up by more than 30 percent.

We have all seen the devastation of recent wildfires and hurricanes. Less noticed, but no less destructive, is the severe drought that has gripped many parts of the country, perhaps none more so than the one I get to represent.

Even less noticed is the rampant cheating going on in the global trade that hurts our farmers and ranchers every single day. China recently oversubsidized just three crops by more than \$100 billion in a single year.