

(4) That the banks be inspected by the same regulatory agencies who have assigned the credits and permitted the banks; and,

(5) That the banks only receive credits if they prove the continuing ecological success of their project, thus allowing regulators to ensure a 100% success rate of the projects they monitor.

Mitigation banking places the responsibility for restoration and preservation of wetlands in the hands of the experts and establishes the financial incentive to make the restoration work. By applying sound environmental engineering to the restoration process, setting up a longterm monitoring and maintenance endowment, and having the regulatory controls in place—these are the assurances my legislation requires of any potential banking project.

This free-market approach to environmental conservation and stewardship is hard for some to swallow. But I ask you, many organizations have profited greatly from stringent environmental regulations, yet where has all the money gone that was allegedly spent on protecting the environment? And are our lands and waterways really in better hands when the Federal government is the owner or administrator?

I do not believe the interests of the economy and the environment have to be at odds. Wetlands mitigation banking makes conservation good business. It provides the financial and ecological incentives to make restoring, preserving and protecting our environment successful.

The end result, protecting and preserving environmentally sensitive lands, is assured with my legislation. The "American Wetland Restoration Act" will give wetlands mitigation banking the statutory authority it needs to flourish, and it will begin restoring the wetlands that many thought were lost forever.

I hope my colleagues will join me supporting this bill.

REFORM DAIRY PRICING REGULATIONS

HON. THOMAS E. PETRI

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 4, 2001

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill that will reform the method by which fluid milk has been priced in our country for too long. The Federal Milk Marketing Order system is a relic that fixes prices and feebly serves the outdated aims of a bygone era. Created in the 1930's, its original purpose was ostensibly to provide a locally produced supply of fresh milk throughout the country. Over sixty years ago, such a system may have made more economic sense. We didn't have the Interstate highway system, efficient refrigerated trucks, or reconstituted milk, for example. Today, conditions are vastly different, necessitating reform of the federal dairy program.

By basing the price of Class I, fluid milk, on the distance from Eau Claire, Wisconsin, the federal government has radically distorted dairy markets and discriminated against the dairy farmers of the Upper Midwest. The resulting inefficient production of milk in areas distant from the Upper Midwest has led to the oversupply of milk and depresses the price of

processed dairy products. Dairy farmers in Wisconsin have paid dearly under this system. Today, my state loses approximately five dairy farmers a day.

Furthermore, by using distance to set the price of fluid milk, the federal order system is inherently anti-consumer. Consumers are stuck paying the set price for milk instead of the price determined by a free marketplace where efficiency is rewarded. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that eliminating this market distorting system would save \$669 million over five years. In an age of "global free trade," this system that effectively puts a tariff on milk from other regions of the country is absurd.

The bill I introduce today reforms the single most discriminatory element of the Federal Milk Marketing Order program by prohibiting the Secretary of Agriculture from basing the price of fluid milk on distance or transportation costs from any location outside the marketing order area unless 50 percent or more of that area's milk comes from a location outside that order area. By eliminating this factor the Secretary of Agriculture will have to consider supply and demand factors when setting milk prices as required by the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act. Additionally, the bill requires the Secretary of Agriculture to report to Congress on the specific criteria used to set milk prices. This report will include a certification that the criteria used by the Department in no way attempts to circumvent the prohibition on the use of distance or transportation costs as the basis for milk prices.

Reform of the Federal Milk Marketing Order program is long overdue. The discrimination against the dairy farmers of the Upper Midwest must end. Not only will this bill restore fairness to our dairy policy, but consumers of fluid milk across the nation will also benefit from this reform. I urge my colleagues to do the right thing and support this bill.

TRIBUTE TO VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS ON LOYALTY DAY

HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 4, 2001

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to pay tribute to the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, a fine group of men and women who share a profound commitment of patriotism, comradeship and service to our nation's veterans, both in times of war and in times of peace.

These outstanding men and women of every race, creed and ethnic background will celebrate Loyalty Day on May 1, 2001. This day is set aside as a special day for the reaffirmation of loyalty to the United States of America and for the recognition of the heritage of American freedom. Yet, this day does not belong to the Veterans of Foreign Wars alone; it belongs to all Americans. We should all pledge ourselves to maintain a free society in which loyalty is always encouraged and respected. We should let the world know that Americans are behind their country and that, because of this, America is still a strong and vibrant nation.

I would like to specifically recognize the people in my district who have dedicated their

time to support a Loyalty Day celebration. The Third District Commander Walter Liptak and Ladies Auxiliary President Diane M. Pencak, in conjunction with Loyalty Day Chairman James F. Davis, members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Barbara Maruszak-Sparr and Anthony S. Maruszak and the local community are gathering on Sunday, April 29, 2001 to commemorate Loyalty Day.

I commend all our Veterans of Foreign Wars on this Loyalty Day, May 1, 2001 and encourage my colleagues to do the same.

HELP MORE FULL-TIME WORKERS
BRING HOME A DECENT PAY-
CHECK

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 4, 2001

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, on March 7 I introduced the "Federal Living Wage Responsibility Act of 2001," legislation to mandate a livable wage for employees under Federal contracts and subcontracts. Seventy representatives currently cosponsor this important legislation.

Nearly a third of the members of the U.S. labor force work full-time, year-round and still do not earn enough to sustain a family of four at no less than the poverty threshold of \$17,650 per year for a family of four. Employees who work hard at full-time jobs should be paid a wage that assures they will not live in poverty.

To address this problem, this Act requires that:

Employees of Federal contracts or subcontracts of more than \$10,000 be paid the greater of \$8.49 per hour or the hourly wage necessary to reach the poverty level.

Individuals hired by the United States government also receive a living wage, helping thousands of more workers to stay above the poverty level.

Employees of Federal contracts or subcontracts and individuals hired by the United States government receive benefits such as medical or hospital care, vacation and holiday pay, disability and sickness insurance, life insurance and pensions.

Although Congress passed laws such as the Davis Bacon Act and the Service Contract Act to help ensure that employees of Federal contractors earn a decent wage, thousands of federal workers and federally contracted workers still do not earn enough to support themselves or their families.

This legislation will allow hard-working Americans to earn quality wages and to increase their savings for such essential needs as their retirement and their children's education. We believe the Federal government must take responsible, workable steps to reward working Americans and to help keep them out of poverty. This bill represents a practical step toward that goal.

Mr. Speaker, I submit the full text of this meaningful legislation for the RECORD and I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

H.R. 917

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,