

up opportunity in world markets. And also, most important, the third passage dealt with tax—tax law flexibility, so that that production unit, that farmer or rancher, can deal with the cyclical character of his or her markets on good years versus bad years. So they pay their fair share in taxes but they do not pay taxes one year on substantial profits and then the next year have tremendous losses that put them in a bind.

They used to understand that. That is the way the law used to be. With that flexibility, you kind of store it up in the good years to offset your needs in the bad years. That is the way agriculture ought to operate, and that is the way our tax laws ought to allow them to operate.

I thought I would give that synopsis of what we are doing and what I think is important for our taxpayers to understand. Keeping this tremendous production unit in our country—known as agriculture—healthy and producing is of critical importance to our country. The American consumers today pay less for food than any other item they buy. As a result of that, our consuming public has more spendable income to buy cars, to buy homes, to provide for their children's education. They are not paying 30 percent or 40 percent or 50 percent or 60 percent of their income for food. They are paying 13 to 14 percent, for the highest quality, safest, richest foods in the world. That is a result of this marvelous production unit we call American agriculture.

I am proud that this Republican Congress, working with our colleagues on the other side, represented that understanding in the current policy that is embodied in this omnibus bill with which we will be dealing. It is an important area. I am glad our leaders were sensitive to it and that we can turn to agriculture and say: We didn't save you, we didn't guarantee you, but we recognize the need to shore up, in those areas of disaster, and to assure that those units of production—and those are family farms; these are people, men and women and their children who oftentimes work from daylight to dark—are going to be held as whole as we can possibly keep them at a time when farm commodities, because of certain situations here and around the world, have plummeted to nearly 25- and 30-year lows.

Mr. President, let me run through a few unanimous consent requests cleared by both sides of the aisle.

ACTIVITIES OF THE MICCOSUKEE TRIBE

Mr. CRAIG. I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 3055, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3055) to deem the activities of the Miccosukee Tribe on the Miccosukee Re-

served Area to be consistent with the purposes of the Everglades National Park, and for other purposes.

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. GRAHAM. Today I join my colleague Senator MACK in supporting the right of the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida to reside in Everglades National Park.

Mr. MACK. I thank the Senator and feel that although the acreage provided to the Miccosukee in this legislation is far less than their historic territory within the Everglades, it does satisfy their right to reside within Everglades National Park.

Mr. GRAHAM. It is also my understanding that by giving the Miccosukee Tribe this opportunity to build a community within Everglades National Park we are fully resolving their claims to land within the park.

Mr. MACK. Yes. Also, it is expected that Miccosukee Tribe is granted the right to occupy, reside in, and govern in perpetuity the Miccosukee Reserved Area in Everglades National Park. I am pleased that this legislation will resolve the dispute between the Park Service and the Miccosukee Tribe over lands within the park.

Mr. GRAHAM. I am pleased to join the Senator in supporting the continued residence of the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida in Everglades National Park.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the bill be read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 3055) was considered read the third time and passed.

PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1998

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask the Chair lay before the Senate a message from the House of Representatives on the bill (S. 1525) to provide financial assistance for higher education to the dependents of Federal, State, and local public safety officers who are killed or permanently and totally disabled as the result of a traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty.

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 1525) entitled "An Act to provide financial assistance for higher education to the dependents of Federal, State, and local public safety officers who are killed or permanently and totally disabled as the result of a traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty", do pass with the following amendment:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Police, Fire, and Emergency Officers Educational Assistance Act of 1998".

SEC. 2. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION TO DEPENDENTS OF PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS KILLED OR PERMANENTLY AND TOTALLY DISABLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY.

Part L of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in the heading for subpart 2, by striking "Civilian Federal Law Enforcement" and inserting "Public Safety";

(2) in section 1211(l), by striking "civilian Federal law enforcement" and inserting "public safety";

(3) in section 1212(a)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking "Federal law enforcement" and inserting "public safety";

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking "Financial" and inserting the following: "Except as provided in paragraph (3), financial"; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(3) The financial assistance referred to in paragraph (2) shall be reduced by the sum of—

"(A) the amount of educational assistance benefits from other Federal, State, or local governmental sources to which the eligible dependent would otherwise be entitled to receive; and

"(B) the amount, if any, determined under section 1214(b).";

(4) in section 1214—

(A) by inserting "(a) IN GENERAL.—" before "The"; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

"(b) SLIDING SCALE.—Notwithstanding section 1213(b), the Attorney General shall issue regulations regarding the use of a sliding scale based on financial need to ensure that an eligible dependent who is in financial need receives priority in receiving funds under this subpart.";

(5) in section 1216(a), by inserting "and each dependent of a public safety officer killed in the line of duty on or after October 1, 1997," after "1992,"; and

(6) in section 1217—

(A) by striking paragraph (2); and

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (3) and (4) as paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively.

Mr. CRAIG. I ask unanimous consent the Senate agree to the amendment of the House-passed bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am proud to cosponsor the Federal Law Enforcement Dependents Assistance Act of 1996 and am again proud to cosponsor this bill, S. 1525, the Public Safety Officers Educational Benefits Assistance Act of 1998. I am delighted that the Senate is finally sending this important bill to the President's desk for his signature into law.

Our legislation extends the educational benefits that we previously provided to the children of federal law enforcement to the families of State and local public safety officials who die or are disabled in the line of duty. Those families make the ultimate sacrifice for our public safety and deserve our support and assistance. I commend Senator SPECTER and Senator BIDEN and all the cosponsors for their work on these measures.

The Federal Law Enforcement Dependents Assistance Act of 1996, known as the Degan Act after U.S. Deputy Marshall Bill Degan, who died in the Ruby Ridge incident in 1992, provides Federal educational assistance to families of Federal law enforcement officers