

operations in the United States. Today, going from one-seventh, as of 2012, Black farmers make up less than 2 percent of all farmers.

In the Virgin Islands, we recognize this. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has a long and well-documented history of discrimination against Black farmers. The unequal administration of government farm support programs, crucial to protecting farmers from an inherently risky enterprise, has had a profound impact on rural communities of color.

We have got to stay on this administration to make sure that all Americans have a fair shot, not only at food and food security through SNAP, but also to ensure that those farmers, American farmers, particularly minority farmers, have a fair shot at being part of that food production.

We know that in the Virgin Islands, our farmers farm very small acreages of land, but we are hoping and looking for the support of the USDA to live up to their example and the ideal that they are there to support farmers, not to undermine them; they are there to support not just the commodities, but to those specialty crop workers, those smaller farmers who are providing food and sustenance to Americans here in this country.

We know that fresh food is the best food for our children as part of the school lunch program, and we must expand support for the farm-to-the-schoolroom programs, those programs that allow local farmers to be the ones to provide the food for those school programs that are in place, and not allow the administration to undercut any part of the process.

We know that the Congressional Black Caucus will be vigilant at ensuring that this administration does not cross the line, and we will be vigilant at bringing to the American people the message that this Congress will not sit back and allow any administration, Democrat, Republican, anybody, to shirk their responsibility to the American people.

As the conscience of the Congress, that is our charge, and we will continue to do that work.

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague, Congresswoman

PLASKETT for anchoring this Special Order on support of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

I want to express my significant concerns with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's proposed rule to change the determination qualifications for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Currently, nearly 36 million people receive monthly SNAP benefits.

To be eligible for assistance, gross monthly income must be at or below 130 percent of the poverty line.

44.4 percent of residents in Houston live at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty line.

In the Houston metropolitan area households with children, 19.3 percent struggled against food hardships in 2014–2015.

In February of 2018, SNAP served 304,542 households in Houston, bringing in \$82,374,563 of 100 percent federally funded benefits, generating approximately \$147.5 million in economic activity.

In Harris County alone, 599,928 people are eligible for SNAP benefits.

In August of 2019 Harris County received a total of \$70.9 million in totally SNAP payments.

As a result of the proposal 3 million people may lose their eligibility for food assistance.

States currently have the flexibility to not cut off benefits as soon as a family's gross income exceeds a certain level, but to more slowly phase out the food aid.

This is to ensure that those who are at or slightly above the poverty line do not risk falling below that line.

Additionally, these benefits reduce food insecurity and help alleviate poverty.

The proposed changes would limit this and cause many families to be abruptly cut off.

The new proposal jeopardizes access to free school meals for 500,000 low-income students.

Not only does this significantly affect families but also retired populations that rely on a fixed income.

This would adversely affect food banks around the nation as people look for food elsewhere.

Forcing families to choose between placing food on the table and covering other important expenses is unacceptable.

This proposal shows the Republicans' special interest agenda that gives billion-dollar handouts to big corporations and the wealthy few, and then steals from children, veterans, seniors and working families to make up the difference.

It is both cruel and counterproductive, ignoring the positives that SNAP puts into the

economy by creating \$1.79 for every dollar in benefits.

This proposed rule change does not help and support low-income individuals and families meet their basic human needs.

The current Administration is rejecting the overwhelmingly bipartisan passage of the 2018 Farm Bill, which made smart improvements that strengthened the safety net for food-insecure families.

This Administration must commit to implementing the bipartisan agreement to make anti-hunger initiatives more effective.

House Democrats will always stand firm for the health, well-being and dignity of America's working families, and will continue to advance our For The People agenda to deliver lower health care costs, bigger paychecks and cleaner government that fights for the public interests, not the special interests.

Thus, I urge the administration to reconsider this proposal and look at the adverse effects that it will have on our society.

#### SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 1340. An act to authorize activities to combat the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

#### ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Cheryl L. Johnson, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 1058. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to enhance activities of the National Institutes of Health with respect to research on autism spectrum disorder and enhance programs relating to autism, and for other purposes.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Ms. PLASKETT. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 12 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, September 25, 2019, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

#### BUDGETARY EFFECTS OF PAYGO LEGISLATION

Pursuant to the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (PAYGO), Mr. YARMUTH hereby submits, prior to the vote on passage, for printing in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, that H.R. 2229, the First Responders Passport Act of 2019, as amended, would have no significant effect on the deficit, and therefore, the budgetary effects of such bill are estimated as zero.

Pursuant to the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (PAYGO), Mr. YARMUTH hereby submits, prior to the vote on passage, the attached estimate of the costs of H.R. 3190, the BURMA Act of 2019, as amended, for printing in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.