

FAMILY FARM SAFETY NET ACT
OF 1998**HON. RICHARD A. GEPHARDT**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 25, 1998

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, today my colleagues LEONARD BOSWELL, EVA CLAYTON, JIM CLYBURN, LANE EVANS, DAVID MINGE, COLLIN PETERSON, EARL POMEROY, GLENN POSHARD, DEBBIE STABENOW and I are introducing legislation to restore the farm safety net shredded by the Republicans in the 1996 Farm Bill. House Republicans want to end the farmer safety net. Democrats want to mend it.

Over the past two years, America's farmers have watched large harvests and the Asian crisis push down grain prices as much as 40 percent. University of Missouri economists tell us that, as prices continue to fall, real net farm income could fall more than 8 percent this year. Producers are concerned. First, that the existing safety net is inadequate. Second, that even these protections, inadequate as they are, are scheduled to be phased out in a few short years.

This bill restores a sensible safety net by giving farmers a better chance to market their grain for a fair price. This bill utilizes a market-oriented tool farmers know well: the marketing loan. Marketing loans have generally provided a safety net ensuring producers 85 percent of a commodity's 5-year average price. The 1996 bill slashed the safety net by cutting these rates sharply. Our bill will establish loan rates equal to 85 percent of historic price levels—providing more income stability. Our bill boosts loan rates. Corn and soybeans up \$.30 per bushel. Wheat up \$.59 per bushel. Cotton up \$.04 per pound.

We must take other steps to repair the safety net as well. We need an emergency price floor for dairy farmers in all regions of the country. We also need Congresswoman CLAYTON's bill to ensure hard-working farmers access to Federal credit cut off by the Republicans.

We must also extend the ethanol program. Tomorrow the Ways and Means Committee will act on the highway bill. We call upon the Republican Chairman to extend the ethanol program. Ethanol provides us clean energy—and strengthens American agriculture. The ethanol program strengthens corn prices, boosting the annual income of a typical Missouri grain farm by \$15,000 to \$30,000.

Last year, key Republicans opposed the ethanol program, and Congress failed to renew the program. This halted construction of a dozen ethanol plants—\$700 million in investment—in rural America, costing our rural communities good-paying jobs.

Congress can do better. So we are renewing our call to the Republicans: Stop the attack on America's farmers. Let's restore the ethanol credit. Let's stand together for opportunity for Rural America.

TRIBUTE TO TOM SZELENYI

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 25, 1998

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to my dear

friend and advisor Tom Szelenyi of Millbrae, California. This week he marks his 70th birthday, and his seven decades provide lessons from which all of us can learn—worthy examples about perseverance and overcoming obstacles to create a life distinguished by a commitment to his family and his community.

Mr. Speaker, Tom Szelenyi's long and unpredictable journey began on March 28, 1928, in Budapest, Hungary. The only child of a middle-class Jewish family, his early years were happy ones, marked by close friends and loving parents. His father was a traveling salesman who was away from home for a portion of every week. During this time Tom remained with his mother and freely engaged in typical childhood pranks without fear of punishment—until his father's return at the weekend.

The happy circumstances of Tom's early life were abruptly shattered on March 19, 1944, when the German Army seized control of Hungary. The occupation had swift and bloody consequences for the Hungarian Jewish population. Tom, only sixteen years old at the time, suffered mightily. Shortly after the German occupation, Nazi storm troopers arrested Tom's father and sent him to a forced labor camp. He never returned. He was murdered by a young German soldier for not working fast enough.

Tom and his mother found temporary refuge in one of the "safe houses" that Swedish diplomat and humanitarian Raoul Wallenberg designated as "Swedish Legation Property" throughout Budapest. Wallenberg's remarkable courage saved the lives of as many as 100,000 Hungarian Jews—including myself and my wife, Annette, as well as Tom Szelenyi and his mother. Through Wallenberg's efforts, Tom Szelenyi survived through the summer months, the time when the bulk of the Hungarian Jewish population was deported to Auschwitz and other Nazi death camps.

Tom's sanctuary was short-lived, however. He was captured by the Germans in the fall of 1944 and, with a group of Hungarian Jewish men, was forced to undertake a "death march" of exhaustion and starvation from Budapest to the Austrian border. From there, Tom was shipped to the concentration camp at Buchenwald, Germany, where he arrived in November 1944.

Tom endured seven months at Buchenwald—seven months of hunger, agonizing work details, and the ubiquitous fear of death. At the end of the war, with the American Army driving closer and closer to the center of the Third Reich, he and other surviving inmates were forced to march from Buchenwald to the concentration camp at Theresienstadt in Czechoslovakia. Most of Tom's fellow prisoners succumbed during this last Nazi torment, victims of starvation, exhaustion, and cold-blooded murder. Throughout this agonizing trial, as with his many previous struggles, Tom endured, driven by the hope that he would live to create a better life for himself and his family.

The German war machine collapsed in May 1945, and Tom Szelenyi was liberated from Theresienstadt that same month. Still only a seventeen year-old boy, he then proceeded to make his way back across the war-ravaged continent to his home in Budapest. There he joyfully discovered that his mother had survived the war and had remarried.

At this time, it became evident to Tom that he had no future in Hungary. He realized that

the time had come to fulfill his lifelong dream of living in the United States. Tom initially spent time in Germany and Canada, but he finally arrived in New York City in 1952—penniless, but emboldened by a hunger to build a new life in America.

His early years in this country were not easy. The young, but strong-willed Tom Szelenyi worked at a number of different jobs—loading bales of hay onto ships, loading motion picture film cans onto trucks, and then working his way up to become a movie distributor for Warner Brothers.

In late 1956, Tom received a telephone call from the Red Cross informing him that his mother had escaped from Budapest in the wake of the Hungarian uprising and that she was on her way to New York City. When she arrived, he immediately decided to take her to live in California. He had been impressed by the mild climate—he visited the state once in January and did not need to wear an overcoat. He was also attracted by the great opportunities available on the West Coast.

In California, through hard work, Tom found great success in the air freight business. He recently retired after thirty successful years in that field. He has also applied his accumulated wisdom to making a difference in his adopted homeland, and he has advised and assisted me on some of the most important decisions that I have faced in my career in public service. For some time, Tom has been my representative to the San Mateo County Democratic Central Committee, and he has served as liaison with the small business community in my district.

As successful as his business career had been and as important as his contributions to the community have been, Tom Szelenyi's proudest accomplishment is his family. In early 1957, three months after moving to the Bay Area, he met Evelyn Feiler, a charming and brilliant woman, and they were married soon after. Tom and Evelyn have enjoyed forty wonderful years together. They are the parents of two fine sons, Mark and Bob. They also have two delightful grandsons, and Tom never misses their soccer and T-ball games.

Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Tom Szelenyi for the integrity and example of his life and for his service to our community as he celebrates his 70th birthday. I am proud to know Tom and to have him as my friend.

SCHOOL OVERCROWDING FORUM:
PROBLEMS & SOLUTIONS**HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 25, 1998

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following testimony for today's CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

STATEMENT OF CARMEN CRUZ, 6TH GRADER, LOARA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, ANAHEIM CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Hello, my name is Carmen Cruz and school overcrowding is a problem at Loara School. That's why we have year-round school here. In my class, we move, which means we move around from room to room each month. Moving is no fun, yet it is useful because it fits in more kids at school. Some of my friends