need to be aware of the fact that there certainly is no predisposition on this side of the aisle nor is there any predisposition on the part of the White House to allow that to happen. And assuming that the House and the Senate meet their responsibilities to pass a neutral short-term continuing resolution that would take us sometime into October so that Congress would have a chance to produce an omnibus appropriation bill, because I assume that that is going to happen, there is absolutely no reason to expect that there will be a government shutdown in the wings. I just do not see that happening.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the House will stand in recess for approximately 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 21 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess for approximately 15 minutes.

□ 1036

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. EWING) at 10 o'clock and 36 minutes a.m.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H.R. 4101, AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 4101) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes, with a Senate amendment thereto, disagree to the Senate amendment, and agree to the conference asked by the Senate.

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

There was no objection.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT OFFERED BY MS. KAPTUR

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct conferees.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. KAPTUR moves that in resolving the differences between the House and Senate, the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the bill H.R. 4101, be instructed to agree with the provisions of the Senate amendment which provide funding for agricultural disaster assistance and reserve inventories, including the designation of such funds as an emergency requirement under section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, and with no offsetting reductions as provided in the Senate amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) and the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. SKEEN) each will be recognized for 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise to explain my motion to instruct conferees on this agricultural appropriations bill, and fundamentally this motion would require the conferees on H.R. 4101, which is the 1999 appropriations bill for agriculture and related agencies, to agree to the language in the Senate bill which provides funding for agricultural disaster assistance, including reserve inventories, and designates that assistance as emergency spending without offsets.

Mr. Speaker, there is a real crisis facing most American farmers and rural communities today, and many have been unduly affected by the drought and other extreme and unusual weather conditions. Some are suffering the impact of crop disease, and others have been impacted by falling farm prices and an increasing inability to obtain credit. While the rest of the country may be experiencing economic recovery, thousands of farm and ranch families and the communities that depend on them have been left behind.

But the current farm crisis is one that will eventually touch every American, rural and urban, if we do not address this problem and this set of circumstances immediately.

The Senate agriculture appropriation bill provides a total of $521 million in emergency spending to begin to assist farmers in addressing this crisis. My motion does not address the adequacy of the funding level. That provision was added in July before the true extent of the summer drought and its impact on crops and livestock could be known. The appropriate funding level is something that we on the Committee on Appropriations will be discussing with the administration, with the authorizing committee and the Members most impacted by this crisis as we move to completion of this appropriations conference.

But my motion does address the designation of the funding provided to assist farmers in crisis as emergency spending, as defined under the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, with no offsetting reductions in other areas. This has symmetry with the Senate bill.

I know some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will argue that the Congress has been offsetting emergency spending since 1994 and that this emergency should be treated no differently than the other supplemental spending bills we have passed. Well, it seems to us that we have found a way to bend these self-imposed rules on offsets in selected emergencies. We have done so in the supplemental appropriation bill passed last year. We offset only domestic emergency spending, not the defense-related emergency spending included in that bill. Surely our Nation's farmers are as deserving of emergency assistance and designation, particularly this year, as have been our military forces in prior years, and the offsets used for the earlier domestic supplemental bills were primarily funds from the HUD section 8 housing program, funding which we will eventually need to pay back in that program to ensure adequate low-income housing for low-income citizens, particularly the elderly who need this program.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot continue to rob Peter to pay Paul when it comes to addressing funding for natural disasters and other emergencies. It is time to abandon the so-called budget shell games and face our responsibilities and address the real emergencies facing our country today.

Mr. Speaker, this farm emergency is real. Several of my colleagues who are here on the floor have districts more directly impacted by this crisis, and I will be pleased to yield to them so that they can discuss the severity of this crisis and the immediate impact on their constituents. I ask that the House support this motion to instruct conferees and send a message to America's farmers that we recognize the impact of this farm crisis, that we recognize the contributions that farmers and ranchers make to this country's economic success and the well-being of our families and that we are going to act in a responsible way to assure that they get the assistance they need to get beyond this crisis and continue to ensure the productivity of this Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on the motion to instruct and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the distinguished ranking member of the subcommittee, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), bringing this matter before the House. We all know about the desperate situation in agriculture and the problems caused by flood and drought. These are the kinds of problems that we have solved together in a bipartisan fashion in the past, and I look forward to working in that same fashion again in conference to help our farmers and ranchers.

There already is a $500 million emergency spending provision accepted by the other body. It is what we call a plug or a marker, and I refer my colleagues to the debate in the other body on the bill in which it was understood that the amount and scope of any emergency disaster plan for agriculture would have to wait for the administration to submit a detailed package. It is

now 2 months after the bill passed in the other body and much longer since bad weather and other problems hit our farmers and ranchers, and the Administration has yet to come up with a plan.

Now we heard that the USDA has a draft plan that will cost in the neighborhood of $1 billion, and then there is another plan or package in the other body that is estimated to cost $5 billion, and that plan was offered as an amendment yesterday, and it was tabled, but I understand the Administration supports or does not oppose it, and I expect we will see it again before the end of our conference.

So all Members should know at this point that we have several agriculture emergency spending proposals costing anywhere from $500 million to 6 billion, but we still do not know what, if anything, the Administration wants in the way of money, new programs or authorities. I had hoped that the Administration would have put something together sooner, but for whatever reason that did not happen, and yesterday was the most recent day by which the Administration promised us a plan, but nothing has been sent down to us.

□ 1045

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I suggest to my distinguished colleague that she may also want to consider some kind of instruction to the Administration which says that there are some serious problems out there in rural America, and it should not take this look to come up with at least an outline of what needs to be done.

The Department of Agriculture has several thousand people here in Washington and throughout the country, and that is their job. If, for any reason, the Administration cannot or will not draw up a plan, they ought to say so now, because time is wasting and Congress will have to step in and do the Administration's work.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY), who has worked as hard as any Member, harder than most Members in this Congress on this particular issue.

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time, and I thank her very much for her leadership by bringing this motion to instruct.

I have the greatest respect for the chairman and appreciate the comments he just made. What is before the body, however, is what we can do right now, and what this body can do right now is pass this motion to instruct our conferees to go ahead and accept the Senate disaster provision into the conference report for the agriculture appropriations bill.

Mr. Speaker, we have an unprecedented disaster facing farm country, and working together, Republicans and Democrats, we have to respond. It is estimated that we could lose up to one-third of the farmers in the State I represent if we do not do something meaningful. This is urgent. This is a crisis.

Our region, the Upper Great Plains, has been swamped by a 5-year wet cycle that has left 1.4 million acres inundated, under water, not able to be productive. In addition to that, the same wet cycle has produced a disease called Scab, which has devastated production, and for crop we are able to get that is afflicted with this Scab, we get steeply discounted prices. Just when we thought nothing could possibly get worse, we have a collapse in Asia markets and the price of wheat and barley is literally at a 50-year low.

Mr. Speaker, this situation is so dire that according to the Department of Commerce, farm income in North Dakota declined by an astounding 98 percent, a 98 percent decline in net farm income between 1996 to 1997.

Now, our pain, and our pain could not be greater, is spreading. We do not take joy in having company in our plight, but we do acknowledge that the drought which wiped out the 1998 cotton crop in Texas created dire circumstances for farmers in the southern plains; hurricanes have hit the Carolinas; commodity prices have been hurt from Maine to California. We have a disaster of national dimension and we must respond to it.

Now, the motion to instruct calls upon House conferees to take the action by delivering immediate assistance to America's farmers and to acknowledge the flat reality that this is an emergency. This is an emergency. Our response to it needs to be afforded the emergency status provided for in our budget rules and not be offset, but be funded under the emergency basis. That is the action the Senate took, and it will be key to our being able to make a meaningful response to the dimensions of this plight.

The motion to instruct conferees to accept the Senate provisions in light of the mounting farm losses will probably need to be plussed up. We are going to need more money than the $500 million in the Senate bill. I think that this motion, however, directs us exactly in the way we need to go. We have an emergency, we have to respond to it. Republicans, Democrats, farm country, urban legislatures, please unite to pass this motion.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to place in the RECORD communications that have been sent to this House from the President of the American Farm Bureau Federation, Mr. Dean Kleckner, where the federation met with the task force representing 10 different State Farm Bureau Presidents to consider the situation that is facing rural America.

I would like to include their report in the RECORD, but I just wanted to quote one section here, which indicates that net farm income is projected to fall by over $7 billion this year, and the level of a $500 million disaster allocation will not begin to address this shortfall. They are asking Congress to focus on immediate remedies to redress producers, and given the magnitude of the agricultural economic problem, emergency supplemental funding of several billion dollars is justified.

I think in view of the Farm Bureau's position over past years, this is quite a significant statement, and we appreciate their hard work in helping us resolve this situation for our producers across the country.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the correspondence just referred to in my statement.

AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION,
Washington, DC, September 11, 1998.

Hon. NEWT GINGRICH,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Capitol Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: I recently appointed a task force of 10 state Farm Bureau presidents to consider the economic situation facing agriculture and to make recommendations regarding legislative and administrative changes necessary to increase farm income. The task force filed its report, and the leadership of the American Farm Bureau Federation wholeheartedly approved those recommendations. The attached report outlines the priorities that Farm Bureau believes need to be implemented to increase farm income and agricultural exports.

When producers agreed to support the FAIR Act in 1996, Congress assured them that its passage would be accompanied by regulatory reform, tax changes, private property protection, and trade policies designed to improve our global competitiveness. These commitments have not been met, thus exacerbating the current farm crisis.

I urge you to take immediate action to help alleviate the crisis currently facing farmers and ranchers.

Sincerely,

DEAN KLECKNER,
President.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE FARM ECONOMY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1998, BOB STALLMAN, CHAIRMAN

When producers agreed to support the FAIR Act in 1996, they were assured by Congress that its passage would be accompanied by regulatory reform, tax changes, private property protection and trade policies designed to improve global competitiveness and increase foreign markets. These commitments have not been met thus exacerbating the current farm crisis.

Farm Bureau has long been a proponent of balancing the budget and the ''pay as you go'' concept of offsetting increased spending with reductions elsewhere in the budget. However, the failure of Congress to fulfill its commitments necessitates immediate restitution by requesting emergency supplemental funding to assist producers facing depressed prices and/or weather-related disasters.

Farm Bureau firmly believes that current low price are not due to the failure of the FAIR Act. Instead, they are reflective of the failure to compete aggressively in foreign markets due to government restrictions and the inability or unwillingness of the Administration and Congress to fulfill their promise to open foreign markets for U.S. producers. With 96 percent of the customers living outside U.S. borders, these failures cannot be allowed to continue.

In the limited time prior to adjournment, Congress must focus on the agricultural

issues which will immediately aid producers suffering through disasters and low prices, as well as trade issues where the impact may not be immediate—but if ignored until the next Congress—will adversely affect the agricultural economy for years to come.

The problems facing agriculture are diverse—low commodity prices, crop disaster losses, livestock feed losses, and export market barriers that have reduced overseas markets. A ''one size solution won't fit all.'' Therefore, the proposed solutions address each of the problems individually.

Giving that background, Congress and the Administration must focus on the following agricultural priorities:

SHORT TERM NEEDS

Supplemental crop insurance payments

A crop disaster assistance program must be implemented. The $500 million in emergency funding included in the Senate agricultural appropriations bill is insufficient. It is imperative that any disaster assistance be implemented in a way that maintains the integrity of the crop insurance program. We must avoid sending a signal to producers that discourages them from further participation in the program.

The crop insurance program is so inflexible it cannot be adjusted to unique situations. It is incapable of responding to multi-year disasters and leaves producers unable to insure crops at a reasonable level. Supplemental crop insurance payments must be made for those suffering from disasters. Payments should not be limited to those suffering from multi-year disasters.

SANCTIONS INDEMNITY PROGRAM

Unilateral trade sanctions are costing American farmers access to critical markets. Those lost markets have caused poor market prices and reduced sales volume. Program and minor crop producers must be compensated for those lost markets via direct funding. Sanctions Indemnity Payments should not be restricted by any payment limitations.

Unilateral sanctions have become the weapons of the moment to address actions by our trading partners when the U.S. disagrees with some action they take. There is no record of unilateral sanctions producing anything favorable from either an economic or political standpoint. They simply shut U.S. producers out of needed markets. Our competitors are only too happy to sell in these markets. The U.S. earns the reputation as a unreliable supplier when sanctions are imposed.

There currently are about 120 unilateral trade sanctions in place. Over half of those have been implemented during the last four years. It is estimated that over 11 percent of the world's wheat market lies outside the reach of U.S. producers.

Changes to the FAIR Act

Congress must avoid abandoning the market-based policies of the FAIR Act. Producers are reallocating their resources in a more efficient manner than the government could ever dictate. The loan program is intended as a method to lessen pressure to sell at harvest time and spread sales throughout the marketing year. It is a marketing tool for producers, not an income support program.

Raising commodity loan rates or extending the loan period should be discouraged. Such action would be a clear signal to our competitors that once again we are willing to forego our markets and guarantee sales to them. It is a short term fix that has grave longer term economic implications. Any possible short term gains will be obliterated by storage cost, lower prices when the loans ultimately come due and the loss of world market share. Both farm producers and taxpayers would lose.

Disaster Feed Assistance Program

Funding is needed for some type of assistance to livestock producers suffering weather related disasters. Congress should fund a Disaster Reserve Assistance Program or Emergency Livestock Feed Assistance Program to reimburse those producers who have experienced disaster related losses for a substantial portion of the cost of purchasing feed.

PL 480

Several foreign economies are near economic and political collapse. Now is an excellent time for the United States to donate products to these countries. We support enhanced funding for the PL 480 program. Enormous opportunities exist for humanitarian and public relations benefits, in addition to an opportunity to impact market prices. It is important to provide relief to our long term customers who are at risk of liquidating their livestock sectors. These markets must be supported as they are future long-term customers for U.S. products. The PL 480 program should not only be used to help move product to traditional customers, but increased to include customers who may not currently qualify for GSM credits.

Credit relief

A change in current law to allow producers more flexibility in obtaining Farm Service Agency (FSA) guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans is necessary. Under current law, FSA can guarantee operating loans up to $400,000 and ownership loans up to $300,000. The caps should be combined to allow producers to borrow up to $700,000 from one or both programs.

The FSA guaranteed loan program should be expanded, particularly to assist young farmers and ranchers.

Current law generally requires FSA operating loans to be repaid within seven years. While Farm Bureau has long called for discontinuance of FSA lending to anyone unable to build up enough equity to get financing elsewhere after 10 years, the eligibility period for current borrowers should be extended for producers affected by disasters. Farmers should, at least, get the same treatment as other small businesses and homeowners do when floods, hurricanes, and other natural disasters occur.

Congress should oversee FSA's administration of the emergency loan procedures to ensure that application approval is expedited, paperwork is streamlined, and the process is more user-friendly.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

There are currently 30 million acres under contract to CRP. Adequate funding should be provided to allow USDA to accomplish full enrollment at the authorized 36.4 million acres cap.

The announcement for the 18th CRP sign-up will be made this month. However, land accepted during that sign-up will not enter the program until October 1999. Entrance must be accelerated to early 1999.

In addition to the land traditionally accepted into the CRP, Congress should urge the Administration to target some of the newly-enrolled land towards mitigating emerging disease and pest situations such as wheat scab, potato blight and Karnal bunt.

Extended assistance

Since projections indicate that 1999 crop prices will not improve significantly, Congress should consider a two-year assistance program to help producers cope with current low prices expected to extend into the next crop year.

LONG TERM NEEDS

Trade issues

Fast-Track

Fast-track negotiating authority must be passed. Continuing to delay the implementation of fast-track is reducing critical time needed to define and advance U.S. negotiating objectives for the next round of multilateral negotiations, and the opportunity to realize meaningful gains in increasing market access. Discussions have already begun for the Free Trade Area of the Americas. Our trading competitors are not waiting for the U.S. to step forward as the leader but are moving forward to create agreements that we can only hope will not disadvantage the U.S.

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

Congress should act quickly to provide the full $17.9 billion requested for the IMF. The IMF was created to help stabilize national monetary systems in times of fiscal instability. Countries must be determined to be creditworthy to be eligible to participate in the GSM guaranteed loan programs. These programs make possible the sale of U.S. products into critical markets, and help maintain market share and product visibility. The IMF must have the necessary funding to address financial market instability as it occurs around the world. In order to break the Congressional stalemate, we favor basic reforms to IMF policies.

Sanctions Reform

Food and agricultural products should not be used as a foreign policy tool.

In just four years the U.S. has imposed 61 unilateral economic sanctions on 35 countries. These countries contain about 40 percent of the world's population, and thus, a large lost market for U.S. farm output.

Congress should pass legislation that would help prevent future useless embargoes or sanctions by requiring a reasonable evaluation of the consequences of imposing unilateral sanctions before they are imposed.

Market Access and Development Programs

Congress should fully fund the Market Access Program to the $210 million authorized and provide necessary funding for the Foreign Market Development Program. These programs need the expertise provided by a fully supported Foreign Agricultural Service that is expanded to cover all existing and potential market posts.

Tax issues

The next tax bill should include the Farm and Ranch Risk Management Accounts (FARRM). This would encourage farmers and ranchers to save for a ''rainy day'' by allowing them to deposit up to 20 percent of pretax net farm income into an interest-bearing account. Funds could be withdrawn and taxed over the subsequent five-year period.

Congressional efforts should also be focused on addressing farmers' cash flow problems this fall and winter. Tax legislation should include lengthening of the net operating loss rules so that net operating losses could be carried back more than two years and acceleration of the health insurance tax deduction for self-employed individuals.

Crop insurance

The crop insurance program must be fixed. Congress and the Administration must take a hard look at this program to determine how to make it a more viable risk management tool. For several years, we have attempted to ''tinker'' with the program. We will ''tinker'' again this fall due to the inadequacies and lack of flexibility in the program. With an increasing number of producers relying on crop insurance as their primary risk management tool, Congress must

commit to spend the time, effort and money to overhaul it. This obviously cannot be done prior to adjournment. However, a commitment by the House and Senate leadership to schedule floor consideration of major program changes early next spring would send a very positive signal that it does not intend to let the inadequacies linger.

Funding

Net farm income is projected to fall by $7.4 billion in crop year 1998. A $500 million disaster allocation will not begin to address this shortfall. Because the agenda to which Congress committed is woefully incomplete, Congress must focus on immediate remedies to redress producers. Given the magnitude of the agricultural economic problem, emergency supplemental funding of several billion dollars is justified.

The AFBF Committee on the Farm Economy urges Congress to adopt the above recommendations to insure the future viability and competitiveness of U.S. agricultural producers.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA).

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, as we wrap up our work on the fiscal year 1999 agriculture appropriations conference report, I want to reiterate the importance of emergency-designated funding to assist farmers, ranchers, and producers.

During my August break, I met with over 450 farmers and ranchers in my congressional district, together with FSA administrator Keith Kelly, and we heard about the emergency crisis that they are facing. I am particularly concerned about the agriculture sector in drought-stricken regions such as my home State of Texas.

There is no question that more funds are needed. At the minimum, the amount contained in the Senate-passed version of this bill is what needs to be adopted. This $500 million is to be but a starting point. Personally, I feel this amount should be increased to $2.5 billion. Under the emergency situations that we face, that is what we should be looking at to help them out.

My concern is that no matter what action is taken today, it may be too little too late. There are a large number of farm products producers; yes, hard-working agricultural producers who meet our Nation's food needs. We have to make their concerns our top priority, and I respectfully request that my colleagues join me in supporting this motion today.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA). I know that the pain and suffering that is being borne by farm families in that region of the country is particularly acute, and we want to commend the gentleman from Texas for his leadership and for his willingness to come down here today and help us on that measure.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the very distinguished ranking member of the House Committee on Agriculture, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM).

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this emergency declaration motion to instruct conferees in the conference on the agriculture appropriation bill. I wish there were other ways in which we could deal with this. I would hope that the House Committee on Agriculture would soon come together and begin to address this question from the perspective of our committee.

This problem is much bigger than the Senate anticipated. I think, as others have said, that it is very clear that $500 million will not begin to address the devastation that is occurring in farm country. We have the natural disaster which we are addressing here. On top of the natural disaster, we have an economic disaster of low prices that I think a lot of people perhaps cannot fully appreciate. A lot of concern has been expressed about a 20 percent drop in the stock market. If it goes to 20, we are in a recession.

Well, corn prices are 30 percent below the average of the past 5 years. Think about this as I recount some of these numbers. If one thinks of any other part of our economy, or very few parts of our economy in which the last 5-year average of prices and/or salaries that this year would be projected 30 percent below that, and then looking ahead to 1999 is getting no better, I think one can begin to appreciate the full economic problems facing American farmers and ranchers. Wheat prices, 28 percent below. Cattle prices, 17 percent below. Net cash farm income, 43 percent below the average of the last 5 years.

This is what we are dealing with, and the frustration that I have today is nobody seems to be concerned about it from the standpoint of doing what we should normally do, and that is address it through the committee system, working with the Secretary of Agriculture.

I heard previous speakers talking about the blame game and the fingerpointing to the administration. Perhaps there is some of that that is due, but there is also a blame game, and I was reminded of this when we start pointing fingers, I was reminded that when one points a finger, be careful, there are usually 3 pointing back at you.

This should not be a partisan argument. This ought to be today the beginning of an honest and sincere effort to address a very serious economic situation that is facing those who produce food and fiber in the United States. At home, we are talking no longer about farmers and ranchers going out of business, we are talking implement dealers, we are talking the support groups, we are talking the small towns and communities. One cannot take 30 percent of the economy out of the rural community and not have devastation. That is what we ought to be talking about today, and that is why I commend the gentlewoman for this motion to instruct.

I think it should be clear, though, that there are so many other areas that need to be addressed. There is so little time remaining, 18, 17, legislative days. Mr. Speaker, let us not waste them in talking about other activities; let us go to work, roll up our sleeves and deal with it.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with the Committee on Appropriations as a member of the House Committee on Agriculture. I see my chairman is here, and I would hope, and I know that the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. SMITH) is very concerned about this and is doing what I am about to say already. But the problem is that we need somebody else to listen to us, and the leadership of the House to say, let us seriously and sincerely begin to address this. Certainly our side of the aisle will reach out and work with my chairman and the members of the House Committee on Agriculture and the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. SKEEN), and I know where his heart is on this, and the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

The bottom line is, as of today, we feel like that there is not very much being done, other than what the Senate has done. They have made a good step forward. We need to join in that and begin to build upon that to avoid a terrifically serious problem becoming even worse if we choose to do, through inaction, what we otherwise should do.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I have worked for the last few months with the gentleman from Texas and others interested in agriculture to try to reach agreements which would benefit the agriculture community in this Nation on a basis of trust and mutual respect, and to attempt to keep this question, which is so likely to slip into partisan politics, out of that arena. So I must remind Members that we have already taken action, and this leadership, by the way, has taken action to support agriculture in this country, and the gentleman from Texas will remember, with the Square Deal for Agriculture, which included lifting sanctions in Indonesia, which included normal relations with China, and that I join him and he joins me in the effort to pass funding for IMF and for fast track.

□ 1100

To some, those are long-term kinds of solutions. However, certainly lifting the sanctions and the immediate purchase of wheat by Pakistan was not a long-term program.

Since that time, we have searched to find ways to put cash in the hands of agriculturalists in this Nation without distorting world prices for commodities. We have done that by moving the transfer payments, as the gentleman well knows, and he was a part of that, to place in farmers' hands some $5 billion by the 1st of October, which were

transfer payments under the AMTA program, in their hands for their discretionary use.

Now, beyond that, there have been identifications of disaster in the gentleman's portion of America as well as continuing problems in the upper northern States of North and South Dakota and Minnesota where they have had, not 1 year, but 6 or 7 or 5 years of loss due to Scab and other problems in that area.

I have been dedicated to try to find an answer to assist in disaster as well as those ongoing problems in the upper northern States as well as trying to address the horrible revenue reduction which Agriculture has sustained as identified by the gentleman.

So we have had an unfortunate set of circumstances likely, and not having occurred in the recent past, and that is simply a disaster on the one hand in agriculture coupled with and together with a huge reduction in income to farmers.

This does not take and should not take a motion to instruct to get my attention or anybody else's attention. I disagree with what the Senate did. This sounds like we are going to agree with the Senate. The Senate is inadequate, $500 million does not touch this problem. If I thought it did, I would throw my arms about this amendment and say here we have done it. Congratulations. We have solved the agriculture problem. That is silly, and I am not going to do that.

But I am going to suggest this, that while we are putting together a program which must pass this House and the Senate, we ought to be cautious to work together on a program that makes sense and that is judgmental and that addresses each of these issues, disaster, loss of revenue in agricultural country. That is what I am up to. That is what I am about.

So I suggest to my colleagues this is not the way to legislate this issue. This may be a well-meaning amendment. It does not even address the minimum problems we have in agriculture. Vote this down. Give us a chance, hopefully, to work together, because if we do not, we do not answer the question. Let us let farmers make up their choices, but let us do the best job we can.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I would like to inquire as to the remaining time on both sides, please.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EWING). The gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) has 16½ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. SKEEN) has 22 minutes remaining.

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

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to note again that the motion to instruct does not set a dollar level. There was a reference by the prior speaker of $521 million. The motion to instruct does not address the adequacy of the funding level. All it does is says that this assistance should be in the form of emergency spending as in past supplemental bills that have dealt with defense, for example. So it does not set a level.

Let me also place on the record if I might some of the figures that have been given to us from various States in the union. For example, in the State of Georgia, where the farmers and ranchers have been subjected to freezes, floods, and now drought through much of last year and this year, farmgate losses there are estimated to be three-quarters of a billion dollars, over $767 million as estimated by the University of Georgia extension economists.

The gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY) talked a lot about the losses in North Dakota. I know that the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) will shortly be addressing the Minnesota situation and the Red River Valley in general.

But the amount of flooded acres are at historic levels over several years with the compounding factor of wheat Scab there and of course record low prices that are even putting a further downdraft on farm income and productivity in all of these places.

If we look across the country, USDA, as well as private forecasters, are not expecting price conditions to do any better for the near future due to freezes, floods, droughts, hurricanes, fires and for sure the Asian financial crisis which is affecting our markets and our ability to sell.

We know that up to a quarter of the farmers in many States will not get financing to put in a crop this fall or next spring and bankers are calling in and asking the U.S. Department of Agriculture to provide assistance.

So this is not a problem that is diminishing. This is a problem that appears to be growing as we move through 1998. Texas losses already are at over $2 billion as our esteemed colleagues, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) have reminded us.

We have drought currently spreading from the southwest up to parts of Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas; in the southeast all the way to Virginia where over 400,000 acres are affected by drought. We have fires in Florida. We have seen those on television and even floods in my own home State in Ohio as well as Michigan. So this is a national problem that demands a national solution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to our distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. MINGE). I thank the gentleman so very much for coming down and for his leadership throughout this past year on these issues of concern to our farmers and ranchers.

Mr. MINGE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Ohio for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I also would like to express my appreciation to the chairman of the subcommittee for his leadership on behalf of agriculture. It is very important that, in this time of agricultural crisis, that we pull together, that we work on a bipartisan basis, and we try to make sure that the necessary legislative response comes before we adjourn in October.

We do not have many opportunities to take this up. Uniquely, this agricultural appropriations bill is one of those opportunities, if not the only opportunity.

So in that context, I would like to express what I have heard from the bankers, the farm equipment dealers, the farmers, and others in my area as to what we have to do.

I would like to preface this by saying that, as all of us recognize, the agricultural economy is in an economic free-fall. If we do not act, we face the prospect of farming as we have known it in much of America being transformed, not for the better, but for the worse within a period of about 18 months.

First, with respect to administration, I have heard that the Farm Service Agency at the local level is suffering every bit the problems that the Defense Department is suffering from, and the gentleman from Florida has spoken about it so eloquently.

If we are going to take up the Defense Department's needs, I submit that we must take up the needs of the Farm Service Agency so it can deliver and administer these programs at the local level.

I have received calls from people I know in church and otherwise on their own time that work at the Farm Service Agency saying we do not know what to do. We have mountains of paperwork that are building up in our offices. We must respond to this.

Secondly, we have loan guarantee, direct loan, and interest buy-down programs. These programs have worked well over the past several years. They have served agriculture well. They have been supported on both sides of the aisle.

Unfortunately, we have spending caps that we have had to impose on these programs. But the bankers are telling me that, if we do not have these interest buy-down, loan guarantee, and direct loan programs that we are not going to be getting the crop in in 1999.

We have to expand these programs so it is not just having them but it is expanding them. I submit that we ought to double the loan guarantee authority that we have, given the interest buy-down and the direct loan. This, again, is an appropriations problem.

I would like to emphasize that we are all searching for a way to deal with the question of prices.

The question of prices, how do we respond to this? There are many choices, there are many opportunities, but I would submit that the easiest is to take something we are all familiar with, the loan marketing program, or the marketing loan program, uncap the loan rate, move it up to 85 percent. We can use the loan deficiency payment approach; we can use the forfeiture approach, whatever is going to work, but

that is a program that is in place that the farmers are familiar with, that the U.S. Department of Agriculture is familiar with and we can implement immediately.

I submit that we ought to do that. We ought to move on it.

There are many other items I would like to address but I would just like to leave this thought with you in closing: The bank examiners, in a sense, haunt the process. They have to make sure that our banking system is operated with integrity. Unfortunately, when cash flow statements do not make any sense, the bank examiners say to the banks, those are not going to be performing loans. Those are criticized loans. We have to make sure that the lenders in the farm economy are able to do cash flows with their farmers that show a prospect for repayment of the loans and that these are not criticized loans. If we do not act in a way that I have outlined, it cannot happen.

I submit that the motion to instruct is at least a positive development to move this along.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN).

(Mr. COBURN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COBURN. Mr. Speaker, there is no question that our agricultural community is in danger. One out of three farmers in Oklahoma this year is at risk, one out of three ranchers, but what this proposal portends to do is to take money that we do not have and take it off the balance sheet and say, children, you pay for this later. Social Security, we will take it out of you again.

What we have to do is to recognize that we have a need in the agricultural community. That need does not obviate our need to be fiscally responsible in other areas of our government budget.

I am going to support lots of things to help our farmers and additional monies, but it is incumbent upon us to pay for it, to not just say, here is money, we are going to just add it to the debt, our children are going to pay it back, or, better yet, the money that is there we are going to steal from the Social Security surplus that is coming right now, because that is what this instructs our conferees to do, to take the money away from our children or away from the seniors.

My question is: Is there not some place in the Federal grandiose budget that we can say we can cut so we can help our farmers? The question is not about whether or not we can help our farmers, and the question is not whether or not we should.

The question is: Who are we going to hurt to help our farmers? The assumption is if we cannot do that, if it is not possible for us to do that, then what we are saying is this government is running efficiently, there is no waste, there are no areas that we should be able to rescind to be able to pay to help our farmers.

I think that the vast majority of the farmers in this country, the farmers and cattle ranchers in this country, want us to find it somewhere else. They do not want to put this money off on their children because that is exactly where it would go. The American public should know that declaring it an emergency means we do not have to pay for it. The hard work of being a Member of this body to find out the most efficient way to run this government is thrown out the door, and we just add it to the debt.

So we have two problems. One is, our farmers and ranchers are in trouble. We need to help them. The second problem is, we do not help them at all in the future by taking the money from our children or from the Social Security trust fund. That is exactly where this money will come from.

Let us find it. Let us do the hard job that we are paid to do to find the money to solve the problem for our farmers. We can do it. We can do it in a bipartisan manner. We can find this money and we can serve our farmers and ranchers well.

I will be asking for a recorded vote on the previous question in order to enable that we can offer a way to offset these funds.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. MINGE).

Mr. MINGE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the dilemma that the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) has posed. I certainly join with him in a commitment to balance the budget, but first let me point out we do not even have a budget resolution we are operating under. Who knows what the budget is for agriculture? Until we get a budget resolution, I submit, we do not have the leadership on the majority side on this vital matter.

Secondly, we are going to be treated to a request that this body approve $80 billion in various taxes.

□ 1115

Where is that money coming from? From Social Security? If we have that amount of money, I submit we ought to also be considering what can we do for America's farmers. We must do something for this sector of our economy.

Finally, we are going to be considering supplemental appropriations in many other areas, the Defense Department for one. If we cannot consider this for the American farmers, I think we have abdicated our role in Congress.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN).

Mr. COBURN. Mr. Speaker, I would just say that I agree with the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. MINGE), that there should not be the first tax cut until we have secured our children and the seniors in this country and what has been promised to them.

But there also should not be the first penny left in Washington for us to spend that does not go towards those two goals. So, I will agree with the gentleman and he will find my vote lining right up there. But that does not say that we should not do the right thing now. Because somebody else is going to do the wrong thing does not mean that we should follow them down that road. Mr. Speaker, we should, without a doubt, pay for any supplemental spending to help our farmers and ranchers.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I would like to inquire as to time remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EWING). The gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) has 9 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. SKEEN) has 18½ minutes remaining.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON), who has been such a leader on trying to get assistance to our farmers and ranchers.

(Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN), I sympathize with a lot of what he is saying. But I would like to point out again that we do not have a budget at this point, and that is frankly one of the problems.

Mr. Speaker, I come from an area, and I just spent last weekend out talking to farmers again, where they are telling me up in the north part of my district that 70 percent of the producers are not going to be able to get money to get in the field next year.

We are in an absolute crisis situation. I think all of us would like to pay for all of these additional appropriations, and I hope that we could find some way to pay for this. But my concern is that we might get into a situation where we cannot find the money and then nothing happens.

We have an absolute desperate situation because of things beyond our control, because of disease problems, to some extent because of weather problems, but mostly disease problems. We need some kind of an immediate response. Should have been one 2 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, while the rest of the country has been experiencing pretty good crops in most of the areas, and the prices have been a lot better than they are now, we were experiencing a situation where we did not have anything to sell. During the time when the prices for wheat and corn were considerably higher than they are now back in 1996, we did not have a crop because it was wiped out by scab and Vomitoxin and floods.

So now this year we have a fairly decent crop in some of the areas, but it is not worth anything. What has happened is the farmers have lost their equity. Next year, the situation does not

cash flow because of the prices that we got. We need some kind of response if we are going to keep these folks in business.

Mr. Speaker, if this is not an emergency, I do not know what is. I think that I am going to support this motion because it is a step in the right direction, but I do not think it is enough money to deal with the problem. I think that we need to look at solutions such as the administration is working on right now, as I understand it. They are looking at a proposal where if farmers had a crop insurance loss 3 years out of 5, that they would pay 25 percent of the crop insurance that farmers receive during that time as a direct payment. That would be a step in the right direction.

I also would encourage the Members in this body and the administration to look at a proposal that has been put forward by some folks in our area where we could set up a land diversion program where we would turn this land black for 3 years and try to get this disease out of the system. That would be something that would be very helpful to us.

Again, there would be some cost to that proposal. But, again to reemphasize, we have gone through a situation where we have some farmers that have not had a crop for 5 or 6 years, have not had a thing to sell, and have eaten up their equity. If we are going to keep the fabric of that part of the country together, we have to have some kind of a response.

Mr. Speaker, I implore my colleagues to support us in coming up with something yet before we adjourn this session, so that we can go back to those people with some kind of hope that they can farm next year.

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

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to point out, one of the previous speakers expressed some concerns about the budget. I just want to say that of all the subcommittees in this House, this Subcommittee on Agriculture has taken more cuts, has laid off more people, over 10,000 at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, has consolidated more offices at the local level, has had to cap research dollars below levels at which we would prefer to fund them. We have had to cut back on our trade promotion programs at a time when we are having trouble with exports.

If we look at the choices that we have had to make, there has been no more responsible committee or subcommittee in this Congress than this Subcommittee on Agriculture. If one is concerned about attempting to deal with balancing the budget, we have done more than our fair share.

I would hope that the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN), in trying to find a true answer to this, could look across accounts, including to some of the accounts that are outside the jurisdiction of this committee.

This is an issue that the Committee on the Budget should have dealt with. We do not have a budget resolution this year. Why should the farmers and ranchers of this country be asked to pay the price of the Committee on the Budget inside this Congress that did not do its job?

It just seems to me that we have taken the hits, substantial hits in this committee at a time when rural America is crying out to us for attention. It would be a travesty not to meet our public obligations to the people who are producing the real wealth of this country simply because some procedural group inside this Congress, not this subcommittee, and not this full committee, did not do their job.

So, I think we have a higher calling here today with this motion to instruct. We welcome the gentleman's support and ideas as we move forward here. But, please, understand what is going on on this budget situation. It is not the work of this subcommittee, nor the full committee, nor in fact the Committee on Agriculture of this Congress, but other problems that we are facing in other venues here. There is no reason we could penalize the farmers and ranchers of this country because of the inaction of some elements of this institution and the other body.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM).

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for yielding me this time, and I associate myself with her remarks concerning the work of this subcommittee, the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. SKEEN) and the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) and their fellow members. The problem we face is not their fault. In fact, they have done an admirable job in dealing in a very, very judicial and positive way with a very tight budget.

But I want to speak to the question that the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) brought up just a moment ago, because he is right on target with one major exception. That is if we are truly to work out the expenditure cuts in order to fund this particular need of an emergency, that must be done supporting a budget that can get 218 votes.

If the gentleman will remember, and just for the body's recollection, those of us who had a slightly different opinion of what this budget ought to look like this year, those of us so-called Blue Dogs, were denied the opportunity even to debate our ideas on this floor when we had the opportunity to talk about this issue. The leadership of the House chose not to even let the free exchange of ideas occur on the floor of the House as some of us would like to have talked about this.

So, it is important for this body to understand those of us who bring this resolution today, admitting it is inadequate, admitting that it is muddying the water, but unless the water is muddied, some of us believe that nothing is going to happen because we will never be able to get the perfect plan.

Later this week we are going to debate an $80 billion tax cut with Social Security trust funds. I agree with the gentleman, any dollars that are spent for any purposes are coming out of the Social Security trust fund. Therefore, I am going to be very judicial with how many of these dollars, and I will reach out and work with the gentleman from Oklahoma and anyone else that can help us find those dollars.

But I believe someone has already spoken to the fact that we have got a potential growing emergency in the defense areas of this country that I am very concerned about also. And, therefore, perhaps it is time for reasonable heads to get together and start working on a plan that can be supported by 218 votes that meets the needs of this country.

Mr. Speaker, today we talk about agriculture. We made that argument. But I think it is going to be ''fess up'' time and ''honest up'' time for a lot of us. The concern I have, and why I asked to speak again, is I am afraid that we are going to pursue a process in which we have all kinds of ideas, but no one ever gets 218 votes and we end up pointing the finger of blame. Rural America cannot stand that.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would just ask the Members to please support our motion to instruct in order to assure that the farmers and the ranchers of this country in many cases are allowed to plant a crop, to move their livestock, to keep this country whole in its economy and moving forward.

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this motion to instruct conferees because of the grave drought situation affecting the farmers of south Texas and the difficulties they are facing with the Crop Insurance Program's coverage of their crop loss.

My office has heard from farmers, bankers, and those in the farming industry who have experienced their fifth straight year of weather related crop losses. Assistance under the emergency status designation for Texas agriculture producers is definitely needed.

I am here to voice the concerns of these farmers in Washington and urge that disaster assistance alleviating this situation be made available.

Mr. SANDLIN. Mr. Speaker, over the last month, donated hay has come to Texas from Missouri, Kansas, Illinois, and other states across the country. The free hay is a near miraculous sight for many East Texas ranchers and a wonderful tribute to the generosity of the human spirit. However, in all but a few cases, the hay will provide only a stopgap measure until the cattle producers can find another way to purchase hay.

Most of the state's pasture land is still rated as poor or very poor, and my district in East Texas is one of the driest regions in the state. For months, parched fields have forced Texas ranchers to purchase feed or hay to feed their herds. The dry conditions and the increased demand, however, have made hay scarce and expensive. Texas ranchers are spending an

average of $3.5 million a day in extra feed costs to support their herds.

All agricultural producers in Texas, not just the ranchers, are suffering through the second severe drought to hit Texas in three years. Total farm and ranch losses from the drought are now estimated to reach $2.1 billion statewide, with an overall impact to the state economy estimated at $5.8 billion. Other factors, such as a glut of foreign cotton and bumper crops of grain in the Midwest are driving down commodity prices and compounding an already disastrous year for Texas farmers.

I return home to East Texas every weekend, and every time I do, I hear from another farmer who doesn't think he will make it to next year. Mr. Speaker, these are families who have been farming and feeding the country for generations. These farmers are highly skilled and very efficient, but no farmer, no matter how competent, could get through this year unscathed. And it is not just the farmer who suffers—every time East loses a farming family, the ripple effect is felt throughout the local economy.

Mr. Speaker, we absolutely must take this opportunity to address the crisis in the Texas farming community. We have to provide emergency funds to give the USDA the flexibility to address the needs of Texas farmers and ranchers. With emergency funding, Secretary Glickman can fund the Disaster Reserve Assistance Program to provide feed assistance to ranchers and provide increased flexibility for indemnity payments to producers who have lost their crops. It is only an initial step, Mr. Speaker, but it is a step we must take as soon as possible.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the motion to instruct conferees to agree with the Senate amendments to the Agriculture Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 1999 providing emergency funds for agricultural disaster assistance. Our nation's farmers and ranchers, especially those in Texas, have faced extremely difficult financial times due to brutal natural disasters and very low commodity prices over the past five years. They need these emergency funds, and they need them now.

Texas farmers have suffered extraordinary losses. This summer's extreme heat and drought conditions have resulted in near total crop losses for every county I represent. The drought has forced many Texas ranchers, who cannot afford to feed cattle any longer, to liquidate their herds. The crisis has cost the state nearly $2 billion in economic losses.

Our nation cannot sustain this type of loss. Farmers and ranchers in Texas and other states deserve our assistance in this time of extreme need. They feed us and clothe us providing high quality agriculture products throughout the year. Supporting the Senate amendment for emergency funding is an essential step in the right direction.

We cannot afford to put anymore farmers and ranchers at risk. Although the Senate increase is minimal, it is necessary insurance for our nation's farmers and ranchers who risk losing their livelihood.

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Speaker, after experiencing one weather-related disaster after another, including this year's drought, the future of production agriculture and family farming in middle and south Georgia faces a threat of almost unprecedented proportions.

This is not a sudden, overnight crisis. Farmers, bankers, and communities dependent on production agriculture have been in a crisis mode for some time.

Our farmers have faced a threatening situation that has now become even more severe.

Over the past few weeks, I have visited farms to meet with farmers all across the Second District and to see first-hand the destruction that has been wrought by the droughts and other disasters which have struck our area. Indeed, as mentioned by Ms. KAPTUR, the University of Georgia has estimated farmgate value lost this year at over $767 million.

Farmers want indemnification payments that will give them the same kind of safety-net our government offers to other nations in Asia, such as South Korea, Thailand, Indonesia and the Phillippines—to bail them out in their time of crisis.

Farmers want relief from high production costs and low commodity prices.

I promised I would carry that message back to Washington and work with my colleagues in Congress and the Administration to get some relief.

I am pleased to join my colleagues in supporting this motion to instruct the Ag Appropriators to designate disaster spending as ''Emergency Spending'' under our current Budget Rules.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I move the previous question on the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

Pursuant to clause 5 of rule XV, the Chair will reduce to a minimum of 5 minutes the period of time within which a vote by electronic device, if ordered, will be taken on the question of agreeing to the motion to instruct.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 331, nays 66, not voting 37, as follows:

[Roll No. 430]

YEAS—331

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Allen
Andrews
Armey
Bachus
Baesler
Baker
Baldacci
Ballenger
Barcia
Barrett (NE)
Barrett (WI)
Barton
Bass
Bateman
Becerra
Bentsen
Bereuter
Berman
Berry
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop
Blagojevich
Bliley
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonior
Bono
Borski
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brown (CA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Bryant
Bunning
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Canady
Capps
Cardin
Carson
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Clay
Clement
Clyburn
Collins
Combest
Condit
Conyers
Cook
Cooksey
Costello
Coyne
Cramer
Crane
Crapo
Cummings
Cunningham
Danner
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
DeLay
Deutsch
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Doyle
Dreier
Dunn
Edwards
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
English
Etheridge
Evans
Everett
Farr
Fawell
Fazio
Filner
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Fossella
Fowler
Frank (MA)
Franks (NJ)
Frost
Furse
Gallegly
Ganske
Gejdenson
Gekas
Gephardt
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Goode
Gordon
Granger
Gutierrez
Gutknecht
Hall (OH)
Hall (TX)
Hamilton
Hansen
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hefner
Hill
Hilleary
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hobson
Holden
Hooley
Horn
Houghton
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inglis
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jenkins
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (WI)
Johnson, E. B.
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kasich
Kelly
Kennedy (RI)
Kennelly
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kim
Kind (WI)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kleczka
Klink
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kucinich
LaFalce
LaHood
Lampson
Lantos
LaTourette
Lazio
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
Livingston
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McCrery
McDade
McDermott
McHale
McHugh
McInnis
McKeon
McKinney
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Menendez
Metcalf
Mica
Millender-McDonald
Miller (CA)
Miller (FL)
Minge
Moakley
Mollohan
Moran (KS)
Murtha
Neal
Nethercutt
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Oxley
Packard
Pallone
Parker
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pease
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Pickering
Pickett
Pomeroy
Porter
Portman
Price (NC)
Quinn
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Redmond
Regula
Reyes
Riley
Rivers
Rodriguez
Roemer
Rogan
Rogers
Ros-Lehtinen
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sabo
Sanchez
Sanders
Sandlin
Sawyer
Saxton
Schaefer, Dan
Scott
Serrano
Sessions
Shaw
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Sisisky
Skaggs
Skeen
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith, Adam
Snyder
Solomon
Souder
Spence
Spratt
Stark
Stenholm
Stokes
Strickland
Stump
Stupak
Talent
Tanner
Tauscher
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Thomas
Thompson
Thornberry
Thune
Thurman
Traficant
Turner
Upton
Vento
Visclosky
Walsh
Waters
Watkins
Watt (NC)
Watts (OK)
Waxman
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Wexler
White
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson
Wise
Wolf
Woolsey
Yates
Young (FL)

NAYS—66

Archer
Barr
Bartlett
Brady (TX)
Burr
Campbell
Cannon
Christensen
Coble
Coburn
Cox
Cubin

Doolittle	Largent	Royce
Duncan	Latham	Ryun
Ensign	Leach	Salmon
Ewing	LoBiondo	Sanford
Fox	Manzullo	Scarborough
Frelinghuysen	McIntosh	Schaffer, Bob
Goodlatte	Moran (VA)	Sensenbrenner
Goodling	Myrick	Shadegg
Greenwood	Neumann	Shays
Hayworth	Nussle	Smith (MI)
Hefley	Pappas	Smith (OR)
Herger	Paul	Snowbarger
Hoekstra	Paxon	Stearns
Hostettler	Petri	Sununu
Istook	Pitts	Taylor (NC)
Johnson, Sam	Pombo	Tiahrt
Jones	Radanovich	Wamp
Klug	Roukema	Weldon (FL)

NOT VOTING—37

Clayton	Manton	Rohrabacher
Engel	McGovern	Schumer
Eshoo	McIntyre	Smith, Linda
Fattah	Meeks (NY)	Stabenow
Gonzalez	Mink	Tierney
Goss	Morella	Torres
Graham	Nadler	Towns
Green	Oberstar	Velazquez
Harman	Owens	Weygand
Hastings (FL)	Pelosi	Wynn
Jefferson	Poshard	Young (AK)
Kennedy (MA)	Pryce (OH)	
Lewis (GA)	Riggs	

□ 1149

Mrs. CUBIN and Messrs. SENSENBRENNER, GOODLATTE, COX of California, WELDON of Florida, PAXON, WAMP, GREENWOOD, TAYLOR of North Carolina, FOX of Pennsylvania, and COBLE changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Messrs. SCOTT, BACHUS and LEVIN changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 430, I intended to vote ''no'' and inadvertently instead voted ''yea'' and did not realize my error until the vote was announced.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EWING). The question is on the motion to instruct offered by the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. Kaptur).

The motion to instruct was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the Chair appoints the following conferees:

Messrs. SKEEN, WALSH, DICKEY, KINGSTON, NETHERCUTT, BONILLA, LATHAM, LIVINGSTON, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. FAZIO of California, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. DELAURO, and Mr. OBEY.

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H.R. 4103, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 4103) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes, with Senate amendments thereto, disagree to the Senate amendments, and agree to the conference asked by the Senate.

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

There was no objection.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES OFFERED BY MR. OBEY

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. OBEY moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the bill, H.R. 4103, be instructed to reduce, within the scope of conference, the maximum amount possible from appropriations for low priority congressionally-directed projects not requested in the FY 1999 Defense Department budget request and apply those funds to alleviate high priority military readiness needs for spare parts, quality of life programs, training exercises, retention bonuses, and recruitment incentives.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) each will be recognized for 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

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

Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that the majority party leadership is contemplating an emergency spending supplemental to add substantial sums of money for military readiness to be paid for out of the surplus. The concerns for slippage in military readiness are legitimate and I share them. What I do question is whether this Congress needs to spend sums out of the surplus to take care of those needs when it is evident that we have not come close to squeezing low priority pork barrel spending out of this bill so that that spending can be shifted to meet those legitimate readiness needs.

A lot that often happens in this town is enough to give hypocrisy a bad name, and on this issue I think we have the same principle operating. This Congress has added $20 billion to military budget requests of the President over the last three years. The vast majority of that money, over 85 percent, has not gone to address readiness shortfalls about which we now hear so many crocodile tears. It has gone for procurement and research, some of it useful, much of it of low priority to meet the political needs of Members for things like additional C–130 aircraft that the Pentagon has not asked for, or questionable studies of the Aurora Borealis. It has been reported that there is $4 billion in the House defense appropriation bill this year for congressionally-directed projects not requested by the Pentagon.

I want to say that I am not a Percy Pureheart on these items.

□ 1200

I think there are times when the Congress has a perfect right to substitute its judgment on the need for projects for that of the executive branch. I recognize that that is our prerogative. What I do object to is when we go overboard in the process, and I would like to say that we ought to be able to take at least one-fourth of the congressional add-ons that in my judgment, and in the judgment of many others who know a lot more about it than I do, were made principally to meet the political needs of Members of Congress rather than to meet the defense needs of the country, and we ought to take that money, eliminate those low-priority projects and move that into true readiness portions of the budget for things like quality-of-life improvements for troops, spare parts, recruitment and retention initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, this amendment does not specifically require a specific amount to be moved, but it does instruct the committee, to the maximum possible extent, to move whatever items they can move out of these low-priority pork and project areas into readiness parts of the budget.

Now, I earlier mentioned hypocrisy. We have seen this Congress on several occasions bemoan the very shortfalls that it has helped create.

One example: Just last year, when the leadership of this House attacked the Clinton administration intelligence budget for being too low and then proceeded to cut it even more in order to free up more money for congressional pork.

I do not, as I said, object to the Congress occasionally exercising its independent judgment on the values of some of these projects. What I object to, whether it occurs on the highway bill, or the committee of jurisdiction added over 1,800 pork barrel projects, or whether it happens in this bill, what I object to is when the practice of adding these projects becomes so gross that in the end that itself drives through this place legislation which otherwise would be considered in a more thoughtful way and with a more skeptical eye.

And so I simply want to repeat: This Congress has added in the last 3 years over $20 billion in military spending, 85 percent of which went to nonreadiness accounts for destroyers that the Pentagon did not ask for or C–130s the Pentagon did not ask for and other items.

In my own district, I have tried to eliminate one military project for 14 years and still have not had any success. I do not know if there is another Member of Congress who has asked the Congress to eliminate a project in his own district. I have not succeeded, but I am going to keep trying.

But what I object to is the mind-set on this bill that always assumes that money should be spent, rather than saying that the burden of proof falls on those once in a while who want to spend the money.

It just seems to me when we are told that there are 11,000 military personnel who are still on food stamps, that what we ought to be doing is putting our money in places that alleviates that demeaning need for them to ask for food stamps when they ought to be