ELECTING MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. WALDEN. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Republican Conference, I send to the desk a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 303

Resolved, That the following named Members be, and are hereby, elected to the following standing committees:

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE—Mrs. Noem.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE—Mr. Fleischmann.

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS—Mr. Reed.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1380

Mr. KLINE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1380.

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

There was no objection.

RESIGNATION AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON RULES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignation as a member of the Committee on Rules:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, June 14, 2011.

Speaker JOHN BOEHNER,
U.S. Capitol,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER: I write to inform you that effective immediately I am resigning from the House Rules Committee to join the House Ways and Means Committee. If you have any questions please contact me directly or your staff can contact Steve Pfrang, my Legislative Director, at 202–226–1919.

Sincerely,

TOM REED,
Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignation is accepted.

There was no objection.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1380

Mr. KELLY. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1380.

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

There was no objection.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2112 and that I may include tabular material on the same.

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

There was no objection.

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CHAFFETZ). Pursuant to House Resolution 300 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2112.

□ 1435

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 2112) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes, with Mrs. MILLER of Michigan in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I yield myself 5 minutes.

I recommend to the Committee H.R. 2112, the House Agriculture, FDA, and CFTC funding bill for fiscal year 2012, and I want to make a few remarks about it.

Number one and foremost, because a lot of people are very concerned about the allocation for this bill and the funding level, I want to remind everybody of a couple of things: Number one, our national debt is now 95 percent of the GDP. It's $14 trillion. For every dollar we spend, 40 cents is borrowed.

Now, both parties have fingerprints all over this. We have all overspent. For example, for 8 years under President Bush the national debt increased $3½ trillion. Way too much. And yet, in contrast, in just 3 years President Obama has added to the national debt $5 trillion, an increase of 56 percent. And so much of this is due and owed to foreign countries, and much of it to China. Can you imagine what kind of deal Communist China, a major competitor of ours, would impose upon us if they forced us to restructure our debt? We have to do it ourselves.

Now, the House has passed the Ryan budget, which many people oppose, and I understand that. But I want to point out the President of the United States' budget failed in the Senate 97–0. HARRY REID voted against the President's budget. And in the House, the Congressional Black Caucus offered a budget that failed. The Congressional Progressive Caucus offered a budget and it failed. The Republican Study Committee offered a budget and it failed. The Democrat Caucus offered a budget and it failed. In the Senate, budget plans were offered by Mr. TOOMEY of Pennsylvania and Mr. PAUL of Kentucky; both failed. The only budget that has passed either body is the Ryan budget, and that's what we are looking at today, those numbers.

Now, I understand there's a lot of reluctance to make some of these tough decisions. Today in America 61 million people receive monthly government checks. That's anything from welfare to Medicare to farm payments to veteran retirement to Social Security—lots of people receiving lots of money. These programs are enormously popular, and they're deeply integrated into our economic system and culture. Therefore, reforming these programs is very, very difficult. And to further complicate things, 47 percent of American households do not pay income taxes. For them the status quo is working just fine.

So addressing these things is very difficult. And if you look at the spending pattern in the last several years, it's frightening: March, 2008, $29 billion to bail out Bear Stearns; May of 2008, a $168 billion stimulus package from the Bush administration; in July of 2008, $200 billion to bail out Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac; then in November of 2008, $700 billion for TARP, or the Wall Street bailout; and then in January of 2009, $878 billion for the Obama stimulus program, which, by the way, Madam Chair, was to keep us from getting to 8 percent unemployment.

□ 1440

Now, we're hovering between 9 and 10 percent, and I don't need to remind you but this is the 1-year anniversary of the ''summer of recovery.'' There has not been any recovery. We're still looking for those jobs. Spending our way into prosperity does not work. If it did work, we would be having prosperous times right now.

So the Ryan budget for this bill is $17.25 billion, our reduction of $2.7 billion, approximately a 13½ percent decrease in spending, and yet, despite this, because of the mandatory spending portion of this bill, the bill actually has a net increase, mostly driven by food stamps and the school lunch program, which have gone up about $7 billion between the two of them. We still have a net increase in this bill.

Now, there's going to be a lot of discussion on lots of different accounts, and one of them is the WIC account, the Women, Infants, and Children account, something that I'm very concerned about, something that all of our committee has always supported on a bipartisan basis. But last year, there was some money taken out of it, $562

million, to settle a lawsuit which had nothing to do with school nutrition. A lot of the critics are going to be saying WIC has never been cut. Last year, the Obama administration cut WIC $562 million.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I yield myself 2 additional minutes.

USDA numbers show that WIC participation has dropped 300,000 from February 2010 to February 2011, yet we are still funding it at 8.7 million people. We do not intend for anybody to fall through the cracks. If there is a shortage, there are three discretionary accounts that we can draw upon: a contingency fund of $125 million; a carryover fund, which is in excess of $350 million; and the Secretary's interchange authority, which is $210 million.

There are a lot of things in WIC we can do to improve to make sure that children don't fall through the cracks. Right now, for example, 49 percent of the kids in America participate in WIC. Do we really believe 49 percent are impoverished? Perhaps it's oversubscribed. Maybe we can work with the WIC folks on that.

We had a very healthy debate about WIC overhead, and the USDA has given us conflicting numbers on that. We're planning to meet with the USDA and find out what the real story is. I understand there may be amendments to say let's all agree what an overhead limit should be for WIC and then not spend money on overhead for that.

We are concerned about these things, but I want to close with this. Today, in America, a child under 5 years old is eligible for 12 Federal programs. After that age, he or she is eligible for 9 Federal feeding programs. At 65, you're eligible for 5 different Federal feeding programs. We want to make sure no one falls through the cracks and no one goes hungry, yet at the same time, is it possible that some folks are eligible for not just three meals a day but maybe four and five?

And can we enter into that discussion without a lot of finger-pointing and a lot of emotion? Can we also talk about the fraud and the misuse and the administrative costs without a lot of screaming and hollering? I think we can. I look forward to that debate, and I recommend passage of this bill.

I. 14 percent down.

Reflects the House Rep/Ryan budget which reflects our attempt to deal with the national debt.

A. I don't need to lecture anyone on the national debt but I need to remind all of us on a few facts:

1. At $14T the national debt is 95 percent GDP.

2. For every dollar we spend $.40 is borrowed.

3. While both parties have been responsible for this the spending by this administration has been tremendous. For example, the national debt under President Bush increased $3.5 trillion in 8 years. Way too much! In contrast, however President Obama has increased it by $5T in 3 years. That's 56 percent.

4. Much of this almost half is due to foreign countries, China being a high leader.

If we don't address our debtor crisis eventually our creditors will. With a communist country as a major competitor can you imagine what China could impose on us? It's nothing I want my children and future generations to deal with. We have to do it ourselves.

B. Let me continue with the Ryan budget we hear non stop changes from its critics that it's too harsh but where is their alternative?

1. The Potus has been all but absent. In fact his own budget was rejected by the Harry Reid Democrat led Senate 97–0.

2. Other proposals have been furled as well:

a. In the House:

Congressional Black Caucus.

H. Amdt. 256 to H. Con. Res. 34.

Failed by recorded vote: 103–303.

Congressional Progressive Caucus.

H. Amdt. 257 to H. Con. Res. 34.

Failed by recorded vote: 77–347.

Republican Study Committee.

H. Amdt. 258 to H. Con. Res. 34.

Failed by recorded vote: 119–136.

Democratic Caucus:

H. Amdt. 259 to H. Con. Res. 34.

Failed by recorded vote: 166–259.

b. In the Senate:

Toomey's plan to balance the budget in 9 years:

Failed 42–55.

Rand Paul's plan:

Failed 7–90.

3. Having failed to pass a budget in either the House or Senate, it seems the POTUS and Harry Reid have given up. That's correct there no ongoing negotiations, conferences or hearings. They have totally abandoned their duty and obligations.

C. One can understand cowardice when we look at political realties.

1. Today in America 61 million people receive monthly government checks. That's anything from welfare to Medicare, to farm payments, veteran retirement and social security. Lots of people receive lots of money.

2. These programs are enormously popular and deeply integrated into our economic system and culture. Reforming these programs is at best politically difficult even if both parties dealt in good faith and earnestness.

3. To further complicate the situation 47 percent of American households did not pay income taxes. For them the status quo is just fine.

i. According to the tax policy center.

D. Continuing our spending path has not created prosperity. Think about the big ticket items in the last few years. March '08 $29 billion to bailour Bear Sterns, May '08 $168 billion for the Bush Stimulus Package, July '08 $200 billion for the Fannie May/Freddie Mac bailout, Nov '08 $700 Billion TARP/Wall Street Bailout. Jan. '09 $878 billion for the Obama Stimulus bill which by the way was to keep unemployment below 8 percent but it has bounced between 9–10 percent ever since.

Real growth comes from less government, less job killing regulations, a tax structure that is simpler, clean and fair.

E. One last word on the Ryan budget. Despite the spending reduction in discretionary accounts be of entitlements, food stamps and school lunch there is a net increase in spending! That's right at $17.25 billion, a reduction of $2.7 billion below FY2011 or 14 percent discretionary, the mandatory spending has still increased from $105 billion to $108.3 billion, resulting in an overall increase of 283 million! Food stamps have increased $5.6 and school lunch $1.5. Thus one more time underscoring the need for long term entitlement reform.

II. Our bill attempts to move us in this direction. Mr. FARR and I have had 11 hearings. These were long with several rounds of questions. We don't agree on all issues but we found much common ground and where we disagree no one was shut out of the process.

III. I will now go through some specific accounts.

A. Research is funded at $2.2 billion. Almost half goes to Agriculture Research Service at $993 million. This allows ARS to focus on high priority items such as food defense and food safety.

1. It also includes vital pest and disease research such problems with the:

Brown Marmorated Stink Bug.

Commerants.

Cotton Pests.

Sudden Oak Death.

Equine Disease.

2. Finally, I would like to point out that the bill assumes ARS will close 10 facilities, as proposed in the budget, and provides USDA with the authority to transfer those facilities to a land-grant or other agricultural college or university that agrees to continue agricultural related research at the facility for a minimum of 25 years.

One billion dollars on this account goes to the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and gives level funding for land-grant university research.

B. Farm Programs are funded at $1.7 billion discretionary and $18.3 in mandatory or traditional as Ag programs specified in the five year authorized farm bill.

1. These programs are the target of much of the criticism and at least one awkward int'l into agreement w/ the Brazilian government over cotton. Mr. Fluke offered an amendment to affect this and committee act was passed; however if it is out of order and will be struck. Nonetheless our AS committees are planning to address it.

2. Also in this section of the Bill is Farm Service Agency funding at a level of $1.46. Modernization of FSA technology systems remains a committee priority.

The MIDAS, Modernize and Innovate the Delivery of Agricultural Systems, request was $96 million on top of $49.5 million from last year but USDA had reprogrammed $23 million for salaries. The heart of the MIDAS initiative is to improve the delivery of FSA farm program benefits and services through the re-engineering of farm programs business processes and the adoption of enhanced and modernized information technology.

3. Many members requested funding for the FSA Grassroots Source Water Protection program and the bill includes $3.6 million for this program.

Agricultural Credit loan levels are at $4.7 billion which is $95.8 million below the fiscal year 2011 level and the same as the fiscal year 2012 request.

C. The majority of the $910 million in funds for the Marketing and Regulatory Programs is slated in the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service-Salaries and Expense account at $790 million, which is $73.3 million below the

fiscal year 2011 level. These funds will allow the agency to continue to control and eradicate plant and animal pests and diseases. The bill includes language that allows APHIS to access emergency funding to address pest and disease outbreaks.

In addition to other related programs at USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Serves, this Bill provides $147 million for Specialty Crop Pests to control or eradicate invasive pests and diseases, especially for those pests and disease in California, and the west. Although this funding level is below the President's Request, this Program is funded at $4.4 million above the level spent in the fiscal year 2010. Within the program, we have also supported language from members regarding Sudden Oak Death.

D. Conservation Programs are funded at $787 million of which $770 million is for NRCS's Conservation Operations, which is $99 million below the fiscal year 2011 level. This allows NRCS to maintain its core conservation mission and will drive efficiencies to create more farmer-friendly programs.

The Watershed Rehabilitation Program is funded at $15 million, which is $3 million below the fiscal year 2011 level.

In addition to discretionary appropriations, USDA will provide $5.8 billion to farmers and ranchers through its mandatory conservation programs in fiscal year 2012.

(In the farm bill, the Agriculture Committee will review these especially the Conservation Reserve Program which pays farmers not to plant.)

E. More than $2 billion is provided in the bill for Rural Development Programs including section 502 low income housing loan level of $24.845 billion. The President's budget proposed a loan level for direct loans for $211 million and the bill provides for $845 million for this program that serves very low-income rural Americans.

Rural Water and Waste—$730 million is provided for loans, which is $242 million below the fiscal year 2011 level. $430 million is provided for grants, which is $28 million below the fiscal year 2011 level. We received many requests from Members for funding for the Circuit Rider program, and the bill provides $14 million for this purpose.

Electric and Telecommunications Program level is at $7.3 billion in the bill, which is on par with historical levels. The bill denies the budget request to limit the use of electric loans to renewable energy and retrofitting, and requests a report on baseload generation needs.

F. Food Safety and Inspection—$973 million—a funding level that will allow FSIS to maintain meat, poultry, and egg products inspection, as well as to expand poultry inspection system that results in a safe and more efficient poultry inspection regime that will result in a safer food supply.

III. Our committee had 2 good debates on the funding of Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Nutrition programs.

Our mark attempts to address the aggressive marketing growth of WIC w/a funding level of $5.9 billion. Or 1.2 below FY 2011, which was 7,128,424,000.

A. We will hear from many that this hurts the nations most vulnerable but lets look at some fact.

1. Many critics act like WIC has never been cut but last year in order to pay for a completely unreduced program—a legal settlement on a farm loan dispute call Pigford the Democrats cut WIC by $562 m.

2. The latest data from the USDA shows a drop of 300,000 participants between fiscal year 2010 and fiscal year 2011. However; our level still funds at the higher number of 8.7 m people which is the projection for FY 2012.

Now if that changes and there is in unexpected jump in participation then we have 3 reserve accounts in which we can draw.

Contingency fund: $125 million.

Carryover Funds: $350 million+.

Secretary's Interchange Authority: $210 million.

3. So the issue is act one of kids at risk but one of politics.

a. A couple of notes: 49 percent of children in America participate in WIC. Clearly a number that suggests it goes well beyond the poorest of our society.

b. WIC is notorious for a high over head.

As noted at the Full Committee hearing, administrative—as defined by all overhead and program delivery costs—equals 45 cents per benefits dollar spent in FY 2010.

8.9 million participants for March. From the beginning of FY2009 to March 2011 (most up-to-date data), average monthly participation has dropped by 440,000.

c. WIC has had its share of fraud, yet WIC officials seem dedicated to only keeping their funding stream rather than addressing these issues.

4. Finally going beyond the politics let's put some force on it. Take a 3 year old child named Bob. Today Bob is eligible for 12 federal programs:

Bob's Food Assistant Programs:

At age 3, Bob is eligible for 12 programs:

1. Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).
2. Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP).
3. Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program (FFVP).
4. School Lunch Program (SBP).
5. National School Lunch Program (NSLP).
6. Special Milk Program (SMP) [Can receive if not on any other program].
7. Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).
8. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
9. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).
10. The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP).
11. Women, Infant & Children (WIC).
12. WIC's Farmers Market Nutritional Program (FMNP).

At age 10, Bob is eligible for 9 programs:

1. Child and Adult Care Food Program (CAFP).
2. Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program (FFVP).
3. School Lunch Program (SBP).
4. National School Lunch Program (NSLP).
5. Special Milk Program (SMP).
6. Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).
7. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
8. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).
9. The Emergency Food Assitance Program (TEFAP).

At age 35, Bob is eligible for 7 programs:

1. Child and Adult Care Food Programs.
2. Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP).
3. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
4. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).
5. The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP).
6. Women, Infant & Children (WIC).
7. WIC's Farmers Market Nutritional Program (FMNP).

At age 65, Bob is eligible for 6 programs:

1. Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).
2. Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP).
3. Sr. Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP).
4. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
5. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).
6. The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP).

At all ages, Bob can receive:

1. Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservation (FDPIR) if living on Indian Reservation & Not receiving SNAP.
2. Disaster Assistance Program (D–SNAP) if family experiences natural disaster.
3. Nutrition Assistance Block Grant (NABG) if family lives in U.S. Territory.

This doesn't sound like a nation that turning its back on the poor. Indeed the First Lady has made a campaign against over eating not hunger, and I will challenge our critics to take the discussion records from our learning. Google the world's hunger and obesity and see which one we talked about the most.

B. As I stated earlier overall this bill is a net increase and that increase comes from these safety net food programs. Child nutrition programs are funded at $18.8 billion which is $1.56 above last year. This provides 68.8 percent of all school lunches and 85.5 percent of all school breakfasts at a free or reduced price.

1. As respects to SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program, or food stamps there is a $5.66 increase approx 45 million people participate in this program.

2. Again, the administrators tend to ignore these problems. Overpayments of $141 receipt in Michigan for steak, lobster, and sodas were reported. The man was later arrested for selling goods.

3. Michigan man won 2 million in lottery and still uses food stamps WIC—ex-WIC worker in Atlanta stated that no ID, no address and no income information was needed to apply for WIC. There was also an undercover film about the WIC clinic.

C. We have hope to allow some flexibility between emergency and developmental accounts in order for groups like the World Food Program to meet unexpected challenges around the globe. I have met with Josette Sheeran and our food ambassador to the UN Ertharin Cousins, and commend their position and their commitment. Food air combines our humanitarian values and national security so our committee supports it. However; keep in mind we are borrowing from our own future generations to finance this, so we must be good stewards.

Worldwide the U.S. provides 57% of food aid followed by EU 27 percent, and Japan 6 percent.

Food Aid and National Security/'International Harmony'

We have heard several comments today about why we absolutely cannot reduce our

food aid programs this year. In spite of the fact that we are out of money, we have driven ourselves to a crippling level of debt and—from a more immediate perspective—we don't have the allocation for this bill to provide more to any program, we are told it is impossible to cut international food aid, even as we cut almost every other single line item in this budget out of necessity.

Among other arguments, we hear it is a national security imperative. There are legitimate national security aspects to this issue. Food aid does provide a market to drive our domestic food production, which in turn helps ensure a perpetual safe and abundant domestic food supply as we provide surplus overseas.

It also supports our merchant marine fleet, which provides an important cargo capacity for the armed forces in the event of a major deployment. This surge capacity might not be available, at least at a similar cost, without the support of the food aid programs.

However, I don't think the argument that this assistance builds international goodwill to the U.S.—an enduring friendship that is reciprocated when we need it—pans out. For example, I have here the voting practices in the United Nations for 2010 as compiled by the U.S. Department of State. This list includes the nations by region who have received assistance through any of our international food aid programs along with the percentage they supported the U.S. position on votes the State Department deemed most important. Unfortunately, we see numbers like 16 percent, 0 percent, 30 percent, 36 percent, 27.3 percent, right down the line.

It would be nice to see some of the oil rich countries to step forward and help out.

IV. FDA.

The Food and Drug Administration is funded at $2.2 billion which is $284 million below the fiscal year 2011 level of $2.457 billion. While the overall discretionary allocation to the subcommittee was a reduction of 13.4 percent, the overall FDA reduction is 11.5 percent.

Total funding for FDA, including user fees, is $3.684 billion versus $3.681 that was provided in fiscal year 1022. We passed in fall committee an amendment that urged FDA to use sound science in making decisions.

V. CFTC. The Commodity Futures Trading Commission is funded at $171 million, which is $32 million below the fiscal year 2011 funding level. A number of concerns have been raised by the Inspector General at the Commission that proposed rules are not undergoing a thorough cost-benefit analysis.

VI. This bill takes spending to below pre-stimulus, pre-bailout levels while ensuring USDA, FDA, CFTC, and other agencies are provided the necessary resources to fulfill their duties. Our members have worked to root out waste and duplication and, where they have strayed from their core mission, we rein in agencies so they may better focus on responsibilities for which they are intended. In doing so, we balance the urgent need for fiscal restraint with the necessity to provide and abundant food supply, robust trade, prudent conservation measures, and strong rural communities.

VII. Madam Chair, this legislation would not be passable without the great working relation I enjoy with our ranking member Mr. FARR. Again, we don't always agree but we do try to communicate and put together a sound product. I also thank all the staffers who have averaged about 50–60 hours a week since Dec. to make this happen. Matt Smith and Martha Foley with the Minority, and Rochelle Dornatt and Troy Phillips with Ranking Member FARR's office, our majority staff clerk of many years Martin Delgado and his team Tom O'Brien, Betsy Bina, and Andrew Cooper. From my personal office, Allie Thigpen, Michael Donnal, Adam Sullivan, Chris Crawford, Caroline Black, and Mary Carpenter. You might not see them on the House floor, but their fingerprints are all over the bill.

AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
TITLE I - AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS					
Production, Processing, and Marketing					
Office of the Secretary	5,051	5,883	4,293	-758	-1,590
Office of Tribal Relations	498	1,015	423	-75	-592
Healthy Food Financing Initiative	---	35,000	---	---	-35,000
Executive Operations:					
Office of Chief Economist	12,008	15,196	10,707	-1,301	-4,489
National Appeals Division	14,225	15,254	12,091	-2,134	-3,163
Office of Budget and Program Analysis	9,417	9,436	8,004	-1,413	-1,432
Office of Homeland Security	1,496	4,272	1,272	-224	-3,000
Office of Advocacy and Outreach	1,422	7,000	1,209	-213	-5,791
Office of the Chief Information Officer	39,920	63,579	35,000	-4,920	-28,579
Office of the Chief Financial Officer	6,247	6,566	5,310	-937	-1,256
Subtotal, Executive Operations	84,735	121,303	73,593	-11,142	-47,710
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights	893	895	760	-133	-135
Office of Civil Rights	22,692	24,922	19,288	-3,404	-5,634
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration	804	820	683	-121	-137
Agriculture buildings and facilities and rental payments	(246,476)	(255,191)	(209,505)	(-36,971)	(-45,686)
Payments to GSA	178,113	164,470	151,396	-26,717	-13,074
Department of Homeland Security	13,473	13,800	11,452	-2,021	-2,348
Building operations and maintenance	54,890	76,921	46,657	-8,233	-30,264
Hazardous materials management	3,992	5,125	3,393	-599	-1,732
Departmental Administration	29,647	35,787	23,900	-5,747	-11,887
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations	3,869	4,041	3,289	-580	-752
Office of Communications	9,480	9,722	8,058	-1,422	-1,664
Office of Inspector General	88,548	90,755	80,000	-8,548	-10,755
Office of the General Counsel	41,416	46,058	35,204	-6,212	-10,854
Total, Departmental Administration	538,101	636,517	462,389	-75,712	-174,128
Office of the Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics	893	911	760	-133	-151
Economic Research Service	81,814	85,971	70,000	-11,814	-15,971
National Agricultural Statistics Service	156,447	165,421	149,500	-6,947	-15,921
Census of Agriculture	(33,139)	(41,639)	(40,000)	(+6,861)	(-1,639)
Agricultural Research Service:					
Salaries and expenses	1,133,230	1,137,690	993,345	-139,885	-144,345
National Institute of Food and Agriculture:					
Research and education activities	698,740	708,107	600,800	-97,940	-107,307
Native American Institutions Endowment Fund	(11,880)	(11,880)	(11,880)	---	---
Extension activities	479,132	466,788	411,200	-67,932	-55,588
Integrated activities	36,926	29,874	8,000	-28,926	-21,874
Hispanic-Serving Agricultural Colleges and Universities Endowment Fund	---	(10,000)	---	---	(-10,000)
Total, National Institute of Food and Agriculture	1,214,798	1,204,769	1,020,000	-194,798	-184,769
Office of the Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs	893	911	760	-133	-151
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service:					
Salaries and expenses	863,270	832,706	790,000	-73,270	-42,706
Assistance, goods, or services (user fees) NA	---	(141,000)	---	---	(-141,000)
Buildings and facilities	3,529	4,712	3,200	-329	-1,512
Total, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service	866,799	837,418	793,200	-73,599	-44,218

AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Agricultural Marketing Service:					
Marketing Services	86,538	94,755	77,500	-9,038	-17,255
Standardization activities (user fees) NA	(65,000)	(66,000)	(66,000)	(+1,000)	---
(Limitation on administrative expenses, from fees collected)	(60,947)	(62,101)	(61,000)	(+53)	(-1,101)
Funds for strengthening markets, income, and supply (Section 32):					
Permanent, Section 32	1,065,000	1,080,000	1,080,000	+15,000	---
Marketing agreements and orders (transfer from section 32)	(20,056)	(20,056)	(20,056)	---	---
Payments to States and Possessions	1,331	2,634	1,331	---	-1,303
Total, Agricultural Marketing Service program	1,213,816	1,239,490	1,219,831	+6,015	-19,659
Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration:					
Salaries and expenses	40,261	44,192	37,000	-3,261	-7,192
Limitation on inspection and weighing services	(47,500)	(50,000)	(47,500)	---	(-2,500)
Office of the Under Secretary for Food Safety	811	828	689	-122	-139
Food Safety and Inspection Service	1,006,503	1,011,393	972,028	-34,475	-39,365
Lab accreditation fees	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	---	---
Total, Production, Processing, and Marketing	6,193,419	6,303,410	5,658,502	-534,917	-644,908
Farm Assistance Programs					
Office of the Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services	893	911	760	-133	-151
Farm Service Agency:					
Salaries and expenses	1,208,290	1,357,065	1,176,500	-31,790	-180,565
Equal Credit Opportunity claims (leg. proposal)	---	40,000	---	---	-40,000
(Transfer from Food for Peace (P.L. 480))	(2,806)	(2,812)	(2,385)	(-421)	(-427)
(Transfer from export loans)	(354)	(355)	(355)	(+1)	---
(Transfer from ACIF)	(304,977)	(313,173)	(260,730)	(-44,247)	(-52,443)
Subtotal, transfers from program accounts	(308,137)	(316,340)	(263,470)	(-44,667)	(-52,870)
Total, Salaries and expenses	(1,516,427)	(1,713,405)	(1,439,970)	(-76,457)	(-273,435)
State mediation grants	4,177	4,369	3,550	-627	-819
Grassroot source water protection program	4,241	---	3,605	-636	+3,605
Dairy indemnity program	876	100	100	-776	---
Subtotal, Farm Service Agency	1,217,584	1,401,534	1,183,755	-33,829	-217,779
Agricultural Credit Insurance Fund (ACIF) Program Account:					
Loan authorizations:					
Farm ownership loans:					
Direct	(475,000)	(475,000)	(475,000)	---	---
Guaranteed	(1,500,000)	(1,500,000)	(1,500,000)	---	---
Subtotal	(1,975,000)	(1,975,000)	(1,975,000)	---	---
Farm operating loans:					
Direct	(950,000)	(1,050,090)	(1,050,090)	(+100,090)	---
Unsubsidized guaranteed	(1,500,000)	(1,500,000)	(1,500,000)	---	---
Subsidized guaranteed	(122,343)	---	---	(-122,343)	---
Subtotal	(2,572,343)	(2,550,090)	(2,550,090)	(-22,253)	---
Indian tribe land acquisition loans	(3,940)	(2,000)	(2,000)	(-1,940)	---
Conservation loans:					
Guaranteed	---	(150,000)	(150,000)	(+150,000)	---

AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Indian Highly Fractionated Land Loans	---	(10,000)	(10,000)	(+10,000)	---
Boll weevil eradication loans	(100,000)	(60,000)	(100,000)	---	(+40,000)
Total, Loan authorizations	(4,651,283)	(4,747,090)	(4,787,090)	(+135,807)	(+40,000)
Loan subsidies:					
Farm ownership loans:					
Direct	32,804	22,800	22,800	-10,004	---
Guaranteed	5,689	---	---	-5,689	---
Subtotal	38,493	22,800	22,800	-15,693	---
Farm operating loans:					
Direct	57,425	59,120	59,120	+1,695	---
Unsubsidized guaranteed	34,880	26,100	26,100	-8,780	---
Subsidized guaranteed	16,886	---	---	-16,886	---
Subtotal	109,191	85,220	85,220	-23,971	---
Indian Highly Fractionated Land Loans	---	193	193	+193	---
Individual Development Accounts	---	2,500	---	---	-2,500
Total, Loan subsidies	147,684	110,713	108,213	-39,471	-2,500
ACIF administrative expenses:					
Salaries and expense (transfer to FSA)	304,977	313,173	260,730	-44,247	-52,443
Administrative expenses	7,904	7,920	7,904	---	-16
Total, ACIF expenses	312,881	321,093	268,634	-44,247	-52,459
Total, Agricultural Credit Insurance Fund	460,565	431,806	376,847	-83,718	-54,959
(Loan authorization)	(4,651,283)	(4,747,090)	(4,787,090)	(+135,807)	(+40,000)
Total, Farm Service Agency	1,678,149	1,833,340	1,560,602	-117,547	-272,738
Risk Management Agency,					
Administrative and operating expenses	78,842	82,325	68,016	-10,826	-14,309
Total, Farm Assistance Programs	1,757,884	1,916,576	1,629,378	-128,506	-287,198
Corporations					
Federal Crop Insurance Corporation:					
Federal crop insurance corporation fund	7,613,232	3,142,375	3,142,375	-4,470,857	---
Commodity Credit Corporation Fund:					
Reimbursement for net realized losses	13,925,575	14,071,000	14,071,000	+145,425	---
Hazardous waste management (limitation on expenses)	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	---	---
Total, Corporations	21,538,807	17,213,375	17,213,375	-4,325,432	---
Total, Title I, Agricultural Programs	29,490,110	25,433,361	24,501,255	-4,988,855	-932,106
(By transfer)	(328,193)	(336,396)	(283,526)	(-44,667)	(-52,870)
(Loan authorization)	(4,651,283)	(4,747,090)	(4,787,090)	(+135,807)	(+40,000)
(Limitation on administrative expenses)	(113,447)	(117,101)	(113,500)	(+53)	(-3,601)

AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
TITLE II - CONSERVATION PROGRAMS					
Office of the Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment	893	911	760	-133	-151
Natural Resources Conservation Service:					
Conservation operations	870,503	898,647	770,956	-99,547	-127,691
Watershed rehabilitation program	17,964	---	15,000	-2,964	+15,000
Total, Natural Resources Conservation Service	888,467	898,647	785,956	-102,511	-112,691
Total, Title II, Conservation Programs	889,360	899,558	786,716	-102,644	-112,842
TITLE III - RURAL DEVELOPMENT					
Office of the Under Secretary for Rural Development	893	911	760	-133	-151
Rural Development:					
Rural development expenses:					
Salaries and expenses	191,603	234,301	161,011	-30,592	-73,290
(Transfer from RHIF)	(453,474)	(411,779)	(400,000)	(-53,474)	(-11,779)
(Transfer from RDLFP)	(4,931)	(4,941)	(3,500)	(-1,431)	(-1,441)
(Transfer from RETLP)	(38,297)	(39,959)	(30,000)	(-8,297)	(-9,959)
Subtotal, Transfers from program accounts	(496,702)	(456,679)	(433,500)	(-63,202)	(-23,179)
Total, Rural development expenses	(688,305)	(690,980)	(594,511)	(-93,794)	(-96,469)
Rural Housing Service:					
Rural Housing Insurance Fund Program Account:					
Loan authorizations:					
Single family direct (Sec. 502)	(1,121,406)	(211,416)	(845,666)	(-275,740)	(+634,250)
Unsubsidized guaranteed	(24,000,000)	(24,000,000)	(24,000,000)	---	---
Subtotal, Single family	(25,121,406)	(24,211,416)	(24,845,666)	(-275,740)	(+634,250)
Housing repair (Sec. 504)	(23,360)	---	---	(-23,360)	---
Rental housing (Sec. 515)	(69,512)	(95,236)	(58,617)	(-10,895)	(-36,619)
Site loans (Sec. 524)	(5,052)	---	---	(-5,052)	---
Multi-family housing guarantees (Sec. 538)	(30,960)	---	---	(-30,960)	---
Multi-family housing credit sales	(1,448)	---	---	(-1,448)	---
Single family housing credit sales	(10,000)	---	---	(-10,000)	---
Self-help housing land develop. (Sec. 523)	(4,966)	---	---	(-4,966)	---
Farm Labor Housing (Sec.514)	(25,724)	(27,288)	(18,302)	(-7,422)	(-8,986)
Total, Loan authorizations	(25,292,428)	(24,333,940)	(24,922,585)	(-369,843)	(+588,645)
Loan subsidies:					
Single family direct (Sec. 502)	70,060	10,000	40,000	-30,060	+30,000
Housing repair (Sec. 504)	4,413	---	---	-4,413	---
Rental housing (Sec. 515)	23,399	32,495	20,000	-3,399	-12,495
Multi-family housing guarantees (Sec. 538)	2,994	---	---	-2,994	---
Site development loans (Sec. 524)	293	---	---	-293	---
Multi-family housing credit sales	555	---	---	-555	---
Farm labor housing (Sec.514)	9,853	9,319	6,250	-3,603	-3,069
Self-help land dev. housing loans (Sec523)	288	---	---	-288	---
Total, Loan subsidies	111,855	51,814	66,250	-45,605	+14,436
Farm labor housing grants	9,854	9,873	6,250	-3,604	-3,623
RHIF administrative expenses (transfer to RD)	453,474	411,779	400,000	-53,474	-11,779
Total, Rural Housing Insurance Fund program	575,183	473,466	472,500	-102,683	-966
(Loan authorization)	(25,292,428)	(24,333,940)	(24,922,585)	(-369,843)	(+588,645)

AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Rental assistance program:					
Rental assistance (Sec. 521)	948,704	900,653	886,000	-62,704	-14,653
New construction (Sec. 515)	2,026	3,000	1,500	-526	-1,500
New construction (Farm Labor Housing)	2,994	3,000	2,500	-494	-500
Total, Rental assistance program	953,724	906,653	890,000	-63,724	-16,653
Rural housing voucher program	13,972	16,000	11,000	-2,972	-5,000
Multi-family housing revitalization program	14,970	---	---	-14,970	---
Multifamily housing preservation revolving loans	998	---	---	-998	---
Total, Multi-family housing revitalization	29,940	16,000	11,000	-18,940	-5,000
Mutual and self-help housing grants	36,926	---	22,000	-14,926	+22,000
Rural housing assistance grants	40,319	11,520	32,000	-8,319	+20,480
Rural community facilities program account:					
Loan authorizations:					
Community facility:					
Direct	(290,526)	(1,000,000)	(1,000,000)	(+709,474)	---
Guaranteed	(167,747)	---	(105,708)	(-62,039)	(+105,708)
Total, Loan authorizations	(458,273)	(1,000,000)	(1,105,708)	(+647,435)	(+105,708)
Loan subsidies and grants:					
Commmunity facility:					
Direct	3,856	---	---	-3,856	---
Guaranteed	6,613	---	5,000	-1,613	+5,000
Grants	14,970	30,000	10,000	-4,970	-20,000
Rural community development initiative	4,990	8,400	3,000	-1,990	-5,400
Economic impact initiative grants	6,986	---	---	-6,986	---
Tribal college grants	3,964	---	---	-3,964	---
Total, RCFP Loan subsidies and grants	41,379	38,400	18,000	-23,379	-20,400
Subtotal, grants and payments	118,624	49,920	72,000	-46,624	+22,080
Total, Rural Housing Service	1,677,471	1,446,039	1,445,500	-231,971	-539
(Loan authorization)	(25,750,701)	(25,333,940)	(26,028,293)	(+277,592)	(+694,353)
Rural Business-Cooperative Service:					
Rural Business Program Account:					
(Guaranteed business and industry loans)	(889,111)	(822,900)	(626,959)	(-262,152)	(-195,941)
Loan subsidies and grants:					
Guaranteed business and industry subsidy	44,899	52,500	40,000	-4,899	-12,500
Grants:					
Rural business enterprise	34,930	29,874	20,000	-14,930	-9,874
Rural business opportunity	2,478	7,483	2,250	-228	-5,233
Delta regional authority	2,973	---	2,250	-723	+2,250
Total, RBP loan subsidies and grants	85,280	89,857	64,500	-20,780	-25,357
Rural Development Loan Fund Program Account:					
(Loan authorization)	(19,181)	(36,376)	(14,758)	(-4,423)	(-21,618)
Loan subsidy	7,385	12,324	5,000	-2,385	-7,324
Administrative expenses (transfer to RD)	4,931	4,941	3,500	-1,431	-1,441
Total, Rural Development Loan Fund	12,316	17,265	8,500	-3,816	-8,765
Rural Economic Development Loans Program Account:					
(Loan authorization)	(33,077)	(33,077)	(33,077)	---	---
Limit cushion of credit interest spending	(207,000)	(241,794)	(155,000)	(-52,000)	(-86,794)
(Rescission)	-207,000	-241,794	-155,000	+52,000	+86,794

AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Rural cooperative development grants:					
Cooperative development	7,908	8,924	5,000	-2,908	-3,924
Appropriate technology transfer for rural areas	---	2,800	2,000	+2,000	-800
Cooperative research agreement	---	300	---	---	-300
Value-added agricultural product market development	18,829	20,367	12,500	-6,329	-7,867
Grants to assist minority producers	3,456	3,463	3,000	-456	-463
Total, Rural Cooperative development grants	30,193	35,854	22,500	-7,693	-13,354
Rural Microenterprise Investment Program Account:					
(Loan authorization)	---	(8,700)	---	---	(-8,700)
Loan subsidy	---	2,850	---	---	-2,850
Grants	---	2,850	---	---	-2,850
Total, Rural Microenterprise Investment	---	5,700	---	---	-5,700
Rural Energy for America Program					
(Loan authorization)	(10,785)	(10,645)	(2,482)	(-8,303)	(-8,163)
Loan subsidy	2,495	2,788	650	-1,845	-2,138
Grants	2,495	34,000	650	-1,845	-33,350
Total, Renewable energy program	4,990	36,788	1,300	-3,690	-35,488
Total, Rural Business-Cooperative Service	-74,221	-56,330	-58,200	+16,021	-1,870
(Loan authorization)	(952,154)	(911,698)	(677,276)	(-274,878)	(-234,422)
Rural Utilities Service:					
Rural water and waste disposal program account:					
Loan authorizations:					
Direct	(898,263)	(770,000)	(730,689)	(-167,574)	(-39,311)
Guaranteed	(75,000)	(12,000)	---	(-75,000)	(-12,000)
Total, Loan authorization	973,263	782,000	730,689	-242,574	-51,311
Loan subsidies and grants:					
Direct subsidy	76,917	73,788	70,000	-6,917	-3,788
Guaranteed subsidy	---	190	---	---	-190
Water and waste revolving fund	497	497	497	---	---
Water well system grants	993	993	993	---	---
Colonias and AK/HI grants	68,600	65,000	65,000	-3,600	---
Water and waste technical assistance	19,110	19,000	19,000	-110	---
Circuit rider program	14,700	14,000	14,000	-700	---
Solid waste management grants	3,434	4,000	3,400	-34	-600
High energy cost grants	11,976	---	---	-11,976	---
Water and waste disposal grants	331,717	311,510	327,110	-4,607	+15,600
Total, Loan subsidies and grants	527,944	488,978	500,000	-27,944	+11,022
Rural Electrification and Telecommunications Loans Program Account:					
Loan authorizations:					
Electric:					
Direct, 5%	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)	---	---
Direct, FFB	(6,500,000)	(6,000,000)	(6,500,000)	---	(+500,000)
Guaranteed underwriting	(500,000)	---	---	(-500,000)	---
Subtotal, Electric	(7,100,000)	(6,100,000)	(6,600,000)	(-500,000)	(+500,000)
Telecommunications:					
Direct, 5%	(145,000)	(145,000)	(145,000)	---	---
Direct, Treasury rate	(250,000)	(250,000)	(250,000)	---	---
Direct, FFB	(295,000)	(295,000)	(295,000)	---	---
Subtotal, Telecommunications	(690,000)	(690,000)	(690,000)	---	---
Total, Loan authorizations	(7,790,000)	(6,790,000)	(7,290,000)	(-500,000)	(+500,000)

AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Loan subsidies:					
Electric:					
Guaranteed underwriting	699	---	---	-699	---
RETLP administrative expenses (transfer to RD)	38,297	39,959	30,000	-8,297	-9,959
Total, Rural Electrification and Telecommunications Loans Program Account	38,996	39,959	30,000	-8,996	-9,959
(Loan authorization)	(7,790,000)	(6,790,000)	(7,290,000)	(-500,000)	(+500,000)
Distance learning, telemedicine, and broadband program:					
Loan authorizations:					
Broadband telecommunications	(400,000)	---	---	(-400,000)	---
Total, Loan authorizations	(400,000)	---	---	(-400,000)	---
Loan subsidies and grants:					
Distance learning and telemedicine:					
Grants	32,435	30,000	15,000	-17,435	-15,000
Broadband telecommunications:					
Direct	22,276	---	---	-22,276	---
Grants	13,379	17,976	---	-13,379	-17,976
Total, Loan subsidies and grants	68,090	47,976	15,000	-53,090	-32,976
Total, Rural Utilities Service	635,030	576,913	545,000	-90,030	-31,913
(Loan authorization)	(9,163,263)	(7,572,000)	(8,020,689)	(-1,142,574)	(+448,689)
Total, Title III, Rural Development Programs	2,430,776	2,201,834	2,094,071	-336,705	-107,763
(By transfer)	(496,702)	(456,679)	(433,500)	(-63,202)	(-23,179)
(Loan authorization)	(35,866,118)	(33,817,638)	(34,726,258)	(-1,139,860)	(+908,620)
TITLE IV - DOMESTIC FOOD PROGRAMS					
Office of the Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services	811	828	689	-122	-139
Food and Nutrition Service:					
Child nutrition programs	12,042,407	18,770,571	18,770,571	+6,728,164	---
Competitive grants	---	5,000	---	---	-5,000
School breakfast program grants	---	10,000	---	---	-10,000
Childhood Hunger challenge grants	---	25,000	---	---	-25,000
Transfer from section 32	5,277,574	---	---	-5,277,574	---
.2 Percent (rescission) (discretionary)	-48	---	---	+48	---
Total, Child nutrition programs	17,319,933	18,810,571	18,770,571	+1,450,638	-40,000
Special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children (WIC)	6,734,027	7,390,100	6,048,250	-685,777	-1,341,850
Supplemental nutrition assistance program:					
(Food stamp program)	65,206,790	68,173,308	68,173,308	+2,966,518	---
Reserve	---	5,000,000	3,000,000	+3,000,000	-2,000,000
Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion	---	1,500	---	---	-1,500
Grants to States and technical assistance	---	9,000	---	---	-9,000
.2 Percent (rescission) (discretionary)	-97	---	---	+97	---
Total, Food stamp program	65,206,693	73,183,808	71,173,308	+5,966,615	-2,010,500

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(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Commodity assistance program:					
Commodity supplemental food program	175,697	176,788	138,500	-37,197	-38,288
Farmers market nutrition program	19,960	20,000	15,000	-4,960	-5,000
Emergency food assistance program	49,401	50,000	38,000	-11,401	-12,000
Pacific island and disaster assistance	1,068	1,081	1,000	-68	-81
IT modernization and support	---	1,750	---	---	-1,750
Total, Commodity assistance program	246,126	249,619	192,500	-53,626	-57,119
Nutrition programs administration	147,505	170,471	125,000	-22,505	-45,471
Total, Food and Nutrition Service	89,654,284	99,804,569	96,309,629	+6,655,345	-3,494,940
Total, Title IV, Domestic Food Programs	89,655,095	99,805,397	96,310,318	+6,655,223	-3,495,079
TITLE V - FOREIGN ASSISTANCE AND RELATED PROGRAMS					
Foreign Agricultural Service					
Salaries and expenses	185,628	229,730	175,000	-10,628	-54,730
(Transfer from export loans)	(6,452)	(6,465)	(6,465)	(+13)	---
Total, Salaries and expenses	192,080	236,195	181,465	-10,615	-54,730
Food for Peace Title I Direct Credit and Food for Progress Program Account, Administrative Expenses					
Farm Service Agency, Salaries and expenses (transfer to FSA)	2,806	2,812	2,385	-421	-427
Food for Peace Title II Grants:					
Expenses	1,497,000	1,690,000	1,040,198	-456,802	-649,802
Commodity Credit Corporation Export Loans Program Account (administrative expenses):					
Salaries and expenses (Export Loans):					
General Sales Manager (transfer to FAS)	6,452	6,465	6,465	+13	---
Farm Service Agency S&E (transfer to FSA)	354	355	355	+1	---
Total, CCC Export Loans Program Account	6,806	6,820	6,820	+14	---
McGovern-Dole international food for education and child nutrition program grants	199,101	200,500	180,000	-19,101	-20,500
Total, Title V, Foreign Assistance and Related Programs	1,891,341	2,129,862	1,404,403	-486,938	-725,459
(By transfer)	(6,452)	(6,465)	(6,465)	(+13)	---
TITLE VI - RELATED AGENCIES AND FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION					
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES					
Food and Drug Administration					
Salaries and expenses, direct appropriation	2,447,021	2,730,910	2,163,451	-283,570	-567,459
Prescription drug user fees	(667,057)	(856,041)	(856,041)	(+188,984)	---
Medical device user fees	(61,860)	(67,118)	(67,118)	(+5,258)	---
Animal drug user fees	(19,448)	(21,768)	(21,768)	(+2,320)	---
Generic animal drug user fees	(5,397)	(5,706)	(5,706)	(+309)	---
Tobacco product user fees	(450,000)	(477,000)	(477,000)	(+27,000)	---
Food and Feed Export Certification user fees	---	(12,364)	(12,364)	(+12,364)	---
Food Reinspection fees	---	(14,700)	(14,700)	(+14,700)	---
Voluntary qualified importer program fees	---	(36,000)	(36,000)	(+36,000)	---
Subtotal (including user fees)	(3,650,783)	(4,221,607)	(3,654,148)	(+3,365)	(-567,459)
Mammography user fees	(19,318)	(19,318)	(19,318)	---	---
Export certification user fees	(10,400)	(10,400)	(10,400)	---	---
Subtotal, FDA (with user fees)	(3,680,501)	(4,251,325)	(3,683,866)	(+3,365)	(-567,459)

AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
FDA New User Fees (Leg. proposals):					
Generic drug review user fees	---	(40,122)	---	---	(-40,122)
Reinspection fees	---	(14,108)	---	---	(-14,108)
International express courier import fees	---	(5,338)	---	---	(-5,338)
Subtotal, FDA new user fees (Leg Proposals)	---	(59,568)	---	---	(-59,568)
Buildings and facilities	9,980	13,055	8,788	-1,192	-4,267
Total, FDA (w/user fees, including proposals)	(3,690,481)	(4,323,948)	(3,692,654)	(+2,173)	(-631,294)
Total, FDA (w/enacted user fees only)	(3,690,481)	(4,264,380)	(3,692,654)	(+2,173)	(-571,726)
Total, FDA (excluding user fees)	2,457,001	2,743,965	2,172,239	-284,762	-571,726
INDEPENDENT AGENCIES					
Commodity Futures Trading Commission 1/	202,270	308,000	171,930	-30,340	-136,070
Financial regulation user fees (leg proposal)	---	(117,000)	---	---	(-117,000)
Farm Credit Administration (limitation on administrative expenses)	(59,400)	(62,000)	(62,000)	(+2,600)	---
Total, Title VI, Related Agencies and Food and Drug Administration	2,659,271	3,051,965	2,344,169	-315,102	-707,796
TITLE VII - GENERAL PROVISIONS					
Limit fruit and vegetable program (Sec.718)	-117,000	-114,478	-133,000	-16,000	-18,522
Section 32 (rescission) (Sec.718)	---	---	-150,000	-150,000	-150,000
Forestry Incentives program (Sec.722) (rescission)	---	---	-5,500	-5,500	-5,500
Great Plains Conservation (Sec.722) (rescission)	---	---	-500	-500	-500
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (rescission) (Sec.723)	-15,000	---	-11,000	+4,000	-11,000
Limit Conservation stewardship (Sec.728(1))	-39,000	-2,000	-210,000	-171,000	-208,000
Limit Dam Rehab (Sec.728(2))	-165,000	-165,000	-165,000	---	---
Limit Environmental Quality Incentives program (Sec.728(3))	-350,000	-342,000	-350,000	---	-8,000
Limit Farmland Protection program (Sec.728(4))	---	---	-50,000	-50,000	-50,000
Limit Grasslands reserve (Sec.728(5))	---	-50,000	-30,000	-30,000	+20,000
Limit Wetlands reserve (Sec.728(6))	-119,000	-9,000	-200,000	-81,000	-191,000
Limit Wildlife habitat incentives (Sec.728(7))	---	-12,000	-35,000	-35,000	-23,000
Limit Voluntary Public Access program (Sec.728(8))	---	---	-17,000	-17,000	-17,000
Limit Biomass Crop Assistance program (Sec.728(9))	-134,000	---	-45,000	+89,000	-45,000
Limit Bioenergy Program for Advanced Biofuels (Sec.728(10))	---	---	-50,000	-50,000	-50,000
Limit Renewable Energy for America (Sec.728(11))	---	---	-70,000	-70,000	-70,000
Limit Microenterprise investment program (Sec.728(12))	---	---	-3,000	-3,000	-3,000
Limit Crop Insurance Good Performance (Sec.728(13))	-25,000	---	-25,000	---	-25,000
Limit Agriculture management assistance (section 1524) (Sec.728(14))	---	-5,000	-5,000	-5,000	---
Hardwood Trees (Reforestation Pilot Program)	639	---	---	-639	---
Geographic Disadvantaged farmers	1,996	---	---	-1,996	---
Agricultural Research Service, Buildings and and facilities (rescission)	-229,582	-223,749	---	+229,582	+223,749
Broadband loan balances (rescission)	-39,000	---	---	+39,000	---
NIFA, Buildings and Facilities (rescission)	-1,037	-1,037	---	+1,037	+1,037
Wildlife Habitat Incentives unobligated (rescission)	---	-10,188	---	---	+10,188
Water Bank Act unobligated (rescission)	---	-745	---	---	+745
NRCS expired accounts (rescission)	-13,937	---	---	+13,937	---
Outreach for socially disadvantaged farmers (rescission)	-2,137	---	---	+2,137	---
Rural community advancement program (rescission)	-993	---	---	+993	---
Agriculture Marketing Services (rescission)	-717	---	---	+717	---
Common Computing Environment (rescission)	-3,111	---	---	+3,111	---
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Buildings and Facilities (rescission)	-629	---	---	+629	---

AGRICULTURE-RURAL DEVELOPMENT-FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS (H.R. 2112)
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 2011 Enacted	FY 2012 Request	Bill	Bill vs. Enacted	Bill vs. Request
Agriculture Buildings and Facilities (rescission)	-45,000	---	---	+45,000	---
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) (rescission)	-10,887	---	---	+10,887	---
Broadband grants (rescission)	-25,000	---	---	+25,000	---
Export credit (rescission)	-331,000	---	---	+331,000	---
Trade Adjustment Assistance for for Farmers (Sec.729) (rescission)	---	---	-90,000	-90,000	-90,000
Limit Emergency Food Assistance program (Sec.730)	---	---	-51,000	-51,000	-51,000
US Department of Agriculture Unobligated balances (Sec.733) (rescission)	---	---	-63,000	-63,000	-63,000
Limit payments to Brazil Cotton Institute	---	---	-147,000	-147,000	-147,000
Total, Title VII, General provisions	-1,664,395	-935,197	-1,906,000	-241,605	-970,803
Grand total 1/	125,351,558	132,586,780	125,534,932	+183,374	-7,051,848
Appropriations	(126,276,588)	(133,064,293)	(126,009,932)	(-266,656)	(-7,054,361)
Rescissions	(-925,030)	(-477,513)	(-475,000)	(+450,030)	(+2,513)
(By transfer)	(831,347)	(799,540)	(723,491)	(-107,856)	(-76,049)
(Loan authorization)	(40,517,401)	(38,564,728)	(39,513,348)	(-1,004,053)	(+948,620)
(Limitation on administrative expenses)	(172,847)	(179,101)	(175,500)	(+2,653)	(-3,601)

1/ Includes CFTC FY11 funding ($202.675M) ($202.270M after ATB) provided in Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act

RECAPITULATION

Title I - Agricultural programs	29,490,110	25,433,361	24,501,255	-4,988,855	-932,106
Mandatory	(22,604,683)	(18,293,475)	(18,293,475)	(-4,311,208)	---
Discretionary	(6,885,427)	(7,139,886)	(6,207,780)	(-677,647)	(-932,106)
Title II - Conservation programs (discretionary)	889,360	899,558	786,716	-102,644	-112,842
Title III - Rural development (discretionary)	2,430,776	2,201,834	2,094,071	-336,705	-107,763
Title IV - Domestic food programs	89,655,095	99,805,397	96,310,318	+6,655,223	-3,495,079
Mandatory	(82,526,771)	(91,943,879)	(89,943,879)	(+7,417,108)	(-2,000,000)
Discretionary	(7,128,324)	(7,861,518)	(6,366,439)	(-761,885)	(-1,495,079)
Title V - Foreign assistance and related programs (discretionary)	1,891,341	2,129,862	1,404,403	-486,938	-725,459
Title VI - Related agencies and Food and Drug Administration (discretionary)	2,659,271	3,051,965	2,344,169	-315,102	-707,796
Title VII - General provisions (discretionary)	-1,664,395	-935,197	-1,906,000	-241,605	-970,803
Total 1/	125,351,558	132,586,780	125,534,932	+183,374	-7,051,848

1/ Includes CFTC FY11 funding ($202.675M) ($202.270M after ATB) provided in Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I rise today as the ranking member on the Agriculture appropriations subcommittee to draw concern to this bill. I know that we're in tough budget times, but even in tough budget times, people have to eat. It's my opinion that this bill makes it very hard for people to eat, particularly people who don't have any money.

The allocation for the FY 2012 Agriculture appropriations bill, as approved in the full committee, is $17.250 billion. This is $5 billion, or 23 percent, below what President Obama asked for. It's 14 percent below what Congress enacted last year. It's 26 percent below what the Congress enacted the year before. It's even below what we enacted in 2008. So it has taken the wind out of the hopes and food lockers of people who are most poor.

With the allocation that Chairman KINGSTON was given, I don't envy his position. He was forced to make these drastic cuts that will affect every heart of farm country, and I do appreciate the effort that he has made to invest our very limited resources wisely and cost effectively. In tough budget times, everyone has to tighten their belts; we all know that. I want to point out, though, that it doesn't matter if you're a specialty crop producer in California or a cotton or peanut producer in Georgia; if the resources are not available to deliver the program, then the effects felt by both producers and consumers in urban and rural areas are the same.

I know my friend Mr. KINGSTON did the best he could but agriculture is about feeding people. This isn't just about looking at the cost of everything. It's also examining the value. It's about making sure that America has the production capabilities and enough food to go around domestically and internationally. The bill almost makes that difficult, if not impossible, especially where nursing mothers and infant babies are concerned, because the WIC program gets whacked.

The bill also calls into question the United States' commitment to our international neighbors who have hungry and malnourished people that depend on our assistance to stave off mass starvation because the Food for Peace program is chopped.

I think there comes a point in budget exercise when you starve the program so much that it just can't function. I fear that this is where this bill is going, with several of the funding levels in this bill, such as implementing the Food Safety Modernization Act and the Dodd-Frank and Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

The United States is the greatest agriculture producer in the world. We produce more and we produce it more efficiently than any other country, but this bill will undermine the very resources that support our agricultural supremacy. I feel it is important to use this bill to strengthen our rural economy by investing our precious Federal resources, investing in expanding markets for agricultural products and supporting international economic development; by investing in developing alternative markets for agriculture products; by providing financing needed to help expand job opportunities and improve housing, utilities, and infrastructure in rural America, which the U.S. Department of Agriculture is responsible for; and most specifically, enhancing food safety and improving nutrition and health by providing food assistance and nutrition education and promotion. These are the things that America does best.

Madam Chairman, as we move through this bill, through the process again, I want to make sure that you understand that there are dire consequences to adopting this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished chairman of the committee, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS).

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. I thank the chairman for yielding the time and congratulate him and Mr. FARR on producing, I think, a good bill.

The bill answers the call from Americans to reduce government spending while still providing for critical programs that keep American agriculture competitive in a global economy. The $125.5 billion in both discretionary and mandatory funding in this bill will help our rural communities to thrive, provide daily nutrition to children and families, and keep our food and drug supply safe.

However, we can't spend at the rate we used to. We've hit the debt ceiling. We're borrowing more than 42 cents on every dollar we spend. We're mortgaging our children's futures. We have to rein in spending, even if it may not be the most popular thing to do.

Accordingly, Chairman KINGSTON and his subcommittee did not provide the agencies and programs funded by this bill with carte blanche. This bill trims lower priority services, eliminates duplicative and wasteful programs, and limits funding and increases oversight for agencies that have been less than transparent with taxpayer money. All in all, this bill cuts nearly $5 billion in discretionary spending from the President's request.

□ 1450

With this legislation, we are helping to put the Department of Agriculture, the FDA, and the other agencies funded by this bill back on a sustainable budget path that is accountable to the taxpayers of this country. In addition, more than taking the first steps to help balance our budgets, we're taking the necessary steps to increase transparency.

Not only does this legislation encourage, but it requires, each and every agency to submit spending plans for every program funded by this bill. This commonsense oversight will go a long way in demonstrating to the American public our commitment to fiscal responsibility.

I am confident not only that Chairman KINGSTON and his subcommittee have made the smart, but necessary, cuts in this bill to help balance our budgets but also that this bill adequately funds important government programs, including ag research, rural health and economic development, and safety net food and nutrition services.

I want to commend the chairman, the ranking member, the subcommittee members, and the staff all for their dedicated and thoughtful work on this bill, and I urge support in its final passage.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. DICKS), the distinguished ranking member of the full committee and an outstanding player in the Rose Bowl from the University of Washington.

Mr. DICKS. I appreciate the gentleman from California yielding.

With an allocation that cuts $2.9 billion below the current level and $5 billion below the amount requested by the Obama administration for the next fiscal year, the subcommittee has drafted an Agriculture appropriations bill that drastically reduces funding for food programs that serve women, children, and the elderly, and for the Food and Drug Administration, among other drastic cuts.

The economy is still struggling, Madam Chairman. Unemployment is still far too high, and people around the country are still hurting. American families need help just to make ends meet. The bill slashes funding for WIC, the Women, Infants, and Children Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, leaving more people to fend for themselves during the worst recession since the Great Depression.

While I am pleased that we were able to provide a slight increase for the WIC program in full committee markup with the acceptance of the DeLauro amendment, this bill still drastically underfunds this critical program. This bill reduces funding from $6.73 billion this year, 2011, to $6.5 billion, a cut of more than $650 million below current levels. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities estimates that the drastic reduction would require us to turn away anywhere from 200,000 to 350,000 eligible low-income women and young children next year. That's a tragedy. Unemployment is still hovering around 9 percent, and the economic recovery has faltered since the new Republican majority took the reins with their illogical ''cut and grow'' strategy. Again, this is no time to be pulling the rug out from underneath the people who can least afford it, Madam Chairman.

The cut to the budget of the Food and Drug Administration represents

another perfect example of the Republican majority's commitment to shortsighted budgeting. In the aftermath of several nationwide recalls, Democrats in Congress passed a food safety bill that added new and important capability to the FDA, but this bill actually moves us backward in protecting our food supply and medical products. It is 12 percent below the current level and 21 percent below the amount requested by the administration. These cuts will increase the risk of recurring outbreaks of food-borne illness. The FDA would inspect fewer firms that manufacture food and conduct fewer inspections of imported food.

This bill also takes a shortsighted approach with respect to our international food aid programs, cutting Food for Peace by $457 million below current levels and the McGovern-Dole Food for Education Program by $19 million, 10 percent below 2011. By slashing funding for these critical overseas programs, we risk exacerbating food insecurity and strife in some of the most vulnerable parts of the world and are essentially undermining our own national security interests.

Beyond food programs, there are numerous other programs that take egregious cuts. Notably among those is the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. The CFTC takes a cut of $30 million below current levels and is funded at $136 million below the President's request.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. FARR. I yield the gentleman 30 seconds.

Mr. DICKS. The requested increase for FY 2012 is needed in order to implement the measures put forward in the Dodd-Frank Wall Street reform bill and provide oversight and regulation of the options and futures markets that wrought such havoc on our economy just a few years ago.

One can't help but notice the efforts in this bill to drastically cut food assistance to the poor while actively undermining any efforts of oversight and regulation of the wealthy on Wall Street. So I urge all Democrats to vote ''no'' on this bill.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY).

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I thank the gentleman from Georgia for the time.

Madam Chair, farmers are good Americans. They understand our tight budgetary times and the need to tighten the belt, and they are willing to do their part. But before we vote on this bill, which does some very heavy lifting in this regard, let's consider the profound benefits American agriculture brings to people across the country. It's about food security. Today Americans pay only 10 to 12 percent of their income on food, compared to those in other nations who pay up to 50 percent or more. Ag policy now is also about economic security, energy security, and even national security and global stability.

Agriculture, Madam Chair, is one of the few bright spots in the American economy. Agriculture is consistently one of the few trade areas where the U.S. still holds a positive trade balance. And exports are growing as the world demands more and more American-grown food. Last year, ag exports neared $108 billion, and projections indicate an even stronger total this year.

Agriculture is also helping strengthen our energy independence. From rural wind and solar farms to biofuels and biogas production from livestock waste, we are beginning to see the vast potential of renewable sources found on America's farms and ranches.

Not only does food security bolster our own national security, but it also aids in global stability. Our farmers help feed the world and keep the peace in understated but very important ways. In my home State of Nebraska, for instance, our farmers are rebuilding war-torn fields in Afghanistan, countering the illicit poppy trade and helping to create a new sustainable and lawful agricultural production. I just came from a ceremony where we sent off 57 members of the agricultural unit of the Nebraska Air and Army National Guard, who will be using their farming skills to help the Afghan people with new irrigation techniques and new models for wheat and grassland production.

Our farmers participating in global agricultural training projects achieve key humanitarian goals as well. We have made significant gains in empowering women producers, which gives rise to greater equality and social mobilization and engagement in their local communities. For instance, they are helping to rebuild Haiti's decimated agricultural sector in the aftermath of the terrible earthquake. And through various U.S. agricultural food aid programs, they are combating global hunger.

Again, Madam Chairman, American farmers are ready to do their part and help fix our Nation's fiscal mess. But in cleaning up this mess, it's very important not to forget about the hard work our farm families put in day in and day out to help feed and fuel and protect all of America.

Mr. FARR. How much time do we have remaining?

The CHAIR. The gentleman from California has 22½ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Georgia has 19 minutes remaining.

Mr. FARR. I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished Member from Ohio, MARCY KAPTUR, the former ranking member of this committee.

Ms. KAPTUR. I want to thank the ranking member from California (Mr. FARR) for his hard work and Mr. KINGSTON, the chairman from Georgia, for bringing this bill before us today. And I am really sorry I can't support it. At a time of such instability in the American economy, this committee bill simply further destabilizes one of the most productive sectors of the American economy, agriculture, further, it hurts all Americans who depend on the Department of Agriculture for nutritional support during these hard times that we are experiencing.

This legislation has some of the most destructive sections in it that eliminate, for all practical purposes, the Rural Energy for America Program, that was supposed to take America into a new energy future. It takes the cops off the beat at the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to hold Wall Street accountable and clamp down on speculation. We all know that hasn't been happening.

□ 1500

The drastic decrease in the nutrition and commodity supplemental food programs hurt people across this country and with decreases in the WIC program, children will be harmed. They can't speak for themselves here. As well, there is a dangerous directive included in the bill that would further erode the minimal competition in the meat industry in which real competition hardly exists at all. We must defend our farmers and ranchers to be treated on an equal par with the big packers and processors through the grain inspection, packer, and stockyards agency. Later in the consideration of the bill, I'll be dealing with that in a different way.

But let me just say a word about the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. The level of funding provided in this bill is inadequate. We all know it's inadequate because of the mess we face in the derivatives market today. The small agency called the Commodity Futures Trading Commission provides a critical bulwark against the gouging of the American people in the type of manipulation, speculation, and outright fraud that led our country into the worst economic recession since the Great Depression.

With gas prices now rising above $4 a gallon and food prices just skyrocketing, who's really the watchdog in charge of implementing market reforms to protect the consumer by regulating the market to prevent excessive speculation in all fields? I'd hate to think that this bill is being purposefully underfunded to prevent robust regulation of speculation and allow these massive interests on Wall Street—and in the Chicago futures market—to continue doing what they have been doing, and that is gouging the pocketbooks of the American people, whether it's gas prices or food prices or mortgage speculation.

Just to give you an idea, this proposal would not fund the agency to implement reforms contained in the Dodd-Frank bill in a futures market that's grown from $13 trillion back in the mid 1990s to over $600 trillion notional value today. The bill's funding level basically takes the cops off the beat. It takes the watchdogs away. And one might say, the bill gives a green light for Wall Street to harm America again.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. FARR. I yield the gentlewoman another 30 seconds.

Ms. KAPTUR. In sum, this bill falls far short of what America needs. I mentioned the nutrition programs, and their serious underfunding affecting seniors, children and women across our Nation. I want to thank the chairman for accepting an amendment to restore just $1.3 million to the Rural Energy for America Program, as America struggles to regain our energy independence. But we are a very long way from restoring our liberty. Rural America simply has to be a full partner in this effort. This bill does not do that. GIPSA needs to be strengthened not weakened and the CFTC must be allowed to severely regulate the future markets and clamp down on speculation to prevent another meltdown.

And though we disagree on this bill and its funding levels, I congratulate both the new chair and ranking members on their hard work over the last several months to prepare this bill, though imperfect, and bring it to the floor.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished vice chair of the Republican Conference, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS of Washington.

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. I appreciate the gentleman yielding, and I appreciate his commitment to the future of America's agriculture.

I rise in support of this legislation because I believe that it sets the important priorities that must be made in order to rein in the runaway spending of previous Congresses while still providing funding, important funding, for agriculture's safety net, vital research, oversight, and increased opportunity.

I grew up in eastern Washington, working on my family's orchard, where the number one industry is agriculture, and I know what it's like to pick and eat what you pick and have your family's livelihood depend on the success of your annual crop.

For the last 16 years, I have actively engaged the agriculture community in eastern Washington to identify solutions to ensure farmers remain productive and competitive. The success of the farmers in eastern Washington and all across our Nation hinge on two important issues: The ability to adapt and apply cutting edge research, and the ability to access markets.

H.R. 2112, for the first time, directs ARS to prioritize its research and make the vital investments to see those top priorities implemented. We must all remember that it's the American farmer who has fed the world for the last hundred years, kept our Nation's food prices low as a percentage of our income, and has done more to combat poverty around the world than any other antipoverty program; and it's, in large part, due to scientific breakthroughs in agriculture research.

We need to be focusing on research that has the potential to affect the global population. Two such initiatives have national and international importance, and those are crop protection and production research housed within the ARS. These initiatives are on the front line of the fight against stem rust, Ug99, stripe rust, which all have the potential to eliminate our Nation's and, in turn, the world's wheat supply.

I applaud the gentleman from Georgia and his subcommittee for recognizing and including this specific language in the report to study and prevent the spread of these harmful diseases.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the Member from Memphis, Tennessee (Mr. COHEN).

Mr. COHEN. I appreciate the Member from Carmel yielding time to the gentleman from Memphis.

This is unfortunate. Mr. KINGSTON, in presenting his side of the budget, was almost apologetic about WIC, and I can understand that, why he would be apologetic.

This is a sacred portion of the budget to people on my side of the aisle, and it should be sacred to all people in America—newborn mothers, babies, and children under 5 who are identified as nutritionally at risk, and yet we are cutting that budget 13 percent. There's good reason you'd be almost ashamed to introduce it. And the way he introduced it showed concern. He thought it was difficult, and it is.

The fact is some people talk about, in difficult economic times, everybody has to tighten their belt and everybody ought to tighten their belts equally. Well, what about the obesely wealthy? They're not being asked to tighten their belt at all. In fact, there's not a belt big enough to go around their obesely successful selves. They are doing great.

And it seems like in this budget there are only about two things that seem to be sacred. One is tax cuts for the rich. The Bush tax cuts that were created when there was a surplus created by a Democratic Congress and a Democratic President, Bill Clinton. Those tax cuts were passed because we had a surplus. Now we've got a great deficit and they are being extended, and even to people making over $1 million a year. There is rejection of having them pay more so that mothers, babies, and children under 5 identified as nutritionally at risk can get the WIC payments. There's something wrong here.

Economists estimate that for every $1 invested in WIC, there are savings between $1.50 and $3 in health care costs just in the first 60 days after an infant's birth. Talk about a return on investment.

However, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle obviously think this return isn't good enough and so we should gut the program, just like what they want to do with Medicare, until it can no longer function adequately to serve so many of the Americans who need it the most.

This measure funds the WIC program at $686 million less than the current level, which is the equivalent of kicking off 475,000 eligible mothers, infants, and children.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. FARR. I yield the gentleman an additional minute.

Mr. COHEN. It's equivalent to kicking 475,000 eligible mothers, infants, and children off one of the most cost-effective programs in our country. It will cost Tennessee over $1 million. If we get rid of tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires for 1 week, we could pay for the entire WIC program for a year.

I cannot see this. It seems to me it's distorted values, and I would ask that they reconsider and put the WIC program back to its basic level.

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD).

Mr. CRAWFORD. Madam Chair, along with my Republican colleagues, I share a commitment to fiscal discipline in the fiscal year 2012 budget. And while it's important to find savings and carefully consider every item in the budget, it's also important to maintain commitments that have already been authorized.

The 2008 farm bill authorized the Biomass Crop Assistance Program, or BCAP for short. So I stand here today to support at least partial funding for the BCAP program. In my district, hundreds of farmers have worked hard in preparation for planting a variety of switchgrass called Miscanthus giganteus, which has proven to be a viable cellulosic biofuel feedstock. In fact, 1 acre is capable of producing 20 tons of biomass, as opposed to corn, which produces less than 8, on average.

This program will help our country produce renewable energy and accelerate economic growth. I hope my colleagues in the House will keep an open mind about the program and will find a way to give it the priority it deserves as this bill moves through the legislative process.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished Member from California (Mr. GARAMENDI), former Lieutenant Governor of the State of California.

□ 1510

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you, Mr. FARR.

Each piece of legislation that passes the House is really a reflection of our values. It speaks to our heart; it speaks to what we care about and what's important to us. This particular bill does that in a way that more than ever highlights values. Is it about children, about infants? Or is it about tax breaks for the very, very wealthy? Is it about safe food? Or tax breaks for oil companies and subsidies for oil companies? Is it about those people around the world that are hungry and the Food for Peace program that provides them with

enough food to be able to survive and to live? Or is it about a continuation of very fat, unnecessary farm crop subsidies?

It's about our values. It's about what we care about and what we think is important. And if there's anything that's important in life, it's food. It's the ability for our youngest children—I was on this floor not more than 2 hours ago with my granddaughter, 11 months old. Out there in America there are hundreds of thousands of young children that will not have the food that they need to be able to be healthy, will not be able to have the care they need. This is about our values.

What does this bill say of our values? It says that those children are of little value. Is that what this is about? Is it about those people around the world that are starving that will not have the Food for Peace program? Is that the value of this Congress, that we cannot find the money, in this wealthiest of all nations, to provide the health care for our young children and the food for those around the world?

What is it that we care about then? The very wealthy? About Wall Street? About the Commodity Futures Trading Commission not having the money that they need to regulate the programs that brought this country to its knees? What is it that we value? Big question.

In this bill, obviously there's a great difference in what we value on our side and what this bill, brought to us by the Republican majority, values.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, may I inquire as to the time remaining.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia has 16 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from California has 14 minutes remaining.

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Mrs. NOEM).

Mrs. NOEM. Madam Chairwoman, we have important things to discuss, and it truly does deal with our values.

As the previous speaker was talking about his grandchild that was on the House floor previously, I wondered if he had told the grandchild that from the moment they were born they owed $47,000 in Federal debt. That is their responsibility because of the spending that's gone on and because of the fact that when we are going to start with feeding programs and distribute food to other countries, we're going to borrow money from other countries and have our grandchildren and great-grandchildren pay for that so we can do that.

So this discussion truly is about values and getting back to our priorities and getting back to what's important in this country, and it's fiscal responsibility. There are tough decisions to make, but we talk about what we need to do. And the fact that we're increasing food and nutrition programs and spending shows that we dedicate ourselves to those values and taking care of our children into the future while remembering that we're not going to saddle them with a debt that they certainly cannot pay.

Madam Chairwoman, I rise in support and to speak a little bit about the Biomass Crop Assistance Program, the BCAP, which is addressed in this bill as well. I just want to talk about some of the projects that have offered some alternatives in South Dakota.

This program, authorized in the 2008 farm bill, is part of our all-of-the-above energy program. BCAP promotes second-generation biofuels refined from renewable biomass and can reduce our dependence on foreign sources of energy.

I have been a firm supporter of an all-of-the-above American energy plan, and this can certainly continue to play a role in that. It reduces barriers that farmers face to diversify their farms. BCAP, if funded and used as the program was intended as cellulosic biofuels, can spur economic growth in rural areas such as those in South Dakota.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chair, I rise to point out that once again we find ourselves in a familiar situation. Once again, under the guise of fiscal responsibility, austerity, and a blind allegiance to supply-side voodoo economics gimmicks, Republicans have brought forth another effort to cut away the social safety net, this time kicking low-income mothers and their young children into the depths of hunger and food insecurity.

It's like deja vu. Just months ago, Democrats defended the American people from the Ryan Republican plan to turn Medicare into a voucher program. Unfortunately, the plan to get rid of Medicare was passed with the unanimous support of every single Republican in the House. Now, here we stand once again trying to prevent Republicans from delivering a swift kick to the stomachs of low-income mothers, many of whom are already struggling to get by during this economic downturn.

Reducing WIC funding by more than half a billion dollars in the name of deficit reduction while unanimously refusing to eliminate or even decrease tax cuts for big businesses, oil companies and wealthy individuals, Republicans have forgotten one of mankind's most basic human values: upholding our moral responsibilities to our fellow man.

Recently, I received a gift from the House Members Bible study group, and I do appreciate it. My heart compelled me to open it today. When I turned the pages separated by the book divider, I was at Mark 6:33, and nothing could have been more appropriate for the day. It was the passage on Jesus feeding his followers.

Just as Jesus walked with his disciples, preaching the Gospel and healing the sick, he also fed 5,000 of his followers who would have gone hungry without those five loaves of bread and two fish.

If Jesus can feed 5,000 people with five loaves of bread and two fish, then surely America, the wealthiest Nation in the world, and surely this Congress, the greatest deliberative body in the world, should continue to provide for Americans in their time of need.

Just as Jesus provided for his followers, He also broke with tradition and compassionately watched as His followers ate bread with impure hands—as they were called—unclean hands. This upset some of those righteous observers, and they asked Jesus, ''Why do your disciples not wash according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with impure hands?'' Jesus called them hypocrites and then He said, ''Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men.'' Is that what we're doing here today? Does the man-made rule of reducing our country's debt trump our moral responsibility to provide for Americans in their time of need?

We as Members of Congress must also feed the hungry among us. Isn't this our moral and civic duty? According to the USDA, 750,000 of our fellow citizens, women and children, could be turned away from WIC. This is unconscionable. And the result is crystal clear—more Americans will be left to fend for themselves in their time of need.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Meanwhile, the $800 million that we give away on one week of tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires, we could ensure, with that $800 million, that over 9 million WIC participants receive nutrition, education, food and services for an entire year.

America is better than this. Don't hurt the women and the children who need help. I stand opposed to this bill.

□ 1520

Mr. KINGSTON. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Boston, Massachusetts, Mr. STEVE LYNCH.

Mr. LYNCH. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Chair, I speak in favor of a measure that will be coming up shortly, offered by my friend Ms. DELAURO, which goes to a major weakness in the underlying bill.

The core mission of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission is to ensure the integrity and transparency of derivatives markets. Yet, despite the recent spike in gasoline prices and despite the great difficulty we had in this recent financial crisis with respect to commodities-based swaps, we have to come to the floor today to fight for funding for the one agency that would police that activity. It is, indeed, unbelievable that this House would consider

a proposal that would eviscerate the agency with the central responsibility for regulating the commodities markets.

But here we are.

The price of everyday items, from milk to gasoline, depends on the fair and open operation of commodities markets policed by the CFTC, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. The recent spike in gasoline prices is not due to a shortage of supply, as we have seen, or increased demand. Clearly, this is a problem of unchecked speculative interests making money off the commodities markets as there are some who believe that as much as $27 of a barrel of oil today is the result of sheer speculation.

It is our hope that through the Dodd-Frank regulatory reform bill the CFTC's responsibilities will be expanded to include oversight of the nearly $300 trillion in previously unregulated domestic swaps on the market today. This is a key step to bringing the shadow markets, which helped crash the economy, under sensible regulation. This is where the CDOs, CDSs and other complex derivatives deals were made. This is how AIG helped bring down the economy. We have to regulate this financial market and these financial products. However, the notional size of the market that the CFTC now must supervise has increased seven-fold, and the CFTC needs more resources. But in this bill, we will see its budget slashed. Instead of giving the agency the tools it needs to prevent another financial collapse, we are planting the seeds for the next financial crisis.

The result of this Republican legislation to delay reform and the underlying bill to starve this agency would allow large, interconnected financial companies to engage unsupervised in activities and transactions similar to the activities that got us into this crisis in the first place. This would perpetuate an era of no oversight, no regulation and no transparency—in a similar fashion that nearly destroyed our economy. CFTC Chairman Gary Gensler has warned that denying funding to this agency and delaying the implementation of Dodd-Frank will greatly ''increase risk to the American people and leave significant uncertainty in the marketplace.''

The CFTC is vital to the proper functioning of our financial markets and the American economy. Underfunding the commission is deeply irresponsible, so I urge my colleagues to support the DeLauro amendment to properly fund the CFTC.

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, I wanted to respond to the discussion of the CFTC. It's very interesting to me that there are those Members of Congress who believe that bureaucrats control the price of oil. While bureaucrats certainly do have influence on the price of oil, if you're really concerned about the price of oil, you need to drill for it. It's pretty simple—increase the supply.

Folks forget that Alaska is twice the size of Texas. The Arctic Wildlife Reserve area is the size of South Carolina. The proposed exploration area is 2,000 acres. It's about the size of National Airport here. We're talking about a business card on a basketball court. Yet you hear over and over again from people—who, incidentally, do drive fossil fueled cars—that we in America are inept and unable to drill for oil responsibly. If you want to decrease the price, you've got to increase the supply, and there is no better way than to drill your own oil.

Think about the absurdity of President Obama going down to Brazil and telling them, We want you to drill offshore. Apparently, the Brazilians are technologically more advanced than we are, and the President has much more of a comfort level with the people of Brazil than he apparently has with the people from Louisiana or from Texas or from Florida. He goes down to Brazil and says, Go ahead and drill offshore. We're going to lend you money, and by the way, we want to be your best customer.

Now, he never mentioned anything about the CFTC.

Let me tell you what Democrat Commissioner Michael Dunn said. This was, by the way, on January 1, 2011: ''To date, CFTC staff has been unable to find any reliable economic analysis to support the contention that excessive speculation is affecting the markets we regulate or that position limits will prevent excessive speculation.''

What I suggest to you, Madam Chair, is that the discussion of the CFTC and oil speculators is a red herring. The real issue that the Democrats have failed to address is that of drilling for oil in order to increase supply.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, how much time do both sides have remaining?

The CHAIR. The gentleman from California has 6 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Georgia has 12 minutes remaining.

Mr. FARR. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to go back over this food situation. I and the gentleman from California, the ranking member, have had 11 hearings on this. We've had 11 hearings on the Agriculture bill, not on feeding programs specifically.

I want to again remind the Chair that this bill represents a net increase in funding, which is largely driven by the increase of $5.6 billion in food stamps and in the School Lunch Program of $1.5 billion. I also want to remind Members of the many Federal feeding programs that we have. For a 3-year-old child, there are 12 different feeding programs. For a 10-year-old child, there are nine different programs. For a 35-year-old, there are seven programs, and for a 65-year-old, there are five programs that people can apply for.

It is not the intention of this committee to let anyone fall through the cracks. The numbers that we have funded, for example, in WIC, contemplate what we believe is going to be the participation. Should that participation fluctuate, there are three contingency accounts that the USDA can access. It would certainly be our intention to have those accounts accessed before anyone fell through the cracks.

Now, I share in the frustration of the stimulus program that was supposed to create last year's summer of recovery. I'm sorry it did not work, because I would like to be out celebrating with the President. Yet the stimulus program, which was supposed to keep unemployment below 8 percent, actually increased unemployment to the level of 10 percent. Now it's hovering a little bit above 9 percent.

The best thing in the world would be to have prosperity, and I believe that we can get there. One way we should get there is by drilling our own oil because, if you want to keep food prices down, you've got to keep the cost of distribution down, which would be something, I'd hope, that we could work together on.

I also think we need fundamental tax reform because I know one of the things that some on the committee have talked about are some of the tax loopholes taken advantage of by certain companies. I agree with them. That's why I support the Fair Tax, which is a consumption tax. It would actually give a tax credit to the poor so that it does not disproportionately hurt them, but it would close all the loopholes. That would be something else that we could do that would create jobs in America.

Finally, the excessive bureaucratic regulations that our farmers and small businesses have to put up with is killing job creation. If we want to do something to help people get off dependency and get to independency, we need to decrease the size of government. This bill moves us in that direction.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1530

Mr. FARR. I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), the former ranking member of this committee.

Ms. DELAURO. I thank the gentleman.

I want to comment on my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, who continue to make reference to wanting to reduce the deficit and that they are the only ones interested in reducing the deficit and that is what this debate is all about. The fact of the matter is that Democrats and Republicans are very interested in reducing the deficit. The biggest difference occurs in where one starts to effectuate a change in debt reduction, and I will tell you that that is what the basic divide is here.

Now, there are a number of ways in which we can reduce the deficit. One is

that we can look at the $41 billion in the oil subsidies that we grant every year. The oil industry is flush with money, when one CEO can make $21.5 million a year, make profits that are overwhelming, and gasoline in the State of Connecticut is $4.39 a gallon for regular gas. So let's start with the $41 billion and we can reduce the deficit.

How about the $8 billion that we provide to multinational corporations to take their jobs overseas? Now, that is another place where we could shut down the loopholes, gain some money and reduce the deficit.

There is also a third area. What about agriculture subsidies; not to small farmers, not to dairy farmers, but to big agribusiness. It might be of interest, in a political article that appeared this week, to indicate that there are some Members on the other side of the aisle whose States and whose families are rich in the subsidies they are getting from the Federal Government. We could start there.

Why are we starting with women, infants, and children and nutrition programs? That is an absolute dividing line of where one's values are. Democrats want to reduce the deficit. The place is: Where do you start? That is where your values are. We don't start with women, infants, and children and nutrition programs. Let's start with tax subsidies for the richest people in this country and with the special interests of this Nation.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS), a great member of the committee.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank the gentleman.

Madam Chair, this is my third year in this Congress. During my first 2 years, the Democrats controlled the House, the Senate, and the Presidency, and during that time the subsidies or tax loopholes for the rich, for the oil companies, for these bailouts of Wall Street were going on just like they allege they are now. And did they do anything about it when they controlled the entire government? No. Nope. They didn't do anything.

Instead, they created massive new entitlement programs. Instead, they did TARP part two without accounting for part one. They did massive bailouts of the auto industry. They created huge new health programs. They gave massive blank checks to bureaucrats. They increased spending at the EPA, one agency, by 39 percent in 1 year. It is incredible. They taxed, they spent, yet they didn't go after the very people that today they allege are the source of the problem.

Now, when the Republicans were elected in the House to do what the American people felt needed to be done, which is to grapple with spending first, spending being the problem in our country, amassing a huge amount of debt, deficits, borrowing money from foreign countries, risking our own credit rating, risking our own ability to borrow money, risking the value of our currency, now they are alleging we are addressing the wrong targets.

Madam Chair, this very budget we are debating today increases spending for food programs. It increases funding for both food stamps and school lunch. It increases it more than we are cutting spending for WIC and other programs. It increases spending for the human needs that are legitimate for the people in this country by over one-quarter of a billion dollars.

Madam Chair, I allege that this is a responsible budget, that we are beginning to get off that unsustainable path of spending that even the President acknowledges and get back on a path where we can live more reasonably, where we can protect our currency, where we can protect our job market, where we can protect our tax structure and improve it in a way that makes America strong for our grandchildren.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, how much time does each side have remaining?

The CHAIR. The gentleman from California has 4 minutes, and the gentleman from Georgia has 6 minutes.

Mr. FARR. I yield such myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to, first of all, compliment Mr. KINGSTON, who is chair of this committee. He has come on as the chair, and I have come on as ranking member. We have both been on the committee for a long time and served under very distinguished chairs, two of whom are ranking members you heard here today.

It is really tough, because he has been given the allocation to fit all the programs within the Department of Agriculture and Food and Drug Administration within the allocation given him, and one can argue that that is it. I mean, we have to hide behind the allocation that was given. You have to do it.

Mr. KINGSTON. Will my friend yield a minute?

Mr. FARR. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. I just wanted to say that we actually have had one more speaker show up. It sounds like you are closing. You might want to reserve some time.

Mr. FARR. Let me say in this moment, in this allocation of time, that it is about values, and I think the big debate here is not just about how you cut, squeeze, and trim spending.

We have Members of Congress who have spoken today whose families receive millions of dollars in taxpayer money in commodity payments, in crop payments. We ought to be discussing that. What is the value of funding very wealthy people at the expense of taking food away from poor and starving children?

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON).

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Chair, more than 2 years ago, Democrats claimed that their trillion dollar stimulus package would keep unemployment below 8 percent, and we know now it is above 9 percent.

Recently, the CBO released their annual budget and economic outlook report which projects the 2011 deficit will reach $1.48 trillion and our national debt, as everybody knows, is over $14 trillion. We are borrowing nearly 42 cents of every dollar we spend, much of it from the Chinese, and sending the bill to our children and grandchildren. Every child born today owes $45,500 to the debt.

For the past few years, the American people have been told that government spending is the answer. They had their chance to prove this economic model, but it failed. It is time we changed our approach, because our country has a spending problem and not a revenue problem. Debt by the public is estimated to increase to 94 percent over the next 10 years. Over 10 years, the annual government spending will consume an average of 23.5 percent of GDP, which is significantly higher than the post-World War II average of 20 percent.

In a 2010 article for the Cato Policy Report, economists Jason Taylor and Richard Vedder outlined the lessons of the largest public sector drawdown in our country's history—the cuts to government spending after World War II. Taylor and Vedder point out that the Federal spending fell from $84 billion in 1945 to $30 billion in 1946, a reduction of more than 60 percent.

□ 1540

The point is that despite these warnings from economists that this withdrawal of Keynesian stimulus would sure lead to a second Great Depression, civilian employment grew by over 4 million between 1945 and 1947, with unemployment remaining under 4½ percent in the first three postwar years. The postwar era provides a classic illustration of how government spending ''crowds out'' private sector spending and how the economy can thrive when government's shadow is dramatically reduced. The lesson from the 1945–1947 era is that a sharp reduction in government spending frees up assets for productive use and leads to renewed growth.

When spending is slated to reach an all-time high of $3.7 trillion this year and we're living through the weakest jobs recovery since the Great Depression, it's time to get our fiscal house in order. Vigorous and sustained economic growth, fueled by investment and entrepreneurship, is needed for the private sector to create more jobs and increase incomes of the poor. In turn, this will generate the revenues that governments need to expand access to health, education, and infrastructure services and help improve productivity. Spending cuts work; tax increases

don't. Despite the evidence, many liberals continue to call for more spending, more taxing, and red tape.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. These ideas won't solve the problem; they are the problem. Washington needs to stop creating uncertainty and get out of the way.

I commend the Appropriations Committee, Chairman ROGERS, and Chairman KINGSTON for crafting a bill that's $5.041 billion, or 22.6 percent less than the President's fiscal year 2012 budget request, and $2.672 billion, or 13.4 percent less than the fiscal year 2011 enacted level. However, I believe the financial catastrophe facing our Nation requires us to do even more, and so I hope my colleagues will realize this and do what is necessary to get our fiscal house in order.

Mr. FARR. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Chair, we've heard a lot today. We've heard a lot about spending, because that's what this bill is. It is an appropriations bill. But the talk about spending is wrong because it's not putting into the priorities what is really important in our service to the people of this country. We don't need to be here to protect the rich and to protect multinational corporations. We need to be here to protect the rights of people who don't have the wherewithal to have enough food on their table to take care of their kids.

What you've seen in the debate today is tax spending for the rich is okay; tax spending for the poor is not. Tax breaks for oil companies are okay; food for the poor is not. Cutting our Commodity Futures Trading Commission is okay, but paying for police to police for speculation and misuse of public moneys is not a worthwhile expenditure. Our priorities are not straight, and that's why there's so much criticism for this bill.

I applaud the chairman for working hard to try to get the committee to bring together a bill that could meet the allocation. But I think the allocation was all wrong and our priorities are wrong, and I ask my colleagues to oppose the bill.

Mr. REYES. Madam Chair, I rise in strong opposition to the underlying bill for its drastic and extreme cuts to various critical food programs funded through the Department of Agriculture. While we face a great challenge in reducing the deficit and creating jobs, the greater challenge is to do this in a way that is consistent with our values. Slashing funds for programs that help put food on the table for the neediest of Americans, young children, pregnant mothers, the elderly, and those struggling to make ends meet, is not good policy.

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) which serves predominantly low-income seniors, and The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) which works with states to assist food banks are just some of the programs that were targeted for extreme cuts.

The cuts to WIC concern me the most. WIC provides food to new mothers, babies, and children under five who have been identified as nutritionally at risk. Nearly 50% of the babies born in our country each year rely on WIC. On top of that, it is incredibly cost-effective, serving nearly 10 million people each year, and costing less than $100 per person.

In my district, nearly 54,000 children and women suffer from food hardship, and depend on WIC to make ends meet.

This is yet another chapter in the Republican attack on working families to give handouts to special interests.

First they came after seniors who rely on Medicare, and now they're coming after children and mothers who rely on food assistance.

We cannot let Republicans destroy programs on which our most vulnerable population depend to pay for $45 billion in tax breaks for millionaires.

According to the Center for American Progress, if we got rid of tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires for one week, we would pay for the entire WIC program for a year.

I urge my colleagues to protect working Americans, not millionaires and billionaires.

Thank you.

Mr. STARK. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the FY 2012 Agriculture Appropriations Act. This bill makes devastating cuts to nutrition programs. It also undermines the ability of the Food and Drug Administration to protect our food supply and the Commodities Futures Trading Commission to rein in the reckless speculation that is driving up gas prices.

The cuts to nutrition programs in this bill would put hundreds of thousands of our most vulnerable citizens at risk. Working families, the millions who remain out of work, and senior citizens trying to survive on fixed incomes are the Americans who continue to feel the effects of the recession most painfully. This bill adds insult to injury by literally taking food off of their tables.

In my district, there are more than 90,000 people facing hunger each day. That is unacceptable. Fortunately, they have some support, including through the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program, which offers nutrition education to pregnant women and mothers and provides food to meet the nutritional needs of young children. The $686 million dollars that this bill cuts from WIC means 200,000 to 350,000 people will lose access to this program.

This bill would also slash the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), which primarily serves senior citizens living on less than $14,000 a year. The proposed $38 million in cuts to this program would force 150,000 seniors to lose the regularly delivered box of food that they depend on to survive.

Perhaps those turned away from WIC or CSFP could go to a local food bank for assistance? No longer. This bill cuts $50 million from the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) that supplies food banks, so the shelves will be empty when people come for help.

Doing away with just one week's worth of the Bush tax cuts is more than enough to prevent the cuts to WIC, CSFP, and TEFAP proposed in this bill. Yet that's not what we're debating today.

While Republican leaders defend their tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires, people are going hungry. Something is seriously wrong in this country if we are willing to pay for a week of tax cuts for the wealthy but cannot afford to feed all of our people.

We cannot balance the budget or erase the deficit by taking more away from those who already have the least. I urge my colleagues to stand with me and oppose the FY 2012 Agriculture Appropriations Act.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Chair, I rise in strong objection to the Fiscal Year 2012 Agriculture Appropriations bill. The bill before us is simply inadequate. While there is little disagreement that we must reach agreement on a balanced framework to reduce our deficit, we cannot do so by quite literally taking food from the mouths of children. This hinders our long term prosperity, and it is simply wrong.

In expressing serious concerns about this bill, the Administration's statement on this bill says: "The Administration strongly objects to the level of funding provided for nutrition programs that are critical to the health of nutritionally at-risk women, infants, children, and elderly adults. The proposed funding levels would led to hundreds of thousands of participants being cut from the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), and reduce Federal support for food banks. These cuts would undermine efforts to prevent hunger and support sound nutrition for some of the most vulnerable members of our society."

The human impact of the bill would be devastating. Hundreds of thousands of low-income children, mothers and seniors would lose WIC assistance. The National Commodity Supplemental Food program estimates that more than one hundred thousand low-income seniors would lose access to nutritious food assistance. Feeding America estimates that approximately 32 million pounds of nutritious food would not be available at food banks and food pantries for working Americans struggling to feed their families.

I want to say a word in particular about CSFP. This program is a vital component of our nutrition efforts because it reaches many seniors who qualify for no other program while providing delivery for those that are homebound. CSFP provides 600,000 food packages each month in 39 states and the District of Columbia, including seven new states as a direct result of increased funding in Fiscal Year 2010. This year 97 percent of the participants are elderly individuals with an income at or below $14,157. Food packages are designed to supplement needed sources of nutrients typically lacking in participants' diets, and are delivered through local providers in a very cost efficient manner: the typical food package has a retail value up to $50 but costs the Federal governments less than $20 per participant package.

Earlier this year, a number of us wrote to the Appropriations Committee requesting that funding for CSFP simply be held at the 2011 level of $176.8 million. Not an increase, though there is certainly greater need, just level funding. Instead, the Committee cut CSFP by more than 20 percent. As a result, if these cuts become law, more than 100,000 low-income seniors will be at greater risk of hunger.

Madam Chair, this bill represents the wrong priorities. Under the guise of deficit reduction, of which it does very little, it imposes harmful cuts on the most vulnerable among us. I urge all of my colleagues to reject it.

Mr. BACA. Madam Chair, I rise today in strong opposition ot the unerlying bill—H.R. 2112—the FY 2012 Agriculture Appropriations Act.

With continued unemployment and high home foreclosure rates—these are tough economic times for Americans everywhere.

We all understand that our debt and deficit are significant issues—that we must begin to address with intelligent spending cuts.

But it is essential that we reduce the deficit in a way that is consistent with our American values—and not on the backs of impoverished women, children, and seniors.

The Agriculture Appropriations bill we are considering today undermines the food security of the American people.

In my district—in California's Inland Empire—my constitutents face a 16 percent unemployment rate; and a food insecurity rate of almost 22 percent.

Food banks throughout California are reporting a 30 to 40 percent increase in the number of people needing food assistance.

This is the wrong time to cut nutrition benefits for struggling American families.

Unfortunately—the bill the House is set to consider—takes food off the table for low-income women, children, and seniors.

This bill:

Cuts $650 million from WIC—causing hundreds of thousands of women and children to lose benefits;

Cuts $50 million from TEFAP—forcing struggling familes to face empty shelves at the food bank;

Cuts $38 million from the Commodity Supplemental Foods Program—leaving thousands of seniors without help; and

Cuts $2 billion from the SNAP reserve fund—at a time when a record 44 million plus Americans need this assistance.

Sadly, this bill is just the next chapter in the Repubilcan Congress's assault on middle class families.

Already this year—Republicans have voted to end Medicare as we know it.

And they've voted to cut thousands of jobs in order to give tax breaks to the ultra-rich, the big oil industries, and companies that ship jobs overseas.

But with this bill—we may have sunk to a new low.

It is wrong to dismantle the programs that our most vulnerable Americans rely on—in order to pay for $45 billion in tax breaks for millionaires.

If we got rid of tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires for one week—we would save enough to pay for the entire WIC program for a year.

During the last Farm Bill—in 2008—I served as Chair of the Agriculture Subcommittee on Nutrition.

I am proud of the work we did to improve SNAP and other federal nutrition programs.

These improvements helped feed 38 million hungry Americans.

We must not turn back the clock.

Let's focus on the real priorities of the American people—and stop these misguided funding cuts.

I urge my colleagues to protect the health of working families—and vote ''no'' on the underlying bill.

Mr. HANNA. Madam Chair, as Co-Chair of the Congressional Organic Caucus, I rise today in support of adequate resourcing for the Organic Data Initiative, ODI, in Fiscal Year 2012.

Organic agriculture in my district in upstate New York and across this country is a thriving industry that is creating jobs and exporting American products across the world. Last week I visited an organic farm in Herkimer County that produces mike, beef, chicken, eggs, garlic and other vegetables, and field crops.

The Organic Data Initiative collects and distributes organic agriculture price data. This data helps maintain stable markets for organic products, is crucial for the development of risk management tools, and is necessary to negotiate organic standards equivalency agreements with foreign governments. It is important that the organic agriculture has the same access to data that other agriculture sectors currently enjoy. The Organic Data Initiative is cost-effective and is vital to ensure a continued upward trajectory for the organic industry in the United States.

Ms. WATERS. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the underlying bill, H.R. 2112, the Republican Appropriations bill for Agriculture, Food Safety and Nutrition Programs for the coming fiscal year. This bill drastically underfunds critical nutrition programs for hungry people throughout the United States.

This bill is yet another chapter in the Republican attack on working families.

First, the Republicans tried to cut benefits for seniors who rely on Medicare.

Then, they went after low-income families who rely on Medicaid.

They tried to dismantle health care reform and leave people with pre-existing conditions at the mercy of profit-hungry insurance companies.

Now, they're coming after hungry people who rely on food assistance.

The bill cuts funding for the Women, Infants, and Children, WIC, nutrition program by more than $650 million below the fiscal year 2011 level. The WIC program provides nutritious foods, counseling on healthy eating habits, and health care referrals to about 9 million low-income pregnant and postpartum women, infants, and children under five. WIC is an effective program with a long history of bipartisan support. For the past 15 years, Congresses and Administrations of both parties have always provided enough funds for WIC to serve all women, infants and children who qualify—until now. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities estimates that the funding cut in this bill would force WIC to turn away between 200,000 and 350,000 eligible low-income women and young children next year, including 32,000 to 56,000 women and children in my home state of California.

This bill also cuts funding for the Commodity Supplemental Food program, CSFP, by 22 percent below this year's funding level. CSFP is an agricultural commodity program that provides nutritious food packages to about 604,000 low-income people each month, 96 percent of whom are senior citizens who earn less than 130 percent of the federal poverty level. The Republicans' proposed funding cuts would result in loss of food for at least 130,000 low-income seniors.

The bill cuts funding to The Emergency Food Assistance Program, TEFAP, by $51 million and cuts TEFAP administrative funding for food storage and distribution by 23 percent. TEFAP provides nutritious food commodities to low-income Americans in need of short-term hunger relief. TEFAP commodities are distributed by organizations like soup kitchens, food banks, homeless shelters, and faith-based food pantries at churches, mosques and synagogues. These cuts would force many local organizations to turn away hungry people.

Finally, the bill underfunds the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP. SNAP provides monthly benefits to 44 million low-income Americans using a grocery debit card. The Administration requested a $5 billion reserve fund for SNAP to assure that there would be adequate resources to help needy people in the event of continuing high unemployment or unexpected increases in demand from events like natural disasters. The Republicans cut the reserve fund by $2 billion.

Meanwhile, the Republican budget extends the Bush-era tax cuts beyond their expiration in 2012 and cuts the top individual tax rate down to 25 percent from 35 percent. According to the Center for Tax Justice, the Republican budget cuts taxes for the richest 1 percent of Americans by 15 percent while raising taxes for the lowest income 20 percent of Americans by 12 percent.

Madam Chair, if we got rid of the tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires for one week, we could pay for the entire WIC program for a year.

I urge my colleagues to stand up for working families—not millionaires and billionaires! Vote ''no'' on this bill.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Chair, I rise today in opposition to this legislation. Let's take a step back and talk about what this bill does; Instead of ending wasteful subsidies that go to multi-million dollar agri-business, the Republicans have decided to pay for a Brazil Cotton trade problem by cutting nutrition assistance to poor women and children, cutting conservation funding, and by raising gas prices for Americans by cutting those policing wall street oil speculators.

These subsides aren't supporting family farms; they are supporting multi-billion dollar companies, changing the food we eat and the health of our country's citizens. I commend the progress that Congressman FLAKE has made in the Committee to lessen these wasteful subsidies, and ask my colleagues to support other floor amendments, like the Blumenauer amendment, which will ensure that subsidies are capped ensuring that any needed help is distributed to those who need it, not simply concentrated amongst a few mega-corporations.

Madam Chair, I also strongly support the Woolsey Amendment, which would allow the U.S. Department of Agriculture to continue developing scientific-based nutritional standards for school meals. This amendment supports the USDA rule that carries out the intent of the Child Nutrition Act passed last year. The standards in this rule are central to students' nutrition, resulting in better child health, better student behavior, and better academic outcomes.

It's been 17 years since the last update of the national school meal standards. The USDA recently proposed much-needed updates to those standards based on consensus recommendations from the Dietary Guidelines

for Americans. The proposed updates will ensure that school lunch and breakfasts provide recommended amounts of fruits, vegetables and whole grains; fat-free and low-fat milk; less salt; fewer unhealthy saturated and trans fats; and moderate calories. Instead, too may schools are currently serving too much sodium, sugar, unhealthy saturated and trans fats, and starchy vegetables, such as French fries. To make this change, USDA received over 130,000 comments from advocates, parents and concerned citizens in support of the rule.

Yet, while school meal quality has been modestly improving in some schools, much more needs to be done. The proposed standards maximize the national investment in the school meal programs, helping to reduce both child hunger and obesity, and providing balanced meals to 31 million children each day. Our current national investment in school lunch and breakfast is about $12 billion per year—we need to make sure that these meals are healthy.

Delaying the rule—as this legislation would do—goes against what Congress passed and the president signed last year. It would damage the opportunities of our current and future generations by denying them healthy school meals, which limits their ability to live healthy lives. That's why this amendment is so important.

We have heard specious arguments that the law saddles school districts with unfunded costs and mandates. Besides a 6 cent increase in school lunch reimbursements, the law's nutritional improvements in both school meals and school snacks will help increase student participation in school meals by 900,000 students according to USDA, raising school district revenues by an estimated $7.5 billion over the next five years on top of the $3.2 billion from the 6 cent increase. So there is funding for better nutritional food for children. Too many school districts are behind the times on ensuring that students have healthy foods.

That is why we changed the law and why we need to move forward with timely implementation of the proposed rule. We need to get the most out of the national investment in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. Our children's health and educational outcomes depend on it.

Madam Chair, this bill is simply bad policy. I urge a "no" vote.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Chair, I rise today in strong opposition to the FY12 Agriculture Appropriations Bill. This measure includes a $650 million cut to the WIC Program, which would cut up to 1,000 eligible recipients in Rhode Island.

This program provides nutritious food, counseling on healthy eating, and health care referrals for low-income women and children under age five. In Rhode Island, the WIC program collaborates with local culinary programs and farmers markets on cooking demonstrations, healthy eating habits and children's activities.

While all our constituents are feeling the effects of the economic downturn, our most vulnerable citizens are disproportionately affected by job cuts, higher food prices, turmoil in the housing market and other burdens, and the impact can be devastating. Programs like WIC support these families and help put food on the table.

It is our responsibility to ensure that children born into poverty have the same opportunity to achieve the American Dream as any other child in our country and that cannot happen if children grow up malnourished and hungry. I urge my colleagues to vote against this bill and to reject these harmful cuts.

Mr. FARR. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. I have no further requests for time, I move passage of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered read for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

During consideration of the bill for amendment, the Chair may accord priority in recognition to a Member offering an amendment who has caused it to be printed in the designated place in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Those amendments will be considered read.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2112

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I

AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS

PRODUCTION, PROCESSING AND MARKETING

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Secretary of Agriculture, $4,293,000: *Provided*, That not to exceed $11,000 of this amount shall be available for official reception and representation expenses, not otherwise provided for, as determined by the Secretary.

Ms. DELAURO. I move to strike the last word.

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Connecticut is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the underlying bill and to the drastic and ill-conceived cuts to the nutrition programs that are proposed in this appropriation.

Under the majority's bill, our government cannot meet even its most basic responsibilities to the American people. For example, the Women, Infants, and Children program provides nutrition assistance grants to States for low-income pregnant, breast-feeding, and postpartum women, and infants and children up to the age of 5. It serves 9 million mothers and young children nationwide, and that includes 58,000 in Connecticut, my State. In fact, nearly half of the babies born in the United States every year participate in this program. It is a short-term intervention that can help provide a lifetime of good nutrition and health behavior. Over the first 60 days of a child's life alone, every $1 invested in WIC saves between $1.77 and $3.13 in health care costs.

But the budget before us today would leave WIC with a $650 million shortfall. According to the Center for Budget Policy and Priorities, that means as many as 350,000 eligible women and children will be cut from the rolls. In fact, Secretary of Agriculture Vilsack has warned our subcommittee that this number could be as high as 750,000. And if you read his letter carefully, there is no carryover, there is no contingency fund, and there will be substantial reductions in the number of people who will participate in the WIC program. It is unacceptable at a time of such great economic difficulty. With the unemployment rate over 9 percent, more and more families are having to rely on these dollars.

In the past, support for WIC has never been a partisan issue. For 15 years, Republicans and Democrats have always worked together in Congress to see that every woman and child eligible for WIC can participate in this life-saving program. In fact, Republicans and Democrats on our committee voted together to pass an amendment that I offered to provide $147 million more in funding for WIC before the Rules Committee today arbitrarily overturned that vote.

We cannot be taking food out of hungry people's mouths here at home in order to subsidize cotton production and to subsidize Brazilian cotton farmers. It makes no sense. As my colleague, Mr. FLAKE, on the other side of the aisle noted at the committee markup, it is quite ironic that we would subsidize Brazilian agriculture so that we can continue to excessively subsidize agriculture here. This bill flies in the face of our longstanding bipartisan commitment. It will leave women and children hungry.

WIC is not alone on the chopping block. The Commodity Supplemental Food Program provides nutritious food to low-income seniors and those making less than $14,000 a year. According to a study by Feeding America, 30 percent of these households in need have had to choose between food and medical care, and 35 percent between food and paying for heat or utilities. But even in the middle of a very tough economy, this proposal slashes funding for the CSFP. That means an estimated 150,000 seniors all across the country will lose access to this aid. They, once again, will have to go hungry.

Take the Emergency Food Assistance Program, which works with States to supplement food banks, emergency shelters, pantries, soup kitchens. Right now, the hard work these organizations do in helping ensure access to food is more important than ever. In fact, the demand for emergency food assistance has shot up 46 percent over the past 5 years. This budget cuts funding for the Emergency Food Assistance Program by $38 million—nearly a quarter below last year's funding.

Yet, while placing this tremendous burden on our most vulnerable citizens, the majority budget finds money to give subsidies to oil companies and tax

breaks to the wealthy. In fact, the cost of the Bush tax breaks for millionaires for 1 week is more than the cost of the proposed cut to the WIC program for the entire year. One day's tax breaks for the millionaires would pay for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program and for the Emergency Food Assistance Program.

This is what the majority has done. It's tax cuts for millionaires versus nutrition assistance. These are not the right choices for America. The American people know it. Gutting nutrition programs to pay for tax breaks for the rich is more than just a terrible investment in the future; it's a failure of our responsibility to the American people.

Oppose these reckless cuts.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Massachusetts is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I want to again rise in strong opposition to the underlying bill and express my deep outrage over the deep cuts in food and nutrition programs that benefit some of the most needy and vulnerable people in our country.

□ 1550

I am particularly outraged at the cuts in WIC. As we heard from our colleague from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), WIC is one of the most effective programs that exist. There has been a strong bipartisan tradition of fully funding the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children—WIC—to ensure that every eligible family that applies receives benefits. WIC is not an entitlement, but we have made a bipartisan, concerted effort in the past to make sure that everybody who qualifies and who needs it can actually get it. This is the first time since that commitment was established that the appropriations bill is providing less funding than what is needed to serve all eligible young children and pregnant or postpartum women.

Now, Republicans argue that somehow they're not cutting anything, that everything will be okay. That's not at all the case. That's, in fact, a complete distortion. We are told by organizations that monitor this that as many as 350,000 women and children would be thrown off the program as a result of these cuts. That's a conservative estimate. And since we've passed the rule, which does not protect the amendment that Ms. DELAURO got into the appropriations bill, which basically said that we're going to increase WIC funding by cutting subsidies to Brazilian cotton farmers—that is not protected, so somebody on the other side of the aisle, I'm sure, will raise a point of order against that language, and just like that, $147 million will immediately be cut from the WIC program, throwing, again, 100,000 to 200,000 additional women and children off the program. This doesn't make any sense, Madam Chair.

We're told by my friends on the other side of the aisle, well, don't worry, all the faith-based groups will take care of everything; that's what they're all there for. Well, talk to any leader in any faith-based community in this country, and they will tell you that they are working overtime right now to try to provide for the struggling families in their communities. In every part of this country, from urban to suburban to rural, faith-based communities are stepping up, but they cannot do it alone. They need us to be a partner. I don't know a single faith-based leader who would say to anybody in this Congress don't adequately fund WIC or don't adequately fund the TEFAP program or these other programs that provide food and nutrition to needy people.

The fact of the matter is that is not an answer. To put the burden on the faith-based community is basically an excuse for us to do nothing, and that is just unacceptable.

We've heard on the other side of the aisle, well, there are just so many programs out there, we're just eliminating all the duplication and triplication. Again, this is just another justification to try to rationalize the cuts that are being made here, but there's no basis of fact. That distortion ignores the fact that programs don't overlap; they complement each other. There is a difference between programs like SNAP and WIC and school lunch programs and summer feeding programs. They're not all the same. They're designed to complement each other. And in reality they do not provide enough benefits to eliminate hunger and food insecurity in this country.

The problem is not that we're giving too much to low-income families. The problem is not that we're giving them too much food. That is not the problem. We have a hunger problem in the United States of America. Tens of millions of our fellow citizens don't have enough to eat. And we're the richest, most powerful country on the planet. We should be ashamed of that fact. We should be working overtime in this body to try to remedy that fact, to make sure that the neediest among us get what they need.

By ignoring the plight of the poor, by ignoring the plight of those who are hungry in this country, they don't just all of a sudden go away. What we do is we end up creating other problems which turn out to be more costly. Hungry children can't learn in school. Hungry workers are less productive in the workplace. People who don't have enough to eat tend to have their immune systems compromised so that a common cold results in their staying in a hospital for a prolonged period of time. It costs this country a great deal that there is food insecurity in America. Hunger is not cheap. It costs a great deal, and we are paying billions and billions of dollars for that.

I urge my colleagues to defeat this bill.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Chair, I don't know how old my colleague is who just spoke, but Lyndon Johnson worked very hard to pass what was called the Great Society. And when he passed the Great Society, he said we're going to do away with hunger, we're going to do away with poor people, we're going to do away with all the problems facing mankind in the United States. And what happened? Things are worse now than they've ever been with all these social programs.

I just spoke a couple of minutes ago about what happened after World War II. In 1945 the spending was $84 billion. In 1946 it dropped 60 percent to $30 billion. So a 60 percent reduction in spending, but it freed up money for the private sector, and as a result, in the next 2 years there were 4½ million new jobs.

All these giveaway programs and all these programs that you guys talk about indicating that we don't care about seniors, we don't care about kids, we don't care about anybody, we're heartless, the fact of the matter is the thing that's heartless is 9.1 percent unemployment. The President, when he took office, said he was going to keep it under 8 percent. It's 9.1 and it's going up, not down. The economic figures we see today are terrible. Yet you want to continue to just keep spending money and spending money and spending money.

What we need to do is we need to cut spending. We need to cut taxes so people will have more disposable income. We need to cut business taxes so that business has more money to invest so they'll create jobs and create plants and equipment. But, no, you want to just keep spending on these programs and don't want to make any cuts.

Spending is out of control. The shortfall this year is going to be over $1.46 trillion. We don't have the money. The national debt is over $14 trillion right now, and it's going to get worse over the next 10 years by about a trillion dollars a year.

And yet every time we come down here and want to cut spending, you start saying we don't care about the poor, we don't care about the kids, we don't care about seniors. And then you see ads on TV with the little old lady's foot dragging as we throw her over the cliff.

What kind of nonsense is that? If we don't get our fiscal house in order, we're all going over a cliff. This country is in terrible fiscal shape right now, and we have to get control of spending. And it really bothers me every time I come down here and I hear you guys talking about we don't care about the children, we don't care about the seniors, we don't care about anybody.

What we care about is jobs and creating an economy that's growing so

that we can once again become the great economic power of the world. But everything that's going on with this administration and everything that you guys keep advocating is putting us more and more in the tank.

And let me tell you something: The American people get it. And if you don't think they get it, look at what happened in the last election. People are tired of the spending, tired of the runaway, giveaway programs. They want jobs that will create a growing economy. And we're not going to get it with more and more spending.

Keynesian economics, socialistic approaches to government do not work. Free enterprise does. And once again I want you to listen to these statistics:

After 1945 we increased jobs by 4½ million. At the same time we cut spending by 60 percent because we freed up the free enterprise system. That's what we ought to be doing right now if we're going to lower unemployment and get this economy back on track.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. MOORE. Madam Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Wisconsin is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MOORE. Madam Chair, I rise in strident opposition to the underlying bill.

We've all heard Michael Masser and Linda Creed's lyrics, ''I believe the children are our future. Teach them well and let them lead the way.'' The song is sung by every megastar and quoted at every whistlestop by every politician.

□ 1600

Well, if we believe this, then our most basic and most fundamental obligation of a civilized society is not only to teach them well but to feed them.

The WIC program is the USDA's largest discretionary program that provides assistance to children up to 5 years of age, to pregnant women, postpartum women, breast-feeding women who are nutritionally at risk because of inadequate nutrition and income.

We've heard a great deal from the other side—just recently the previous speaker—talk about the importance of letting the free market system work, that we need jobs. Infants cannot work. They are helpless. And according to the most recent census, almost 20 percent of the Nation's children are living in poverty. A recent report estimates that the annual estimated cost of domestic hunger is $90.4 billion, the cost of hunger, the consequences of hunger.

According to the American Community Survey, almost half of the children living in single, female-headed households in my district live in poverty and about 39 percent in Wisconsin are poor.

This program represents in any decent society the basic obligation we have to our fellow citizens. Half of the babies born in our country each year rely on WIC. This bill cuts a devastating $650 million from the WIC program; and in my State, this represents about 4,800 people who would lose the WIC program.

The Ryan budget cuts an astounding $833 million from the WIC program; and if you compare this to the Bush cuts, which gave the average millionaire a $139,199 tax break in 2011, or $2,700 a week, that comes up to a total of $866 million to the wealthiest people in 1 week. One week of the Bush-era tax cuts would pay that WIC for a year for the 20 percent of our kids in this country who are hungry. So that really, in my mind, demonstrates what the priorities of this body are. One week of the Bush-era tax cuts could feed and fund this program.

Now, if you truly believe that children are our future, note that numerous studies have shown that pregnant women who participate in the WIC program have longer pregnancies, lead to fewer premature births, fewer low and very low birth weight babies, experience fewer fetal and infant deaths, seek prenatal care earlier in pregnancy, and consume more of such key nutrients as iron, protein, calcium, vitamins A and C.

Now, if you're not moved by the whole children are our future bit, at least be persuaded that not investing in WIC is a costly proposition, and I know the other side is very concerned about costs because several Members have pointed out that we have all these multiple feeding programs. They're concerned with fraud, and God forbid some of these kids might be getting three, four, five meals a day based on funding of all these programs.

But pre-term births cost the U.S. over $26 billion a year, with the average first-year medical costs of the premature, low birth weight baby roughly costing $49,000 compared to $4,500 for a baby born without complications. WIC prenatal care benefits reduce the rate of low birth weight babies by 25 percent.

Now, for those of you who support these gargantuan ag subsidies, moneys for the various wealthy, I commend to you the words of Theodore Parker, a minister and abolitionist in the early 19th century who's been quoted by both Abraham Lincoln, our 16th President, and by Dr. Martin Luther King, in their epic speeches. Theodore Parker said, ''The miser, starving his brother's body, starves also his own soul, and at death shall creep out of his great estate of injustice, poor and naked and miserable.''

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. I move to strike the last word.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. First of all, I think it would be real interesting, my friend from Massachusetts, and I mentioned this to you yesterday. I think we would both enjoy to see what the results would be if we googled our hearing and put in the word ''hunger'' and put in the word ''obesity,'' which one showed up the most; and I believe you are going to find we talked far more about obesity than we did about hunger.

The question that I have is, on the hunger, there are so many food programs out there and this bill does have a $5.6 billion increase in food stamps and $1.5 billion increase in school lunch, that maybe you and I together could focus on where this hunger is because it could be that there's maybe an ignorance issue more than a hunger issue, ignorance in that people do not know how to get these programs that are out there.

Let me yield to my friend from Massachusetts.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Let me just say that I don't think poor people are ignorant.

Mr. KINGSTON. Then let me reclaim the time, because I'm trying to have an adult conversation, and I clarified what ''ignorant'' means, and if you don't know about a program, then you're ignorant about its existence.

Mr. MCGOVERN. If the gentleman will yield, I would also say, the gentleman raised the issue of obesity. There is a relationship between food insecurity and obesity and poverty and obesity. And so what we're talking about here is the importance of good nutrition, and the fact of the matter is that a lot of the people that we are trying to target some of these programs to don't have access to good nutrition. They live in food deserts where they can't buy good food, where they can't afford fresh fruits and vegetables.

Mr. KINGSTON. Let me reclaim the time, because I wanted to continue the discussion. One of the things that perhaps we could do a better job at is not only explaining to people where these programs are but also coordinating the actual program.

Now, the previous speaker said that some children—and I can't quote her exactly—might be getting four or five meals a day. I think it would be good in a time of fiscal restraint that we talk about, well, can we coordinate better.

Let me yield to my friend.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I think we're all for efficiency and good coordination, but I just want to read one line from a letter that Secretary Vilsack sent up here, where he says that he is confident the proposed funding level in your bill would lead to a substantial reduction in the program, meaning the WIC program, likely by hundreds of thousands of participants per month. That is substantial. That is something we can't afford.

Mr. KINGSTON. And that is substantial. But let me say this, the numbers that we're operating on, 2010, there were 9.2 million participants. This year, it's 8.9. Next year, the projection is less than that because 450,000 people less are on it. The base number on the bill would be about 8.3 million; but with the contingency funds, it could go over 9 million people. And as I have said to my friend from Massachusetts

before, we want to make sure no one falls through the cracks.

But I'm looking at these numbers, too, and I know that the group that has been cited many times, the numbers that they're using are a different base than what we're using. So I think some of this is actually about, well, what is that level, and I'm thinking it is the 8 to 9 million.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I would also just point out to the gentleman that there's another phenomenon going on here, and that is the rising cost of food. So the numbers that group that you're referring to has mentioned are pretty conservative. Food costs have been going up and up and up, and I think every American family can feel that. As a result, we're going to need to step up and not undermine these programs that, quite frankly, provide people basic nutrition of food.

Mr. KINGSTON. I agree that there is an unknown factor on the rising cost of food that we're not sure about.

Will the gentleman also agree with me, though—and we've had a very spirited debate, which I know my friend——

Mr. MCGOVERN. But it's not an unknown factor. Food prices are rising.

Mr. KINGSTON. We don't know the percentage food prices are rising, but we do know that this budget would allow with contingencies 9 million to participate, which is above the current level.

Now, I'm hoping that the economy does turn around, but I think it's very important, though, for us to be talking about some of these things that are in the mix like solid numbers, coordination of benefits, and also sources that people can go to, because the gentleman said, Folks don't know about this program, and we want to help them out.

□ 1610

Ms. DELAURO. I want to offer some solid numbers.

Mr. KINGSTON. Let me yield to my friend from Connecticut with the hopes that when my time runs out, my friend will yield to me as well.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. BISHOP of Utah). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. CHU. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. CHU. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition to the underlying bill where the House GOP guts critical food assistance programs that help America's low-income and less fortunate families at a time when they need it the most. This is yet another chapter in the Republican attack on working families to give handouts to special interests. First they came after seniors who rely on Medicare, and now they're coming after our young children and their mothers.

Millions of Americans are now struggling to get through the worst economy since the Great Depression, and America's food assistance programs are proving to be an essential safety net for the jobless and low-income families of America. At a time when the need is greater than it's been in generations, Congress should be reaffirming our commitment to helping these needy families, not pulling the rug out from under them. But alarmingly, that's just what the Republican Agriculture appropriations bill does.

This bill slashes funding for the nutrition program for Women, Infants, and Children by $686 million. WIC is a program that provides low-income pregnant women, new mothers, infants, and children with nutritious foods and improved access to health care. This funding is critical to ensuring America's new mothers, babies, and young children are fed right and grow up to be healthy, happy kids. But these slash-and-burn cuts completely end food assistance for up to 350,000 low-income women and children nationwide. Republicans, take the target off these kids.

Now let's distinguish between wasteful spending and investments that help the less fortunate get back on their feet. How can anyone say that WIC is wasteful when it serves nearly 10 million people each year for less than $100 per person? To some, these dollars may not sound like much, but they mean all the difference for mothers like Amanda.

Amanda was blessed with three children after she was told she couldn't even have one. But working in the food industry simply wasn't enough to support a family and certainly not one with as many needs as Amanda's. She has one son with disabilities, another that was born prematurely, and a third that requires special formula. All these demands quickly stretched her finances and her time. She couldn't afford the basics for her baby, like cereal, peanut butter, milk, and juice, much less the special formula that kept her son healthy. She was struggling to get by. But with WIC's help, she was able to make ends meet and even found time to get her bachelor's and master's through online classes while raising her kids. Now she is a registered nurse working on her Ph.D. And it was taking that first step to join WIC that helped keep her children healthy and helped her make a better life for her family. We should be investing in Amanda and her children, the future of our country, not leaving them to fend for themselves.

But instead of helping build a stronger American workforce for our future, the Republicans are providing more breaks so Big Oil can line their pockets. This same bill blocks efforts to rein in oil speculators that are manipulating the energy markets at the expense of American families at the pump. And, in fact, in April, Goldman Sachs found that this type of unregulated speculation adds over 20 percent to the price of oil, and that's why our gasoline prices are going sky high.

So what was the Republican reaction to this? They slashed $30 million in funding from the Commodity Futures Trading Commission which would stop this illegal speculation in the oil markets. So, as they gut funding from struggling mothers and tiny babies like this, Republicans are keeping gas prices high and pouring more profit into Big Oil's coffers.

We cannot balance the Nation's budget on the backs of everyday Americans just so that Big Oil can make big profits. Stop these cruel cuts to women, children, and infants.

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Ohio is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the underlying bill.

A mother's greatest fear is not being able to provide food and security for her children, not being able to provide nourishment for her kids to grow up and to learn. She worries about where she will find their next meal. Each morning, she is greeted by growling stomachs and an all-too familiar sense of anxiety. This mother is desperate to provide food for her hungry children and depends on our local food banks. But when she arrives at the food bank, she finds that the shelves are empty. That is the time at which her anxiety turns to fear and desperation.

Some of you might think that I am exaggerating, but if you come to my district and visit the city of Cleveland and other parts of my district, you can meet people who, for them, this is their reality, just as it is the reality for people throughout this Nation who rely on essential nutrition programs like TEFAP, WIC, and SNAP.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program, better known as TEFAP, provides food to low-income Americans in need of short-term hunger relief through food banks. This bill caps TEFAP funding at $200 million, which is a $51 million cut; and, in addition to that, another $12 million in grants for TEFAP for storage and distribution equipment is also being cut. These cuts affect the storage of food that requires refrigeration, forcing many food banks to only provide unhealthy, nonperishable foods.

And to my friend Mr. KINGSTON, there is, indeed, a correlation between hunger and obesity. Twenty-five percent of the food distributed at Cleveland food banks is from TEFAP, and it is some of the most nutritious food they have available. Even without the cuts that are proposed in this bill, food banks are facing a shortage of food, impairing their ability to provide for their communities. Parents turn to food banks especially in the summer when school is out, when their children no longer have a guaranteed breakfast and/or lunch 5 days a week.

And it didn't stop at TEFAP. Also on the chopping block is funding for WIC

and SNAP. Nearly 50 percent of the babies born in this country each year rely on WIC. The proposed cuts to SNAP and WIC would result in hundreds of thousands of low-income women, infants, and children losing needed nutrition assistance. These massive cuts to WIC would force vulnerable families to go hungry, to be completely dependent on food banks which, unfortunately, are losing vital funding through this legislation.

WIC provides food to almost 9 million low-income pregnant and nursing women and young children. This bill cuts WIC by over $800 million; and it's estimated that, because of these cuts, between 350,000 and 475,000 mothers and young children will be eliminated from the program. If we can just get rid of the tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires for 1 week, as my colleague has said, we can pay for the entire WIC program for an entire year. These cuts will cripple families and could have a detrimental effect on the futures of these children.

A quarter of the people in my district have difficulty accessing affordable food. But the chairman, Mr. ROGERS, indicated, ''this legislation reflects hard decisions to cut lower priority programs so that our Nation continues on the path to fiscal recovery.''

To a hungry child, SNAP and WIC are not low-priority programs. These cuts will not set our Nation on a path to recovery but, rather, make it significantly more difficult for mothers to ensure the safety and health of their children.

So what we are doing is punishing children for being poor. That is what we are doing. We're not talking about, necessarily, adults. Children have done nothing to us. I don't know how we sleep at night. The Bible tells us—and I know my friends like to talk about faith, and I am a person of strong faith. The Bible tells us that the poor will always be among us. So we need to make a provision to take care of the poor.

First, Republicans came after seniors who rely on Medicare, and now they're coming after children and mothers who rely on food assistance. Who's next, Mr. Chair?

I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation and protect our children and pregnant women.

□ 1620

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Illinois is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to the underlying bill, H.R. 2112, because of the deep cuts to the Women, Infants and Children's program.

I've always been told that you can measure the greatness of a society by how well it treats its young, how well it treats its old, and how well it treats those who have difficulty caring for themselves. All of us know that there is no way that children, infants, can adequately care for themselves.

The WIC program serves pregnant women through pregnancy up to 6 weeks after birth, or after pregnancy ends; breast-feeding women up to the infant's first birthday; and non-breast-feeding women up to 6 months after the birth of an infant or after the pregnancy ends, as well as infants up to their first birthday and children up to age 5.

Poverty and an identified medical or nutritional risk are two eligibility requirements. Nutritious foods, nutrition education, and referrals to maternal and child health services are among the program's benefits. WIC serves 45 percent of all infants born in the United States.

Now, there is no way that anyone can suggest that any of these individuals, especially the children, had anything at all to do with their level of poverty or the fact that there is not nutritious food available to them. And even if there were not food desserts, they wouldn't have the money to purchase what was available.

How one can reconcile taking milk out of the mouth of babes, or how one can suggest that some way or another we are spending money when, as the gentlelady from Wisconsin pointed out, the additional health care cost resulting as a result of the individual's not having basic food and care far outweighs any money that you could possibly spend.

And so it's not a matter of spending. It's a matter of investing. How do you invest in America? You invest by providing for those who have the greatest amount of need.

I know that we debate whether or not we are spending more than we're taking in. Well, there's a way to rectify that. We just take in more. We just charge people more who can afford to pay.

I don't believe in overspending. I don't believe in having huge deficits. But I don't believe in seeing people suffer and die because the society in which they live will not provide for them the basic necessities of life.

I urge we vote against this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NUGENT. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I do want to continue the discussion which we've had with our friends on the other side by pointing out something I think is very important. I have the vote from the CLAIMS Act, November 30, 2010, on which I voted ''no.'' This vote cut WIC $562 million. So far every speaker who's been on the floor voted ''yes'' to this bill. So in terms of following the rhetoric, it's very difficult.

I also want to point out we had a vote earlier this year, no, late last year, on extending the Bush tax cuts. I voted ''no.'' Did others on that side vote ''no''?

I'm glad my friend from Connecticut did.

I also want to point out we had a vote last week on the Kucinich amendment to get us out of Libya. I voted ''no'' on that. I'm not sure how you guys voted. I know my friend, Mr. MCGOVERN, has been an absolute, very consistent critic of the money that we are spending and engagement we are having in the Middle East. And I respect his philosophy on that.

But the reason I want to point this out is because it appears that when one side tries to cut the budget, they're pushing children out the door. But when another side cuts the budget, it's okay.

Ms. DELAURO. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KINGSTON. The gentleman from Florida controls the time, and I recommend that he does yield to you.

Mr. NUGENT. I yield to the gentlelady from Connecticut.

Ms. DELAURO. I thank the gentleman from Florida and the gentleman from Georgia. Let me first comment on the $562 million. There have been several references to this in the course of the afternoon. This is the truth of this effort: $562 million in unspent WIC funds were cut last year. But the cut did not affect any participants. The reason it didn't affect participants is that WIC foods cost less. There were fewer participants in fiscal year 2010, so the funds were not needed. That shows you that because there was extra money in WIC last year, the funds——

Mr. NUGENT. Reclaiming my time, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. I want to comment on that. But that's exactly what we're doing.

Ms. DELAURO. But the——

Mr. KINGSTON. My friend from Connecticut, you know that's what we're doing.

Ms. DELAURO. Can I finish?

The Acting CHAIR. Members will suspend. The gentleman from Florida controls the time. To whom does he yield?

Mr. NUGENT. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia has the time.

Mr. KINGSTON. The participation in WIC in 2010 was $9.2 million. Today it's about $8.8 million. This bill, because the level has dropped and is dropping, is at a level of $8.3 million, but can go over $9 million with the contingency. So I believe that when you cut WIC last year, you did it in good faith. I would only ask that you give us that good faith too.

Ms. DELAURO. If the gentleman from Florida would continue to yield, the cut in this bill is different because it does result in the loss of benefits to

participants. That's not my word, but the Secretary of Agriculture has said hundreds of thousands.

And from our last conversation, which we didn't finish, you asked about rising food prices. And this is from the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities. I'm not making up the numbers. If the cost of WIC foods increases by 2 percent between fiscal years 2000 and 2012, the smallest increase likely, the proposed funding cut would force WIC to serve roughly 200,000 fewer people in 2012 and 2011. If it goes to 5 percent, the food cost, you'd have to cut roughly 350,000 people. These are actual numbers.

Mr. NUGENT. Reclaiming my time, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. Let me say my friend from Connecticut will agree, though, that if you, on your side, had not cut WIC $562 million, that money would still be there right now.

Ms. DELAURO. The fact of the matter is what we are not asking about is not utilizing funds if we don't need them.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is yielding to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. The point that I'm making, Mr. Chair, is that WIC is $562 million, not because of any Republican action, but because of the Democrat action. And you know what? I don't question anyone's motives on this side, and I admire their passion. And my friend from Connecticut is one of the most passionate persons in this body when it comes to WIC. And I respect that.

But we also have to look at some of these numbers because if they're just air-dropped into this bill, then I can certainly understand their outrage. But if we look at the long term, where WIC was 2 or 3 years ago, where it's going, and the fact that there are three contingency funds to pick up the slack on this, not to mention a number of other good programs.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

□ 1630

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Tennessee is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COHEN. The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) brought up a quote about how you look at government. And it was Hubert Humphrey who said that governments are judged on how they treat those in the dawn of life—the young; in the twilight of life—the old; and the shadows of life—the disabled, people with handicaps. And that is the way you should judge it. I sometimes think with this budget and what we're seeing here from the other side is they think the way you judge a government is by the way it treats the millionaires, the billionaires, the way it treats the oil and gas industry, or the way it treats the Wall Street folks who do the hedge funds. And I think if that's the way you're being judged, it's going to be a harsh, harsh condemnation.

My friend from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) came down and he spoke and he said something about, look at what happened in the last election. Well, I'll tell you what happened in the last election—it was in New York State and the people spoke loudly. In a district that in 2010 was strongly Republican, they said we don't want Medicare destroyed, we want to keep Medicare, and they elected a Democrat. And the people are seeing what these budget cuts are doing.

One of the reasons we've got all these problems and the reasons why we have more and more people falling into needs for the SNAP program and the WIC program and others is because the middle class is disappearing in this country because jobs are being shipped overseas. We're giving millionaires and billionaires tax breaks, and we're saying everybody should share, but the sharing isn't going to the rich; it's only going to the poor people, and they're getting cut and cut and cut.

This WIC program, Women, Infants and Children, should be the last place anybody would consider cutting, it should be the absolute totally last place; and yet the cuts are there, 13 percent. The fact is those people are in the place in life where if we don't give moneys to the food for pregnant mothers we're going to have more infant mortality. In my district, we've got an infant mortality rate similar to Third World countries. We've tried to have programs passed up here to deal with infant mortality and to study it and to try to save the lives of babies, and we're not going to be doing that.

I've heard a lot from the other side about being pro-life. We have a difference on that. I'm pro-choice, but I'm pro-life after birth. And pro-life shouldn't just be during a period of gestation; it should include a time after birth. And we're not hearing pro-life-type statements and pro-life-type budget provisions; it is all about saving money on the backs of the poor. This is something that is not appropriate, and it's something that I think should shame the other side.

Mr. KINGSTON is a fine man. I heard him say he voted against the Bush tax cuts, which I did. I got confused on what you did on Libya, but I don't know what that had to do with it. You voted with KUCINICH? Well, I didn't. I don't know what it has to do with women, infants, and children. There's a whole lot going on in Africa. That's another issue.

The bottom line is he's a good man, but he has a bad provision here, and he could see to it that we change that. The women and the infants and the children are dependent on the man from Georgia to try to come up with a provision to help them.

The lady from Connecticut wanted some more time a few minutes ago, and I would like to yield to her on this issue.

Ms. DELAURO. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

The point was is that we are looking at the potential and the fact of increased food prices. And again, the numbers are not mine, they belong to an organization that has very good credentials on both sides of the aisle in this town, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. They are very clear that if that 2 percent increase in food price—and that's viewed as the smallest increase likely—happens, we will see roughly 200,000 fewer people. If it's a 5 percent increase in food prices, that there would be a cut of 350,000.

The Secretary of Agriculture said that the proposed amount of money would lead to hundreds of thousands of people being eliminated from the program. He also is very clear, as others have been, that there is no carryover money, there is no contingency fund. And the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities reiterates the same effort.

With regard to the $562 million, my only point on that was, I am willing, others are willing to say if the funds are not needed at that juncture and they are extra, yes, they can be used for something else. No one is saying that the numbers have to be static all of the time. But the fact of the matter is we are in a different period in 2011 going into 2012, where there is much more serious economic difficulty—rising food prices, rising rates of people who need these programs—and we're just saying let's have the money that we need in order to move forward.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MATSUI. I rise today in opposition to the underlying bill. This legislation makes dangerous cuts to essential antihunger and nutrition programs.

In addition to their plan to privatize Medicare, House Republicans are now proposing to cut the Women, Infants and Children program, otherwise known as WIC. This is a much-needed, Federally funded health and nutrition program which provides support, resources, and education to low-income women.

This preventative public health nutrition program connects mothers with prenatal care, increases healthy birth outcomes, and educates new mothers about caring for their children and providing healthy food options for their families.

In my home State of California, there are 82 WIC agencies serving over 1.4 million women, infants, and children, but the bill before us today cuts $650 million from the program, and these cuts we cannot afford to make.

There are two WIC programs at work in my district, and I recently saw firsthand the critical demand and needs for

their services. I witnessed a long line of women trying to provide for their families and trying to receive the support they need to have a healthy pregnancy. This WIC office alone has a case load of over 32,000 individuals a month but can only serve 30,000 because of a lack of resources.

In this economic downturn, people who never before knew about WIC now find themselves relying on its services to feed their families. These include State workers who were furloughed, nurses and teachers who have lost their jobs. Unfortunately, demand for these programs is increasing, not decreasing. With Sacramento's unemployment rate at 12 percent, these resources are not only needed and appreciated but are vital.

One recipient is a mother who once thought WIC was only about giving free food or formula to low-income families, but her perspective about the program changed dramatically when she enrolled in the program herself. As she was expecting her first and only child, she entered the program to help her family make ends meet. Throughout her pregnancy, she received nutrition information and referrals. Unfortunately, she was diagnosed with gestational diabetes, but because she was on WIC at the time she was seen by a dietitian every month. With WIC's support, her baby was born healthy and she had the support she needed to provide for her family.

But the cuts in this legislation do not end at WIC. The Commodity Supplemental Food Program, which helps supplement meals for low-income individuals, and The Emergency Food Assistance Program, otherwise known as TEFAP, which provides food banks with food they distribute, are both on the chopping block.

A month ago, I visited the Stanford Settlement Senior Center, which participates in the California Emergency Foodlink Senior Brown Bag Lunch run by volunteers, many of whom are recipients themselves. The California Emergency Foodlink distributes over 80,000 pounds of food per month to approximately 8,000 low-income seniors in need in Sacramento County. For many of these seniors this is the only nutritious food they will have for a week. TEFAP also provides funding for approximately 18 percent of food that comes into the Sacramento food bank. This food bank provides a 5-day supply of emergency groceries to those who are struggling to get by, and over 18,000 individuals receive fresh groceries from this site every month.

In addition to all of the cuts I've mentioned, the legislation also includes report language to stop the process of updating the school nutrition standards. It is essential for our students to have the nutrition they need to be productive and successful at school. In the Sacramento City Unified School District, approximately 67 percent of students are eligible for free and reduced lunches. Without an investment in proper nutrition, these students will not only fall behind in their studies, they can also face serious health issues.

□ 1640

Unfortunately, the legislation before us proposes some of the hardest cuts to endure. I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Wyoming is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Chairman, the speakers have chosen to cut $562 million out of WIC, which would have carried forward into this year, and this year would have carried forward into next year. That's because the WIC Program has a 2-year carryover. So, when the previous speakers voted to cut WIC by $562 million, they truly were cutting money that could have been available now.

The reason they chose to cut that is they found a higher priority expenditure than WIC, and when they made that choice, they took that money out of the program, money which could have been available now. They did that based on real numbers of WIC participation, not on estimates. They did it on real numbers, and the real numbers showed that WIC participation was in decline.

We are now looking at about 8.3 million per month in WIC participation with about 9 million per month fundable via contingency. We are looking at funding WIC at 87 percent of what it has been. We're not looking at decimating it. We're not looking, like some people have said on the other side, at levels that will cause children to go hungry or to starve, as one of the people said on the other side of the aisle. We're funding it at 87 percent of the level it has been. In addition, there are State food programs. There are county food programs. There are city food programs. There are religious organization food programs. There is the Salvation Army—501(c)(3)-type programs—neighborhood programs, Meals on Wheels programs, food banks; and there are goodhearted, wonderful Americans who help their neighbors in need.

This is an adequate budget in tough economic times. In addition, as I said earlier, we are funding a net increase in food programs because we are increasing the amount of money that will go to food stamps and school lunches.

Mr. McGOVERN. Will the gentlelady yield?

Mrs. LUMMIS. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. McGOVERN. I thank the gentlelady for yielding.

I guess my question to the gentlelady is: Does she believe we do not have a hunger or a food and security problem in this country and that everything is being taken care of?

My other question is: Why are Brazilian cotton farmers more important than poor pregnant women and their children?—because that's another choice we're making here.

Mrs. LUMMIS. In reclaiming my time, I do not believe that cotton farmers in either the United States or Brazil are more important than WIC Program participants.

Mr. McGOVERN. Do you believe we have a hunger problem?

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Chairman, our committee is only able to look at discretionary spending. We cannot look at mandatory spending, and we cannot look at programs that are subject to the 5-year farm bill, such as subsidies for farmers. I think subsidies for farmers can go by the wayside, and I hope that when the Ag Committee meets to restructure the 5-year farm bill that they will do away with farmer subsidies.

I think it is ridiculous that we are paying cotton growers subsidies in this country that violate the World Trade Organization to an extent that we then have to subsidize Brazilian cotton growers in order to rectify our violation of the WTO. That's one of the most ridiculous things I've ever heard. I wish we could have addressed that in this bill.

I wish we could have addressed the categorical eligibility that is available. Once you qualify for one type of Federal program, you're eligible for all of them whether you need them or not. I wish we could address how much money people get on earned income tax credits. I wish we could make sure that 100 percent of the people in this country paid a little bit of tax and that the rich people paid a lot more.

None of that is true, and none of that is within the purview of the Appropriations Committee with regard to discretionary spending.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. WOOLSEY. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. I rise in opposition to the underlying bill. Mr. Chairman, it is often said that a society can be judged by how it treats its young, its elderly and the less fortunate. Today is a perfect example of that.

Instead of feeding the women, infants and children, it appears that the Republicans in Congress are slashing the Ag budget to make room for more tax breaks for the wealthy. Let's have a look at how these priorities balance out. If we got rid of tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires for one measly week, we would pay for the entire WIC Program for a year—a full year. So let's get this straight.

During these times when there is a job shortage, when a person has a job but wages are lower than they should be, when the cost of food is very high and when we have low taxes on the

rich, pregnant women will go hungry and their babies will be born underweight so that someone can afford another beach vacation. Kids will go without breakfast so that someone can buy a second home.

First, the Republicans in Congress passed the Ryan budget act to dismantle Medicare for our seniors and for our disabled. Now they want to take food from the mouths of needy children and women. Honestly, Mr. Chairman, I don't know how they sleep at night.

This shouldn't be a partisan issue. There are WIC recipients in every single congressional district in this country—red States, blue States. Hunger doesn't see political affiliation. This is not some abstract political theory. There are real women and children in every single congressional district who will have to forgo meals. How many of us have ever given up a meal so that a child could eat or have explained to a 3-year-old why there won't be lunch today or have soothed a crying baby who won't get formula?

We should end this shameful spending of $10 billion a month in Afghanistan. We should bring our troops home. We should stop the war tax. We should tax millionaires and billionaires. We should create jobs. We should vote against this bill. Let's show America's working families that we stand with them and that we will be there for them during times of need.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I know this is a very, very tough state of affairs and time frame that we are in. I also know this is a time when America calls upon all of us to stand not for our individual selfish interests but to look at the country as a united team that believes in lifting the boats of all people.

I want to thank my friends who have struggled on this committee to deal with the bare necessities of life, of food. That is why I come today, unfortunately, to oppose this legislation, because it does not take into account that without sustenance and nutrition that people die.

□ 1650

It is plain and simple. We are not talking about knicknacks or trains, buses, highways, bridges, all very important and job creators, and in fact efforts that the Democrats have made very clear that they are the job creating caucus for the press and push that we have made or are making in America. We have asked our colleagues to join us. But today we talk about feeding people.

I rose earlier today to say that it is in the DNA of the 18th Congressional District, because one of my predecessors, Mickey Leland, actually died delivering food to starving people around the world. He thought so much of hunger in America that he organized the Select Committee on Hunger, joined by Tony Hall and Congressman Emerson; and his legacy was that we cannot do without substance.

So it makes no sense to cut $3 billion from WIC; a WIC program that indicates that WIC moms are more likely to have initiated breast feeding than low-income non-WIC moms. Middle- to high-income moms are more likely to have initiated breast feeding than both WIC and low-income non-WIC. One in five children do not drink water easily. WIC children were more likely to drink juice daily than children not on WIC. Ninety-three percent of children drink milk daily. About one-quarter of all children had drunk seven or more sugar-sweetened beverages in the previous week. These are without the ability to have nutritious meals. This is in my own State of Texas, which indicates that food does not matter in terms of how wealthy a State may be.

So I can't imagine why, as my colleagues have said, we can't find $3 billion from the $10 billion a month that is being spent in Afghanistan and the moneys that have been stolen in Iraq, where we don't even know where it is. It is all about priorities.

So I rise today to express great consternation over the cut in WIC and to indicate that WIC is about growing, it is about providing nutrition so that children can think, so that they can be able to be strong leaders. It is to grow children healthy, it is to stop disease, it is to provide the kind of immune system that thwarts disease.

In a State like Texas, the 18th Congressional District which I represent has a strong work ethic. I am so proud of them. But they also have a rate of poverty that is frightening. Food insecurity in my district ranks number 32 in the Nation. That means that there are only 31 districts ahead that have that degree of food insecurity. And yet I am going to have to go home and tell them that the priorities of this Congress were something other than feeding children and providing mothers, prenatal and prenatal condition and after birth, the kind of resources to provide for a healthy child.

That means my pre-K little babies will be going to school hungry. That means they will come home to a nondinner. And that means that we as a country have failed in our natural value that we all are created equal with certain inalienable rights of life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

It is shocking to be able to stand here today and know they are cutting Medicare and Medicaid, and now they add insult to injury that they are cutting food stamps and the WIC program. So I guess our soldiers, who themselves, young soldiers, young families on food stamps, will suffer as well.

But the WIC program, that has gotten blamed for everything but what is right, and that is the Women, Infants and Children program provides nutrition for healthy children, and to stand here today to have to look Americans in the face and those in the 18th Congressional District who are 32nd in food insecurity and say that we do not have the money.

Mr. Chairman, I am asking my colleagues to go back to the drawing board. Don't put this bill on the floor. Take it off, because you are now handing to the children of this Nation a ticket that says no food at the end, no food at this table, no food.

Mr. CICILLINE. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Rhode Island is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CICILLINE. I rise in opposition to the underlying bill.

Mr. Chair, I rise today in defense of 76,000 residents of the First Congressional District of Rhode Island, which I have the privilege of representing who, according to the advocacy group Feeding America, are at risk of losing their ability to feed themselves and their families. That is because this week the majority party in the House is ready to vote on a measure that will undermine the safety net in this country designed for our Nation's women, infants and children.

Mr. Chairman, we all know that one of the greatest challenges before us is reducing our deficit, but we have to do it in a way that is consistent with our values, consistent with the values of our great country. And this week we will be voting on a measure that fails those values miserably.

If the majority party has their way and denies necessary funding to a critical safety net for some of our Nation's most vulnerable citizens, nearly 1,000 women, infants and children in Rhode Island's First District will be denied the assistance they need to survive.

WIC represents the most basic obligation we have to our fellow citizens most in need—food and nutrition. On top of that, it is an incredibly cost-effective program, serving nearly 10 million Americans each year and costing less than $100 per person. In my district, more than 18 percent of the residents suffer from food insecurity and depend on WIC to make ends meet.

At a time when the middle class in our country is being crushed with high unemployment and still reeling from a housing crisis that has left countless families in foreclosure, we are seeing more and more people in need of assistance just to get by. And it is not just affecting people without jobs. It is folks who have a job as well, but they have had their wages cut or they have had their wages diminished or their hours cut.

This is not the time to allow people to lose the lifelines they need to survive. We have helped the auto industry. We have helped big banks. It is time to sustain support for families that are most in need and have been most devastated by this difficult economy.

Yet we see again this week another attack by the Republican majority in

the House on working families while they continue to fight to protect subsidies for Big Oil and to protect tax breaks for the outsourcing of jobs overseas. First they come after seniors by trying to end Medicare, and now they are coming after women, children, and infants who rely on food assistance.

We should not be destroying programs upon which citizens rely for their most basic needs in order to fund tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires or big subsidies for the big oil companies. If we got rid of tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires for one week, we could pay for the entire WIC program for an entire year.

I urge my colleagues to reject this proposal, to ensure instead that families most in need who have been hardest hit by this recession have access to food and nourishment. We have the ability to provide nourishment to families, and that is a cornerstone of a free and decent society. We cannot abandon this great responsibility.

I yield to the gentlelady from Wisconsin.

Ms. MOORE. Thank you so much for yielding.

I just wanted a few seconds to clarify something I have heard over and over again. We continue to say that first they have come after the seniors with Medicare and Medicaid and now they are coming after the children. No. We ended the entitlement to AFDC back in the nineties, and WIC is not an entitlement like the SNAP program, the food stamp program. It is not an entitlement like school lunch programs.

So what this bill does is it double-downs on not providing food to infants and children. No, we have already cut the entitlement and snatched the safety net from underneath kids. This double-downs on that. We have torn the safety net for children, and now we are pulling it through the shredder for the second time.

As a person who has personally had sugar sandwiches, mayonnaise sandwiches and mustard sandwiches, I can tell you that funding this program at only 87 percent of its value will mean we will see a lot more malnourishment in our communities.

Mr. CICILLINE. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BARTLETT. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Maryland is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BARTLETT. Mr. Chairman, I wanted to spend just a few moments putting our discussions in context. This year, the deficit will be perhaps as much as $1.6 trillion.

□ 1700

Now, our total discretionary spending—that's the money that we vote here to spend, and spend nearly a year doing it—is a little over a trillion dollars. A bit more than half of that is the Defense budget. What that means is if we didn't have any government that we vote to spend money for here, if we had no Defense, we had no Homeland Security, if we had no EPA, if we had no NIH, if we had no WIC program, if we had none of the myriad Departments of government that serve us every day, we'd still have a half-trillion-dollar deficit. I'm not sure that the reality of this has gotten through to our Congress or the American people.

Another way of looking at this is that we have revenues of about $2.2 trillion a year, but our mandatory spending—that's interest on the debt and our means-tested welfare programs and Medicaid and Medicare and Social Security—are several hundred billion dollars more than that. What that means is that one second after midnight on January 1, we're already in debt that year several hundred billion dollars, and we haven't even started to pay for the defense of our country, for Homeland Security, for NIH, for the WIC program, or for any of these many, many programs that our government supports.

There is no way with the meager cuts that we're making in these budgets that we're voting on that we're ever going to get to anything near a balance.

Mr. CONYERS. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BARTLETT. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. CONYERS. Thank you very much, sir. We're good friends.

What you're telling me, I presume, is that you approve a $650 million cut from the Women, Infant, and Children's fund. Is that correct?

Mr. BARTLETT. I was just trying to put in context our discussion here and what it means.

Reclaiming my time, we have a $1.6 trillion deficit. We're coming close to that this year. The Ryan budget was kind of an expression of his roadmap. And in the last Congress only eight of us had the courage to sign on to his roadmap, because it was pretty tough. This year, when he filed that roadmap again, I think 13 of us signed on. And then we had the Ryan budget, which is even tougher, I think, than his roadmap, but what else was there to vote for, and almost nobody read it, so we voted for it anyhow.

The Ryan budget doesn't balance for 25 years. It doesn't balance for 25 years. That means with that budget, with all of its austerity, for 25 years we still are accumulating more and more and more debt. Every six hours we have another billion-dollar deficit, which means another billion-dollar debt. About every 12 hours we have another billion-dollar trade deficit.

Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to put our discussions in context. I have 10 kids and 17 grandkids and two great-grandkids. I sure would like to leave them a country better than the country as I find it. And it's going to be really tough to do that. What I want for us to do as Republicans and Democrats, conservatives and liberals, is to sit down and talk through this. How are we going to solve this problem? Grandstanding and making these political points is not going to get us there.

Mr. Chairman, we have got to do something serious. I don't see the Congress doing that.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HOYER. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Maryland is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOYER. I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I thank Mr. BARTLETT from Maryland for making the case. I tell my friends that when they say women and children first, it means to save them, not to throw them overboard. Women and children first means that they are the most vulnerable and need to be lifted up, need to be protected, need to be given the hand up, not the handout.

Ladies and gentlemen of this House, I rise in opposition to this bill. I thank my friend from Maryland, for whom I have great respect. I think in fact he did put this in context. We will not balance the budget on the backs of children. We will not balance this budget on the backs of women who need nutrition and health care. That's not how we're going to balance the budget. And the gentleman from Maryland made that point I think very effectively.

If we cut out all defense and discretionary spending, we wouldn't balance our budget. That's the magnitude of the problem that faces us. But a great country, America, should not ask our children who need nutritional programs, who need health programs, to pay the price—to pay the price of our responsibility because we have failed to pay for what we buy.

But let us not repair to our little children and their mothers to pay the bill that we refuse to pay while at the same time we pass a rule the first day in this House that provides for $5 trillion in tax cuts for the wealthiest in America, including me. I don't want a tax cut if it means that a child goes hungry in America, the richest Nation on the face of the Earth. That is not my priority. That is not my morality. That is not my faith. Lift up the little children.

Surely, America is not a country that wants to see its children go hungry or its pregnant women go without services they need for healthy babies. Surely, America is a generous enough country to feed those who need food. My faith tells me to feed the hungry, house the homeless, clothe those who have no clothes.

I rise in opposition to this bill and I rise in strong opposition to attempts to dramatically cut the food programs that serve some of our most vulnerable constituents. Erskine Bowles, a Democrat, and Alan Simpson, a Republican and former member of the United States Senate, just issued a report. In that report it lays forth a number of premises on which that report is based.

And one of its first premises is: do not hurt the vulnerable in America. Because, as my friend from Maryland points out, that won't get you to where we need to get. And we need to get there. I'm going to work with my friend from Maryland, a Republican, and all Republicans who know that we need to get to balanced budgets to reduce debt, and my friends on my side of the aisle.

This appropriations bill would sharply reduce funding for the vital nutrition programs for women, infants, and children. Surely, Americans did not send us a message to go to Washington and undermine women, infants, and children. At a time when we are still recovering from the worst economic crisis in a generation, where unemployment is unacceptably high, where people have lost their homes, where too many people are in great distress, surely this is not a time to say, We turn our back on you.

This bill is pushing to cut $37 million in support for hungry, low-income seniors, not just women, infants, and children. This bill cuts seniors as well. Surely, our people did not send us to this Congress to cut seniors. Also, $11 million in support for our community food banks. By the way, if you visited your food bank, you know that there is more demand on our food banks than there has ever been.

Ladies and gentlemen, reject this bill. Stand up for the values of America and of our people.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Michigan is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONYERS. I would like to follow on to our great whip's very moving statement and ask our good friend ROSCOE BARTLETT, a distinguished Member from Maryland, whether or not he would pass a bill that would cut funding in the amount of $650 million for women, infant, and children out of the Department of Agriculture's program.

□ 1710

So in the four decades that I have served and have been honored to serve in this Congress, I believe that we will have reached an all-time low today if we pass a bill that will cut funding for the Department of Agriculture's Women, Infants, and Children program.

Ladies and gentlemen, my brothers and sisters, how can anybody in Congress with a conscience seriously consider passing a bill, or even proposing one, that would result in more hunger for hundreds of thousands of the poorest and neediest low-income children across this Nation who are already suffering from hunger and malnutrition?

I fail to understand the logic of any elected official who serves in Congress who would actually support a $650 million cut from the Women, Infants, and Children program during one of the worst economic downturns since the Great Depression without feeling some kind of moral or ethical guilt for doing so.

The Women, Infants, and Children program serves nearly 10 million people each year and costs less than $100 per person. What could be more important than supporting a Federal program that provides nutritious food to new mothers, babies, and children under 5 who have been identified as nutritionally at risk?

Cutting the Women, Infants, and Children program for poor children and mothers is clearly an abandonment of our family values. Promoting policies that we know will result in scores of children feeling the painful sting of hunger, not being able to focus in school or not being able to do their homework, is far from what I would consider having good family values. It is simply un-American, immoral, heartless, and unconscionable to take food away from the mouths of hungry children in the name of deficit reduction. Ladies and gentlemen, have we no shame?

The majority of Americans do not support slashing vital food and nutrition programs for our Nation's poorest children. Let's get rid of the tax breaks for billionaires so all children in this country can live the American dream and not go to bed hungry at night.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Illinois is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 2112, the Agriculture appropriations bill. And like so many before me, I'm particularly opposed to cuts in funding to provide food and nutrition to American families, to pregnant women and infants and children and seniors and families struggling in this country to put food on the table at a time of rising unemployment and poverty.

I have to tell you I am at a loss to understand why my Republican colleagues are so insistent in providing even more tax breaks to millionaires and billionaires that they are willing to take food from children. In the Republican world view, apparently, tax cuts to the very wealthy and subsidies to big oil companies and companies that send jobs overseas are a bigger priority than Medicare and Medicaid and education. And, again, in this bill they even take food out of the mouths of hungry children to give those tax breaks.

Understand what this bill does. The Commodity Supplemental Food Program, which provides low-income seniors with emergency food and nutrition education, is cut by more than 20 percent, or $40 million. In this bill the Republicans will take food out of the mouths of hungry, poor, old people.

The SNAP reserve fund will get $2 billion less. SNAP, formerly called food stamps, provides critical nutrition support to low-income families, and the reserve helps meet the demands created by unexpected participation in higher-than-projected food costs, food costs everybody knows are going way up. And with high unemployment and food prices rising, the reserve fund is more likely to be tapped than ever before, and depleting reserve funds will increase the likelihood of a food crisis in the United States of America.

Let me tell you what these cuts mean to people in Illinois. Lorraine Dzieginski is 82 years old and started receiving Social Security benefits at age 65. Her monthly benefit is $695 a month. But this amount doesn't even cover her property taxes, her home insurance, her supplemental health insurance and utilities. That amounts to well over $700. She relies partially on the SNAP, or food stamp program, to feed herself. Her monthly benefit is $16, the minimum SNAP allotment. Republican cuts likely mean that other seniors like Ms. Dzieginski will be turned away from SNAP if they find themselves in that circumstance next year. Our seniors deserve better.

Mr. KINGSTON. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. I want to remind you SNAP actually goes up $5.6 billion on this, and you're not talking about it, but school lunch also goes up $1½ million. So I did want to say that the SNAP portion of this bill does go up $5.6 billion.

I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Thank you very much. It's still $2 billion lower than the President's request.

We want to make sure the money is there at a time of high unemployment, of disappearing 401(k)s and savings. And the Emergency Food Assistance Program is cut by more than 20 percent, or $60 million. And TEFAP provides commodities to food banks to assist in relief efforts. And with unemployment still high, and I know this in my district, many people who used to contribute to food banks are now waiting in line to get the food to keep food on their tables. And with diminished Federal support, they may show up only to find empty shelves.

And then we get to the WIC program. I'm a mother and a grandmother, and for the first time in American history, we will turn away eligible mothers and children from the program, an effective program. With it, infants and children can get a healthy start in life, and without it they can suffer from lifelong health problems. For every dollar spent, WIC provides health care savings of as much as $3—$3 for every $1 spent.

So we talk a lot about children, we've talked a lot about seniors in this House, but let's be clear. The choice before us is not whether we have to deny children food in order to reduce the deficit. The choice is whether we will

make millionaires and billionaires pay their fair share so that low-income mothers, infants, and children will be fed.

The choice is clear. Vote ''no'' on this legislation.

□ 1720

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. I rise today in opposition to the underlying bill, H.R. 2112, the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2012, and the cuts to the WIC program.

We want to talk about right to life. WIC is a right to life. It's an essential program that offers nutrition, education, breast feeding support, referrals, and a variety of nutritious foods to low-income pregnant, breast feeding and postpartum women, infants, and children up to the age of 5. The program is administered through county health departments, hospitals, mobile clinics, community centers, schools, public housing sites, migrant health centers and camps, and Indian health service facilities.

In New York State, the WIC program provides services to nearly one-half million low-income women, infants, and children through 103 local WIC agencies statewide. Local agencies such as Brooklyn's Healthy Start have provided WIC services to low-income women in my district for more than 20 years. It is the work of the Brooklyn Healthy Start and other WIC programs who are on the front lines that are fighting against this country's already shamefully high infant mortality rate. Decreasing funding to WIC programs will undoubtedly increase my district's infant mortality rate and infant mortality rates across this Nation.

Given the spike in demand for WIC and other nutrition programs like SNAP and food stamps, school meals, summer, after-school, and child care food programs, it is unconscionable that the Republican-led Congress is seeking to cut these critical programs that help seniors, children, and low-income people who aspire to be part of our Nation's middle class.

First, Republicans went after our Nation's seniors who rely on Medicare, and now they're going after the children and mothers who rely on our social compact for food assistance. If we got rid of tax breaks for multimillionaires and billionaires for just 1 week, we would pay for the entire WIC program for a year.

It is my belief that cuts to the WIC program are based on an ideological political rationale that defies human understanding and not an honest desire to cut deficits. This Agriculture appropriations bill continues to protect tax cuts for multimillionaires while having poor women and children stuck to pay the dear price.

WIC has been shown to improve the health of pregnant women, new mothers, and infants and children. The food provided through WIC is a good source of essential nutrients that are often missing from the diets of women and young children. WIC participants have longer, healthier pregnancies and fewer premature births.

We all understand the need to reduce the deficit, but we must do so in a way that is consistent with our shared values. It is a moral imperative that we look after those who are forgotten, marginalized in our society. In the words of a prolific, poetic philosopher, Kanye West, ''How could you be so heartless?'' Republicans shouldn't destroy programs upon which citizens depend on the most in exchange to pay for $45 billion in tax breaks for multimillionaires. Shame.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this bill and protect low-income women, infants, and children.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ELLISON. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Minnesota is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Chairman, we're told that we're broke, we're broke, and because we're broke, we can't possibly pay for things like women, infants, and children. We can't have a jobs bill. We can't build our Nation's infrastructure. We can't, we can't, we can't. We have to cut because, according to some, we're broke.

But when we think about how the bounty of this Nation is spread, we're not so broke that we can't give subsidies to oil companies. We're not so broke that we can't ask the richest Americans to do a little more. We're not so broke that we don't call upon people whom America has benefited and allowed them to become millionaires and say, You know what? Now your Nation needs you. We're told, No, those people don't have to sacrifice, but we're broke.

So women and infants and children and seniors, they have to sacrifice. They have to go without. They have to tighten their belts. It's a shame.

We're not asked to be one America, to bear the burden together. If there's a burden to be borne, surely oil companies can bear it with the American people. If there's a burden to be borne, surely the wealthiest among us can pitch in and help out. But not according to the Republican majority. According to them, we're broke, and the poor must suffer. The aged must do without. Those in need have to figure out how to make it one more day because we're broke, and we have to take food out of the mouths of infants and pregnant mothers. And because we're broke, we need to increase the risk of food-borne illness. And because we're broke, we cannot afford to pay cops on the beat who are going to regulate the speculators on Wall Street who drive up the price of gasoline and food. We can't pay for these important public servants because they say we're broke. But we're not too broke to ask our oil companies to help. We're not too broke to ask the top 2 percent to pitch in.

The day must come, Mr. Chair, when the poor are not thought to have too much and the rich are not thought to have too little. The day must come when we have to be one America and come together to deal with the burdens of this Nation and not leave the wealthiest and the most privileged scott free while the other people have to bear the burden of ''we're broke.''

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KUCINICH. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Ohio is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Chairman, my colleagues, what we really have here is a discussion not so much as to which party has moral superiority here, but it's really a deeper question about what's the purpose of our Nation and whether we are aligned with the Founding Fathers' spiritual principles, because while the Founders separated church and State, they did not intend our Nation to be separated from spiritual principles.

And I think that at this moment, if we really want to sincerely appreciate the dilemma that we have created with these cuts, we need to reflect on some of our own spiritual training for those of us who are Christian, when, in John 21:15, Jesus was dining with his apostles. And so when they dined, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?

He said unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.

And the Lord said to him, Feed my lambs.

He said to him again, the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?

He said unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.

And the Lord answered, Feed my sheep.

He said unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?

Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love thee.

Jesus said unto him, Feed my sheep.

There are spiritual principles at stake here. We know what the right thing is to do. We know that feeding the hungry is a corporal work of mercy. We know that we have a responsibility to do this. We know that when the Bible says, Whatever you do for the least of my brothers and sisters, you do for me, in Matthew 25, that we're actually referring to how spiritual is the act of feeding the poor.

□ 1730

This decision that we make with respect to whether or not we are going to fully fund the Women, Infants, and

Children program does have profound spiritual consequences. We cannot escape them. ''For when I was hungry, you gave me food,'' remember that. When I was hungry, you gave me food. You didn't give me war. You didn't give me a tax break. You didn't give me an oil depletion allowance. When I was hungry, you gave me food. Who among you, the Bible asks, if his son asks for bread, would give him a stone? These are spiritual principles we're talking about here. This really goes to the core of who we are as a Nation, whether we recognize people who are out there are suffering. People may not have a roof over their head. Mothers may be living in a car, having to tend to their children.

America today is not the country it was at its founding, but it can be a Nation that aspires to great things again. But it cannot do it if we forget the poor, if we forget the children, if we forget their mothers, if we tell them that, No, you cannot have the resources you need to be able to provide proper nutrition to your child so that he or she can grow up in this United States of America to be a full participant in the affairs of this Nation.

This is a defining moment for who we are as a Nation. This isn't about whether we're Democrats or Republicans. This is about whether we are prepared to realign ourselves with the deeper truths of the spiritual mission of the United States of America. Feed the hungry. Feed my sheep. When I was hungry, you gave me food. Restore these cuts.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. I yield to my honorable colleague from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentleman from Indiana for yielding. I want to make a couple of points.

Number one, this bill increases food stamps by $5.6 billion. Now, somebody has said, But that's not as much as the President requested. Well, it is an increase of $5.6 billion. And I'm sorry, the President's crystal ball isn't always the best one. I don't need to remind you about last summer's celebration of recovery or whatever it was called. School nutrition goes up $1.5 billion under this bill.

We did what has been done in the past with WIC. We fund the participation level that is anticipated. Last year, the Democrats voted to cut WIC funding by $562 million. I have got the votes right here for any Democrat who is not sure how he or she voted. I want to give you the vote. I will put it in the RECORD so everybody can have a chance to look at it because after a while, I have to wonder. I also have the vote record for extending the Bush tax cuts, which was signed by President Obama. I have the vote record for that. I want to say to some of my friends over there, I voted ''no'' on that. Very important.

This bill funds WIC at 8.3 million participants. Now, if it goes up to over 9 million, the contingency fund is there to cover that. The contingency fund for WIC alone is $350 million. It would have been higher, Mr. Chairman, but the Democrats voted to cut it $562 million last year for an unrelated account. Now, to quote one of the well-known Democrats, That's an inconvenient truth to some of the speakers here tonight. But it is very important.

It is not the intention of this bill to let anybody go hungry. And any time the Bible is quoted on the floor of the House, I think it's a good thing. But I think there are some lessons in there that if there is a target on children's backs, perhaps it's the fact that our Nation is over $14 trillion in debt; and for every dollar we spend, 40 cents is borrowed, much of that from China. And who do you think is going to pay that back? It's not going to be the generations who are making the decisions. It's going to be the children.

So what our challenge is, Mr. Chairman, is to balance the fiscal need with the heart, and I believe that this budget very carefully does that. It increases food stamps $5.6 billion. It increases school lunches $1.5 billion. It funds WIC at a level of 8.3 million and has a contingency that will cover over 9 million participants. So for all the drama that we're hearing—and it is some very good rhetoric and some very good drama, but it's not accurate.

Now we could be talking about the WIC overhead, the WIC administrative costs. We could be talking about the fraud in WIC. We could be talking about the coordination of feeding benefits. If a child is 3 years old in America, he or she is eligible for 12 different programs. At 10 years old, they're eligible for nine programs. At 65, they're eligible for five different feeding programs. Those are Federal programs. It does not mention any of the State or the local participation in programs that are out there. It doesn't mention any of the charitable organizations that are out there.

So, again, we're hearing lots of great rhetoric, lots of drama; but it's not accurate. These numbers are important for reasonable debate for people who are trying to balance the runaway spending in this country—a 56 percent increase in the national debt under President Obama—and the need to take care of the poor.

I want to say to my friend from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH), because I know he has been very consistent—and I do certainly agree that everybody here has passion and conviction and idealism, which I think we all need more of—I voted with you, Mr. KUCINICH, last week. I think we are spending a lot of money in Libya. And those are things that are very important for us to be debating on the floor of the House before the President of the United States—of either party—goes and obligates billions of dollars in a new overseas contingency operation. We need to be discussing that. So I would say, put that on the table.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Washington is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. I rise in opposition to this bill in part because the truth of the matter is that the $562 million that was cut in WIC funds last year did not affect participants. The reason it didn't affect participants was that the WIC foods cost less and there were fewer participants in fiscal year 2010. So the funds were not needed.

Now, today it's Flag Day, and we're celebrating Flag Day, and I want to celebrate that great liberal of the United States of America, Richard M. Nixon. Richard M. Nixon put this program in. Now, we all know he was a bleeding heart liberal. Right? He just couldn't wait to give money to poor folks. And he also, by the way, put out here a universal health care plan.

So there is some question you might ask yourself about why we have WIC. Well, the social safety net is like a spider web, and there are a whole lot of places that you have to help people. We have Social Security, and we have unemployment insurance, and we've got foster kid money, and we've got things for women and children.

Now, the Republicans in this session have deliberately set out to go after women and children. The first place was Planned Parenthood. We don't want to give any young women any information about anything having to do with getting pregnant. Now more kids get pregnant. They're 16 years old. They have a kid, and they don't have any counseling, and nobody talks to them about nutrition and gives them the things that they need.

What is the result of that? The result of that is more low birth weight babies, more babies born with poor development because they didn't have the nutrition during the cycle of development. Do you know how much is the average amount spent on a woman in the WIC program? It's $100 to deal with the problems of infants and children, on average.

□ 1740

Now, I happen to know, being a physician, that if you get a premature baby who comes in at 2.5 pounds, and everybody's so excited that we can save these kids, but let me tell you, it costs money. If you can deal with a premature baby at the hospital for under a quarter of a million dollars, you have a real miracle, and you could have prevented it for 100 bucks. You could have saved—if you're really about deficit reduction, I know you don't care about human beings particularly, but you do care about saving money. If you're going to save money, then you're going to put it into the children at the beginning.

Now, there's other reasons for that. If they don't get good nutrition at the beginning and they don't get good brain

development and they don't do well in school, they drop out; right? And then we don't have a workforce in this country to do what needs to be done in this country. So we get immigrants to come in and do things. People don't want immigrants, then feed the children that you insisted that women have in this country.

You don't want anybody to have any planning on birth, and then the kid comes and you won't feed him, you won't take care of him, and you're going to pay the price.

I remember, there used to be a television commercial when I was a kid. It was called the FRAM commercial. It was an air filter on your automobile. And the commercial was, Pay me now or pay me later. Change the filter or you're going to pay having the engine redone.

That's why we have all these kids dropping out of school, because we don't take—that's why it's fascinating.

The children's feeding program in schools was from Harry Truman. Why did he do that? Well, they looked at the records of the Second World War and they rejected so many draftees because they didn't have good bones. They were malnourished. They were maldeveloped and they weren't fit to be soldiers. They put that school lunch program in so that they could make strong kids so we could have a strong army.

This business about saving 100 bucks on a woman who has a child and doesn't know—she's 16 years old, she's 17 years old, she's 18 years old.

This is the most shortsighted bill I've ever seen. Vote ''no.''

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the underlying bill and in strong support of the Women, Infants, and Children program that provides food to new mothers, babies, and children under 5 who have been identified as nutritionally at risk.

WIC ensures that infants and children grow in a healthy manner. The program reduces levels of anemia, increases immunization rates, improves access to regular health care and Social Services, and it improves diets.

Nearly 50 percent of babies born in this country each year benefit from the WIC program, and the success of the program is clear. Numerous studies have shown that pregnant women who participate in WIC have fewer premature births, fewer low and very low birth weight babies, experience fewer fetal and infant deaths, seek prenatal care earlier in their pregnancy, and consume more key nutrients during their pregnancy. Simply put, WIC infants are in better health than eligible infants not participating in WIC.

But the benefits of WIC participation extend beyond the short term. A baby's physical, cognitive, and emotional growth and development depend largely on how much and what types of foods are eaten during pregnancy and the first years after birth, especially the first year after birth. This period is critical because more than half of a child's brain growth is completed by the child's first birthday, and malnutrition during this period can cause irreversible diminution in brain development. And so 4- and 5-year-olds whose mothers participated in WIC during pregnancy have better vocabulary scores than children whose mothers did not receive WIC benefits. This leads to better academic achievement, lower dropout rates, and other factors that we're trying to work on.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairman, if we want our Nation's children to be the strongest and smartest they can be, we need to make sure that our children are receiving the nutritional support they need during these formative years.

Finally, WIC is cost effective. Serving nearly 10 million people each year, it costs less than $100 a person. And that cost is so low that if we suspended the Bush tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires for only 1 week, we could pay for the entire WIC program for a full year. And we save a substantial amount of that little cost by reducing health care costs.

Medical costs for a premature baby are much greater than those for a healthy newborn. For a baby born without complications, the average cost for first year medical costs is about $4,500, compared to a premature or low birth weight baby which will cost about $50,000 in short-term medical costs and significantly more in long-term costs resulting from high incidence of mental retardation and learning disabilities.

And so, Mr. Chairman, for those interested only in the budget impact of WIC, the Department of Agriculture estimates that the health care cost savings within 60 days of a child's birth are between $1.77 and $3.13 for every dollar invested in the WIC program. Let me say that again. The Department of Agriculture estimates that the health care cost savings within 60 days of a child's birth are between $1.77 and $3.13 for every dollar invested in the program.

So, Mr. Chairman, the benefits of the WIC program are not speculative; they are clear. And I commend my colleagues that are here fighting to maintain funding for this important program, and I urge others to do the same.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TONKO. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the underlying bill.

It seems the Republicans aren't stopping at Medicare alone. Now they're cutting crucial assistance to women and to young children.

In addressing our Nation's fiscal future, we simply cannot afford to lose our values. When the going gets tough, are we a Nation that abandons our most vulnerable while giving tax breaks to millionaires and billionaires? Or are we a Nation that holds close the most basic obligations we have to our fellow citizens, food for young children, Medicare and Social Security for our seniors, and an education for our students?

We have many tough choices to make during these difficult economic times. Cutting a program that provides food assistance for families that would otherwise go without should absolutely not be one of them.

The WIC program is one of our Nation's most cost-effective and successful programs. Nearly 50 percent of babies born in the United States rely on WIC. Ten million Americans benefit from this most basic food assistance at a cost of less than $100 per person. The drastic Republican cuts included in this legislation will leave as many as 350,000 women, infants, and children without access to necessary food assistance.

The Capital Region of upstate New York, my own community, ranks among the 100 most in need of food assistance. My constituents see the plans to cut Medicare and the plans to cut food assistance programs, and they are wondering why their health is being put on the line while some of our Nation's wealthiest individuals and corporations are let off the hook with $45 billion worth of tax breaks.

The Republican budget simply doesn't add up, Mr. Chair. Every $1 we invest in WIC saves up to $3.13 in health costs per child just in the first 60 days after an infant's birth alone. Cutting this program doesn't cut spending, and it doesn't even help reduce our long-term deficit. This program brings down long-term health care costs and, most importantly, most importantly, it saves lives.

In just 1 week, millionaire tax breaks cost our country $866 million and reach only 321,000 individuals. The WIC program, on the other hand, costs $33 million less for an entire year of serving 9.2 million women, infants, and children in need.

It is clear from these numbers, Mr. Chair, where Republican priorities lie. We're all concerned about the Federal deficit. But the majority continues to insist upon cutting programs that work and work well for America's middle class and her families.

WIC saves the taxpayers money in future health care costs and ensures some of our most vulnerable citizens that they will have the most basic food and nutrition assistance. Recent polls show that 64 percent of Americans are concerned that this budget plan will take away needed protections for the poor and underserved.

□ 1750

We have good reason to be concerned given the plan to end Medicare and this most recent attack on the WIC program.

In these tough times, we must stand together in solidarity. This is not the time to abandon our friends and neighbors in need of a helping hand to make ends meet. From Medicare, to WIC, to education and housing assistance, we simply cannot turn our backs on our fellow Americans while we reward the wealthiest amongst us. That is not the compassionate thing to do, it is not the American thing to do, nor is it the answer to solving our debt problem. We can and we must do better.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, how many times will Republicans attempt to rob innocent Americans of their health and their wellness? First, they morally bankrupted themselves when they took a hatchet, or I should say a scythe—that's that thing that the Grim Reaper walks with—they took a scythe to Medicare in the Ryan budget, attempting to increase the health care cost to seniors, and passed it unanimously, unanimous Republican support for the Ryan ''Grim Reaper'' budget plan that cut Medicare. It really destroyed Medicare as we know it and replaced it with a voucher system. That's what they have passed in this House.

And now the Grim Reaper is coming again, not to cut tax cuts to the rich, not to cut tax subsidies to big oil companies. The Grim Reaper is not here to cut from wealthy individuals all of the tax breaks that they have been getting. No, the Grim Reaper is here to cut something that is fundamental to life, and that is money for food for human beings. The Grim Reaper, moving slowly, not bouncing at all, just creeping through the night with his scythe, ready to cut the WIC program.

I'm opposed to any effort to remove funding for nutrition assistance for women and children, leaving them to go hungry in the streets. During these difficult times, soup kitchens, pantry shelters, churches, nonprofits, including many in my district, they have reached their limits in terms of the assistance that they can give to those who need it.

Mr. Chairman, the budget brought to the floor today will lead to a drastic multimillion-dollar shortfall for the WIC program, not only resulting in more individuals going hungry, but placing additional strain on many aid agencies who have already reached the end of their rope.

This week, I have spoken to pastors, rabbis, and faith-based leaders of all stripes and haven't heard a single one of them express support for reducing nutrition assistance. In fact, many of them today right now are roaming the halls of Congress speaking to anyone who cares to listen to express their opposition to this bill. They are desperate, desperate to talk about the effects of these drastic cuts.

I came down to the well of the House earlier today to speak about Republican efforts to take food out of the mouths of mothers and children across the country. Today, with the help of this bill, this Congress will accomplish something that has not been done in 14 years. Today, it looks like this Congress, as the Grim Reaper, will pass a bill that doesn't provide enough money to serve all WIC participants. Instead, we will pass a bill that forces vulnerable families to depend completely on the same food banks that have run out of food while we continue to subsidize tax breaks for millionaires, billionaires, and Big Oil. The Grim Reaper is not coming for them, doesn't want to bother them.

I can't, in good conscience, support this effort of the Grim Reapers to rob low-income Americans of basic necessities like food while giving millions to those who no longer need our assistance. In a Nation as great as the United States, we should not be promoting corporate welfare while taking food out of the mouths of hungry children.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. PASCRELL. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I believe we are broke, but we're morally broke, that's how we're broke. Let's be straight here.

What's our vision for America? That's got to be the barometer. What do we want this country to be in the future? We can say we certainly don't want it to be fiscally broke, but no one comes to this well with clean hands. This is something we should be sitting down and talking about together, how can we solve America's problems.

So what's our vision? It may be a balanced budget, our vision; I could support that. It may be cutting waste and fraud; well, that sounds good, we should all be supporting that. It may be to get Americans back to work. Over 14 million are still unemployed. And the underemployed. It may be to halt the loss of our homes like we did on the Western frontier 150 years ago when people worked together to end those foreclosures. My vision does not include hurting our most vulnerable children and seniors just to make a point. You heard the gentleman from Maryland talk earlier about how little this means in bringing down the deficit for 1 year or 10 years. We've got our priorities screwed up.

So yes, we want a balanced budget. Isn't it interesting that the last President who balanced the budget was a Democratic President? Yes, we want business investment. And isn't it interesting that in the past four decades the only President that reached over a 10 percent increase in business investment was a Democratic President? Bill Clinton; almost three times more than Ronald Reagan. Check your facts. We need a fact check here, a fact check.

The last 4 years, the number of children affected has grown from 12.4 million to 17 million. Have we no responsibility for that? In my district, 109,000 constituents suffer from food insecurity, only half of whom are eligible for Federal food aid programs. What do the other half do? Yet, here we are discussing cuts.

And I understand neither party is privy to virtue on these issues, but you cannot tell me we can't rise above if we have a vision of America that encompasses everyone, not just some and not just the few. The long-term effects of a child struggling with hunger does not add up to any real savings. If a child is hungry, he cannot learn. A child who can't learn will not succeed in school. A child without an education will have difficulty finding a job.

We know the records of those who are unemployed. And the records of how many years they are in school are greatly and essentially connected to how many years they have in school, and that tells you how many people are unemployed.

□ 1800

The children affected by these cuts that you're talking about in the Agriculture bill are our future. If they go hungry today, they will not be ready for tomorrow.

I simply disagree, with all due respect, with the other side's logic behind these cuts. It's shortsighted, and we cannot simply cut the safety net while people are still in that net—seniors, children, the working poor. It doesn't make sense. What have we become as a Nation?

We're not asking for handouts or giveaways. We are talking about people who are working, and many of them are poor. There are many of those, and it took a Republican President to recognize it. The Earned Income Tax Credit was something that your side created. So who would yet take away the incentive for people to keep working?

The cuts that you have proposed to the Food and Drug Administration in this bill are $572 million below the President's request. This means fewer inspectors and fewer inspections, plain and simple. Oh, I forgot. That's the idea in this age of anti-regulation. So what we do want to do is go back to 2008. Let's go back to where we were. I say no. I say we are better than that—we are better than 2008—and if we work together, we can get over that hump.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. PELOSI. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. THORNBERRY). The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Chairman, it is 6 o'clock across America, or at least in the eastern time zone. Families across America are getting ready to sit down for dinner at their kitchen tables in many homes in our country.

Moms are saying to their children, ''Eat your vegetables. Eat your dinner.''

But in some homes in America, there isn't adequate food on the table, and there isn't adequate nutrition for our children. It's hard to imagine that one in five kids in America may go to sleep hungry tonight with pains in their stomachs because they just didn't have enough food to eat.

In its wisdom, the United States of America established the WIC Program awhile back for women, infants and children to make sure our Nation was strong. It was to make sure we fed our children. Our country made a decision that feeding our children was a priority. It sounds so obvious. Families make decisions within their budgets that they are going to feed their children. They wouldn't think of saving money by not feeding their children. Yet, for some in low-income areas and for others now, as this is into the middle class, it is very hard to make ends meet.

So you wonder, in thinking of these people who are sitting down to dinner, how the Congress of the United States in trying to reduce the deficit, which we are all committed to do—that's important to our children as well—would decide to balance that budget on the little, tiny backs of our children, many of whom don't have enough to eat.

I want to commend Congresswoman DELAURO for her leadership as a member of the Ag Subcommittee of Appropriations and as the former chair of that subcommittee. She successfully passed an amendment in committee which had bipartisan support—it would have to have bipartisan support to pass—to restore $147 million to the WIC Program to feed the children. I congratulate her for that. It is part of the bill that was supposed to come to the floor. The Republican leadership has decided not to protect that bipartisanly passed amendment. What we are seeing is that the cutting of support for Women, Infants and Children is in the context of something bigger.

At the same time as we are making these cuts, we are giving tax subsidies to Big Oil. The price at the pump is also an imposition on the budgets of these families, and that is something that we can do something about by ending harmful speculation. To do that, we have to fund the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, which is in this bill as well. The Republicans are saying they want to delay, delay, delay, and defeat the enforcement of laws which would end speculation, which would reduce the price at the pump, Goldman Sachs said, by at least 20 percent. At the same time, this same Republican majority has passed a bill, not once but twice, to abolish Medicare.

Food, price at the pump, Medicare, these are assaults on the middle class that are hard to withstand. In fact, they are hard to understand. It's hard to understand why we'd say to seniors, ''You're going to pay more for Medicare, and for fewer benefits as we abolish Medicare, while we give subsidies to Big Oil.'' We are going to say to seniors in nursing homes, ''You're going to go home and live with your families, who can probably ill-afford for you to do so, so we can give tax breaks to corporations to send jobs overseas.'' We are going to say to children whom we are not feeding that we are cutting education funding as well as making college more expensive for nearly 10 million students in our country and, for some, making it unaffordable to go to college while we give tax breaks to the wealthiest people in our country.

So they are cutting support for Women, Infants and Children while handing a blank check to speculators. They are ending Medicare while they give subsidies to Big Oil. These choices do not reflect America's values and priorities. These are tough choices. They will not bring the growth we need to expand our economy and put people back to work as we create jobs. They will not make America strong. As moms across America are saying to children right now at 6 o'clock in the East, ''eat your vegetables; they will make you strong,'' we are acting on this floor to do just the opposite—to cut the funding for the initiative that will help feed the children of America.

It is unthinkable that a family would say, ''We can't afford to feed the children.'' It is unthinkable that a Nation committed to the future would say, ''We can't afford to feed the children.'' These families need our help. It's a large amount of money, $147 million, but very small compared to the subsidies to Big Oil and a small price to pay for the health and well-being of our children and for the strength of our country as we go into the future.

So I commend Congresswoman DELAURO for her tremendous leadership—for fighting for this, for not taking ''no'' for an answer in the committee. I would hope that we could prevail on the floor, but the Republican majority has left little option for that to happen.

I also want to commend Congressman FARR, now the ranking member on the Ag Subcommittee. Probably nobody in the Congress knows more about this. There may be some who are his equal—I don't know—but probably no one knows more about this issue in his representing an agricultural region as he does and also being committed to the health and well-being and to the good nutrition of our children so that they can be strong, so that they can learn in school and so that they can be a part of our great country in the best possible way for them.

So I thank you, Ranking Member FARR, for your leadership as well.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WOMACK. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Arkansas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOMACK. I appreciate the leadership of our subcommittee chair, whom I will recognize and yield some time to in just a moment.

Obviously, we are spending more than we make. I don't know how many times we have to articulate the financial condition of our country: that we are borrowing over 40 cents on the dollar for everything we spend. The country is in a financial crisis, and you've got Members on this side of the aisle who are doing everything they can to bring fiscal sanity back to the table and to put America on a different path.

□ 1810

I am amused at how many times we continue to be portrayed as being insensitive to women, infants and children, to older folks, and how so many half-truths are being spoken about the things that this conference is trying to do in order to right America's financial ship.

Suffice it to say that we have much work to do, and it is our intent to do it in a way that is rational and feasible and brings this country back to fiscal order and can take away that cloud of uncertainty that continues to hover over the job creators in this country, the threat of higher taxes, the tremendous deficit and debt, the overregulation that is keeping those entrepreneurs parked on the sideline for fear of higher costs to job expansion and higher energy prices. On and on and on, the challenges facing this country are many and we have much work to do.

At this time, I would like to yield to the distinguished chairman of the subcommittee, the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentleman from Arkansas for yielding. I wanted to make a couple of points that I think are very important, Mr. Chairman.

Number one, the only budget that has passed is the Ryan budget. The Democrats, for all their crying, have not passed their budget. The Democrats are the majority party in the Senate. The majority party in the Senate, the Democrat Party, rejected President Obama, another Democrat, they rejected his budget by a vote of 97–0. Now, what did HARRY REID and President Obama do after that? Nothing. That is it. It went to the House. No problem. Where is the leadership? I guess it is the same place as the jobs are. We are still looking for it.

If the Democrats were concerned about balancing fiscal responsibility and some of these vital programs which we are all trying to work through, then why aren't they working on a budget? That is point number one.

Point number two, this bill increases food stamps $5.6 billion and the school lunch program $1.5 billion. It also increases from the committee mark WIC $147 million in the DeLauro amendment. It will not be offset by the

Obama WTO cotton agreement, but it will be offset. That amendment is intact as respects WIC.

Number three, Big Oil. Well, when the Democrats were in charge of the House and the Senate and the White House, if they were concerned about tax cuts for Big Oil, why didn't they go after them? What they did do is extend the Bush tax cuts, which I voted against. If they were concerned about the Bush tax cuts for the wealthy, why did President Obama and the Democrat House and the Democrat Senate extend them? I would ask you that, Mr. Chairman.

What this bill does as respects WIC, it funds it at a level of 8.2 million in participation. Should it go up to 9 million in participation, which is higher than the current level, there are three contingency funds that will pick up the difference.

We have reduced WIC, as did the Democrats. The Democrats cut WIC funding $562 million. I have the vote right here. For those Democrats who are forgetting how they voted on it, they might want to look. But they voted to cut WIC funding. Therefore, the contingency fund is not as high as it could be.

So if we want to talk about all these things, there is lots to talk about. But one thing that is very important for Members to realize is that no one is going to fall through the crack.

I keep hearing about how this is going to starve people. WIC is $42 a month. That is why WIC isn't the only program for these people. That is very important for everyone to remember. I don't even think most Members, if you gave them a pop quiz, could say what WIC is, because it sounds like it is thousands of dollars a month. But I don't believe $42 is anything more than a supplement. Yet that supplement will still be there, because, again, Mr. Chairman, we have funded this with an anticipated level of 8.3 million; but should it go up to 9 million—it has been trending down—but should it go back up, the contingency funds will be there that will pick up the difference.

I thank the gentleman for his time.

Mr. WOMACK. I encourage my colleagues to support the underlying bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. I move to strike the last word.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I rise because I want to respond to my chair, who I respect deeply, but I think there is sort of a misstatement of fact here.

The only budget that has ever been balanced in the last 20 years has been the budget that the Democrats did. We did an unholy thing that the other party can't accept that is going to be necessary to balance any budget, and that is we had to increase revenues. And what did we do? We closed the tax loopholes on the richest families in this country and corporations. We closed loopholes. And we made a lot of cuts, because we also dedicated revenue from those loophole closures to pay off the deficit. And, guess what? We paid it off. We paid it off ahead of schedule.

When the Clinton administration left town and the Bush administration came on, we had an $800 billion surplus—a surplus. And what immediately did they do? They repealed the mechanism that was balancing the budget and said, no, we will give back those tax loopholes to the richest people in the country. And then we go to war. Whenever in history we have gone to war, people have paid for it. Not these wars. We just put it on the credit card.

So, Mr. KINGSTON, you know, let's be factual about the Democrats being in charge. We were able to balance the budget, something that your party hasn't done.

And just on this whole WIC thing, we all know that the administration administers the program and has to estimate how many people are going to be in need. That is the way we put together these big budgets, whether they be Medicare or WIC or other kinds of things. And last year what we found out is that the estimates were not needed, so in fact there was a surplus. But it was based on fact after the fact, not ahead of time.

This year the economy is down. We have heard many, many speakers talk about the impacts in their districts, of the number of people that are unemployed and are seeking benefits like this. I think the chairman himself has indicated that almost 15 percent of the children in this country are using one or more of these programs.

So this idea that this cut can be sustained, when it is based on a guesstimate, and a guesstimate that didn't take in, one, the rising food costs, and, two, the number of people that are still unemployed, and, frankly, people that are underemployed, including members of the military and their families who depend on this WIC funding.

So I just want to put it in some kind of perspective here, that the budget has been balanced by this party and paid for and left in a surplus, and the fact that the guesstimates on these WIC cuts are going to do more to do harm than to do good.

I now yield to my colleague from Connecticut, ROSA DELAURO.

Ms. DELAURO. I would reinforce what my colleague from California has said, but there is a repetition on the other side of the aisle that somehow there are contingency funds and carryover funds which can be used if there is a shortfall. You may continue to say it. It continues to be wrong. This is, again, the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities. The estimates reflect the use of all contingency funds, as well as the use of the carryover funds from fiscal year 2011 to close funding shortfalls, and the funding level would still result in the large participation cutbacks that have been outlined.

There are no contingency funds and no carryover funds; and no matter how many times you say it, that money will not materialize.

I thank the gentleman.

Mr. FARR. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. I just wanted to make sure that my friends, the ranking member and former ranking member, know that the contingency fund data that we get did come from the USDA.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Chairman, I want to tell you about a young woman, a young woman named Sarah. She actually lives in a shoreline community in Connecticut in Representative DELAURO's district. She has got four kids. She was playing by the rules, did everything that we asked. She had a good job in purchasing, and last year she got laid off.

□ 1820

She got laid off, like thousands of other Connecticut residents. She has four kids ages 7 to 15. Since that day, she has been confronted every day with a decision. She's got about enough money to put one meal on the table for her kids. They'll get one meal while they're at school. And so she makes the decision: Does she put breakfast on the table to make sure that they have food in their bellies when they show up to school or does she put dinner on the table when they come back. That's her daily challenge every single day. Now, she gets a little bit of help from a food bank, from a soup kitchen around the corner from her—a soup kitchen that likely gets money from The Emergency Food Assistance Program, one of the programs that is cut 25 percent under the President's proposed budget. That's her daily reality.

Let me tell you a story about another American. His name is Tony. He lost his job last year as well. He was the CEO of a big oil company. On his way out he got about a $1.6 million salary payout and a $17 million pension payout. He might be spending part of his summer on his yacht that he's nicknamed ''Bob.'' He might be sailing in the J.P. Morgan Asset Management Round the Isle Race, like he was a summer ago as one of his oil rigs collapsed in the Gulf. His struggle is that he's only been able to raise about $1.6 billion for his new oil exploration venture around the world.

Franklin Roosevelt said, The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide for those who have little.

I have listened to my friends on the Republican side try to create a choice here today; that because our children later on are going to have to pay back the debts that this country owes, that we have to sacrifice the lives of kids who are living today. That's a false choice. The two are not mutually exclusive. The fact is we are making choices in the budget right now. We are making choices to give more and more money to the defense budget, which is already over-bloated, and cutting 25 percent from The Emergency Food Assistance Program. We are handing another $40 billion subsidy to the oil industry. And we're cutting back funding for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program. As the Republican budget calls for, we are further cutting taxes for the richest 1 or 2 percent of Americans while we underfund the WIC program that gets badly needed nutrition to kids like Sarah's kids.

In my district, the story is the same. We've got 17 percent of households in my district who have reported going hungry. At the Friendly Hands Food Bank in Torrington they've had a 40 percent increase this year. New Britain's municipal food pantry has seen a hundred new families come through the doors this year. And they are watching with horror as we try to create some false choice between feeding kids today and protecting this country's fiscal situation down the line.

When I meet Republicans and Democrats in my district, regardless of their political persuasion, they want this body to start working together to solve the biggest problems in this country. But I have news for my Republican friends. They want us to solve Sarah's problem, not Tony's problem.

This budget, this bill, is a travesty, and I urge a ''no'' vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TOWNS. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TOWNS. Let me thank Congresswoman DELAURO and, of course, Congressman FARR, for the work that they're doing.

Here we go again. I rise in strong opposition to the underlying bill. This bill reduces the amount of funds awarded to public nutrition programs such as SNAP, WIC, and many other programs that lend assistance to families in economically disadvantaged communities.

This session of Congress has really been tough on those that are in need. First, our Nation's seniors are threatened with potential cuts to Medicare proposed by the Ryan budget. Now, hunger programs for women and children are being targeted. It is a tough year indeed. But let me tell you, I was not sent to Congress to sit back and watch these crucial programs be cut. I came here to fight for their existence. And I don't plan to stop now. I will not sit idly by as we destroy programs upon which citizens depend on the most to pay for $45 billion in tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires. It is a shame and it is a disgrace. For people to try and stand here and justify as to why we're doing it just does not make any sense at all. If we get rid of tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires for 1 week—just 1 week—I'm talking about 7 days—we would pay for the entire WIC program for 365 days.

Mr. Chair, I'm greatly disturbed by the negative impact this bill will have on those individuals who depend on public assistance to feed their families. It is projected that the expected funding cuts will result in 350,000 people losing their WIC benefits. Nearly 50 percent of the babies born in this country each year rely on WIC. On top of that, it is cost-effective, serving nearly 10 million people each year and costing less than $100 per person.

I don't understand why we want to stand around here and try to hustle backwards. That's what they say in my neighborhood. We need to make certain that we do what is right and is going to benefit the children. Let's not forget that we're here to serve and meet the needs of our Nation. Supporting this bill would be a great disservice to those who elected us to Congress. Supporting this bill will significantly cut the funding to programs that feed thousands of families. Supporting this bill will lead to the devastation of many hunger programs. There are many families who depend on government funding to put food on the table every day and every night. Voting in support of this bill will only make their lives more than difficult. I urge all of my colleagues to vote ''no.'' This bill does not help those that are in need. It protects the millionaires and billionaires with their greed.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. When you're born, you get a birth certificate. When you die, you get a death certificate. That dash on your tombstone in the middle is what you've done to make this place a better place.

I rise in strong opposition against this bill. I can't believe that the Republicans are attacking the disabled, the seniors, and now the children. I really do believe the Scripture, To whom God has given much, much is expected. They really do expect more out of this Congress, the people's House.

I may be the only person in the House with any institutional memory because it seems as if no one remembers that we didn't get in this mess 18 months ago. No. When President Bill Clinton left us, he left us with a surplus. And then we had 8 years of what I have called reverse Robin Hood. You know what I mean. You've got to be a certain age to know who Robin Hood was. But robbing from the poor and working people to give tax breaks to the rich.

My colleagues talk about the fact that the President insisted on passing that $780 billion—not just for the rich and the millionaires, but the billionaires—in December.

□ 1830

And everybody was slapping themselves on the back, what a great job because we didn't raise the taxes on the average American. And I would have voted not to raise it on the average Americans, but I knew that in April we were talking about cutting funds, pension funds, and now cutting funds for the children, the babies. It is inconceivable that we would cut funds to WIC, providing food for new mothers, babies, and children under 5 years old. Nearly 50 percent of the babies born in our country are on the WIC program. In my State of Florida, as many as 19,000 people would be affected by this cut.

Lawton Chiles, former Governor of Florida, former Senator, used to have a slogan: ''This dog don't hunt.'' Folks, this dog don't hunt. The American people will wake up and wake up to what you're doing and wake up to the fact that when you have your head in the lion's mouth, the deficit, you've got to ease it out. You don't destroy programs affecting children and babies and senior citizens while giving tax breaks to billionaires and millionaires. And the sad fact is, if we put it on the board tomorrow, the Republicans would vote again to give the tax breaks to the billionaires and millionaires and yet leave the children and elderly people holding the bag. The American people need to wake up to what's going on. There is money in the House of Representatives, but you're choosing to give it to millionaires and billionaires.

As I close, I really do believe what the Bible says: To whom God has given much, much is expected. And He's expecting more out of the people of the House of Representatives.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Chairman, I ask my colleagues to vote against any language in the Agriculture appropriations bill that would seek to cut funding for the WIC program.

As you know, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, WIC, makes it possible for vulnerable children to have a healthy start. The Republican cuts will deny many children a chance to receive nutritious food by cutting WIC funding from $6.73 billion this year to $6.05 billion in 2012. This cut is a cut of more than $650 million below the fiscal level of 2011. And this is much less than the continuing cost of the high-end Bush tax cuts, oil company tax breaks, and various other write-offs for well-to-do taxpayers or powerful corporations.

If we allow these cuts to take place, approximately 200,000 to 300,000 women

and children nationwide will lose WIC benefits next year. In fact, in the State of New Jersey, approximately 4,000 to 6,000 low-income families will be turned away by WIC. This is very alarming to me because these cuts will negatively impact a substantial number of low-income women and children in my district.

As a former public school teacher in the inner city of Newark, New Jersey, I witnessed firsthand the effects of hunger and malnutrition on children trying to learn. When they came to school to take tests, they couldn't concentrate. They were unable to really focus on what they had before them. The reality is this: If a child is hungry, he simply cannot learn. If a child is hungry, he is unable to focus in class. What are his chances of thriving academically? If we are serious about closing the achievement gap and ensuring that students are career and college ready, cutting WIC will be in direct contradiction.

In light of rising food prices and current unemployment rates, it would be catastrophic to strip funding from this vital program. I strongly believe that by cutting WIC funding, we risk neglecting and preventing children from getting a head start in recognizing the excellence of their human potential.

We, as a nation, are still a great nation. We are the wealthiest nation in the world. We have the greatest ideals and opportunities for people. But I think that we are being shortsighted. We have a problem and we will deal with it, as we have done for all other problems. In World War II, we had no navy. We had no army that was significant. However, we built ships that floated. We trained people in 20 and 30 days to rivet and to make our powerful defense mechanism work, and we won the war for the world.

We can win this war of the deficit in this country. I think that even the constituents of my good friends on the other side of the aisle, my tea party friends, my Republican friends—go back home and ask people, Do you want to pull the food out of the mouths of babes? Because from the mouths of babes ofttimes come gems. And if our Nation is going to be a great nation in the world, as we are today, we're not going to do it by starving the children and harming the women. It's unconscionable, it's disgraceful, and it's a mark on the House of Representatives. It's really something that shouldn't be.

Therefore, I urge my colleagues to vote against any provisions cutting funding for the WIC program.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, I strongly object to this bill.

In his second inaugural address, Franklin Delano Roosevelt laid out, I think, a very good test for us. It was a test for this Nation at one of its most desperate periods. We, too, find ourselves in a difficult situation. We do have a big deficit, and we need to make some tough choices. And today as we debate this piece of legislation, we are indeed making choices and we are being tested. We're being tested about our values. We're being tested about what we think is important. Franklin Delano Roosevelt suggested this be the test:

''The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.''

Ponder those words and apply those words to what we are debating and what we will soon vote for or against on this floor. The test of our progress, whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much. We've discussed many times here in the last couple of hours the options that are given to us on tax policy, continuing to provide subsidies to the wealthiest industry in the world, the oil industry, not to the tune of a couple of billion but, when you add it all up, some $40 billion a year. Whether we continue to provide a tax break to the wealthiest in this Nation, those whose annual incomes are in the millions and, indeed, some who are even in the billions. We're making choices and we're being tested. That's one option that our Republican colleagues seem to want to present to us.

The other option is what we on the Democratic side have been debating and asking for, and that is the second part of what Franklin Delano Roosevelt said, and that is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.

I was on this floor not more than 3 hours ago with my granddaughter, 11 months old. And in the arms of mothers and grandfathers and grandmothers and parents across this Nation are children of that age who depend upon the Women, Infants, and Children program, which this Republican appropriation brought to this floor reduces by 10 percent. 350,000 children will not be able to have the food that they need, the care that they need to be able to be healthy, to be able to grow, and indeed in the future, to be able to pay, as we will today, one way or another, for the deficit that we have.

□ 1840

A 10 percent reduction from last year, and is there anybody in this House that's prepared to argue somehow things are better out there and that a 10 percent reduction in the face of an increased number of women and children who need help, that that is a worthy choice for us to make? I think not.

I think that this bill miserably fails the test that Franklin Delano Roosevelt laid out during the Great Depression. This does not provide for those who have too little.

And it's not just in the Women, Infants, and Children program. Across the board, thousands, indeed, 48 million Americans become ill each year because of food-borne illnesses, and yet, in this budget, another 12 percent reduction from last year's funding for food safety programs at a time when we have a new food safety program to implement. 350,000 Americans wind up in the hospital as a result of food-borne illnesses, and the Republicans want to cut the money to provide the protection for Americans.

It's about choices. It's about values. What do you value in this system? Yes, we have a deficit. Yes, we must deal with it. And yes, according to our Republican friends, we must take that food out of the children's mouths; we must make sure that people will not be able to be healthy. I don't understand.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Wyoming is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle did not produce a budget. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle did not raise taxes on the mineral industry as they now assert we should. My colleagues ran this House for 6 years. My colleagues ran this House with a Democratic President and a Democratic U.S. Senate. The things of which they argue are the fixes are things you did not do when you were in control of all three: the House, the Senate, and the Presidency.

Without a budget, with the Keynesian philosophy that you attempted to implement, and it was worth a try but it failed, the massive increases in spending, in social programs, in entitlement programs, the massive increase in spending that amounts to ObamaCare, the massive stimulus bill, the massive efforts that you made, all the time asserting that you had something called Pay-As-You-Go, PAYGO, when, in fact, there were more exceptions to PAYGO than the rule ever provided. You took half a trillion dollars out of Medicare. You destroyed Medicare. You destroyed it.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Will the gentlelady yield?

Mrs. LUMMIS. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you.

If the gentlelady from Wyoming would recall the years past, she would recall what is known as the Senate filibuster. The graveyard of legislation that the Democrats put forth many, many times died in the Senate as a result of their filibuster.

With regard to the issues of entitlements and this particular bill, we're talking here about the issue of how we care for those who have little. I'd be

happy to debate with you on this floor or any other place the import of the stimulus program, and, in fact, most every economist argues that without the stimulus program we would have fallen into a great depression, not just a very serious recession. I'm sure the gentlewoman recalls those words.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Reclaiming my time from the gentleman, the crisis is worse than the people realize, and, in fact, in some respects, the people are way ahead of us on this, which is why the people of this country chose to elect fiscal conservatives to run this House during the current Congress, and we presented to the American people what we intended to do, which is cut spending.

We told the American people we have a spending problem, not a revenue problem. The American people chose to give my party the opportunity to lead and to exhibit the fiscal restraint that the American people voted for in the last election. We are now exercising that fiscal restraint in a way that preserves 87 percent of the funding level of the WIC program that is currently being alleged that we are destroying.

Now, there are millions and millions of Americans who are functioning in this recession on 87 percent of what they used to make. In fact, we know that small businesses all over this country who are the drivers of our economy, the creators of jobs, are functioning on far less than 87 percent of what they used to make.

It is time for this House to exercise this fiscal restraint in a way that is sensitive to the needs of the people in this country, that we told the American people in November we would do.

I yield back the balance of my time.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair again reminds all Members that all remarks should be addressed to the Chair and not to others in the second person.

Mr. NADLER. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, there seems to be a little amnesia in this Chamber today. In January of 2009, we were losing 775,000 jobs a month. Then the Obama administration and the Democratic Congress enacted remedial legislation and we stopped losing 775,000 jobs a month. We started gaining. We have gained a million and a half jobs in the private sector in the last year and a half, not enough with a million and a half jobs, but unfortunately State and local government had to lay off 1.2 million people because we didn't give them enough to prevent that. But we did reverse the results of the Bush policy of 8 years, which was 775,000 jobs a month being lost.

Don't forget, in 2000, in the Presidential election, the great debate was what should we do about the $5.6 trillion surplus over the next 10 years. Bush got elected. They enacted the Bush tax cuts, which they said would stimulate the economy and pay for themselves. What happened? We had the slowest economic recovery of any economic recovery after any recession in the history of the United States, the only 8-year period in which we did not gain one net new job even before the 2008 recession from which we are now recovering, albeit too slowly.

The American people did not vote to kill remedial programs last year. They voted for jobs. They were told, Vote for the Republicans; we'll get you jobs. You don't see any jobs. So let's forget this revisionist history.

I rise in strong opposition to the Republican effort to cut funding for the special supplemental nutritional program for Women, Infants, and Children, known as WIC. This program provides food for low- and moderate-income mothers, babies, and children under 5. WIC provides the food pregnant women need to help their babies grow. After the baby is born, WIC provides the breast feeding support or infant formula to make sure the babies continue to develop and to grow. And for young children, WIC provides staples like milk, eggs, bread, fresh fruits and vegetables. Nearly 50 percent of the babies born in the United States each year rely on WIC to get a healthy start to life.

□ 1850

But in this time of rampant unemployment, the Republicans oppose—they oppose extended unemployment benefits and now want to ensure that the wives and children of the unemployed who don't get unemployment benefits can't get food and baby formula. This bill says, Let them starve.

This bill will mean that 200,000 to 350,000 pregnant women and children will be denied food. Knocking these families out of the WIC program is an about-face on a 15-year bipartisan commitment to ensure WIC funds cover all eligible women, infants, and children who apply.

Shockingly, at the same time that the Republicans are demanding that pregnant women and children starve, they continue to promote tax holidays for millionaires and billionaires. If we suspended the Bush tax breaks to the wealthiest 1 percent of Americans for just 1 week, we could cover the cost of the Republicans' latest cut of $833 million to the WIC program.

The debate over WIC funding, specifically, and the Federal budget, generally, is about priorities. By supporting the Republican proposal to slash WIC funding, forcing thousands of women and children from the rolls, the Republicans are saying that America prioritizes tax holidays for those who need it the least over providing food to pregnant women, infants, and small children.

Mr. Chair, make no mistake about it. This is about literally taking food out of the mouths of babies. This Republican bill is immoral. Food for women and children is more important than tax cuts for millionaires, billionaires, and oil companies.

Reject this bill. Reject this bill, and maybe, just maybe, the Republicans, given enough time, will find their consciences.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TIPTON. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Colorado is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Chair, you know, it's remarkable, the theater that we see. Looking throughout America, throughout my Third Congressional District—at least in Colorado—I see people who care about their families, who care about our children. What are they asking for? Jobs. They want to be able to go back to work. And we're seeing far too often, from the opposition, people that are willing not to be a steppingstone to American success but to become a stumbling block, to have us rely on another government program.

The proposed cuts, these are minor. These are minor in the sense of the real life that real Americans are living today. Come with me. Come with me and walk through my district. I have communities that are not in a recession; they are in a depression. They need to be able to get back to work. What do I hear as I walk through those communities? City councils, county commissioners, small businesspeople are saying that they are being inhibited from being able to get people back to work so that they can take care of their children, Mr. Chair, so that they can take care of their children by oppressive government regulations, by people who are not willing to allow us that opportunity to live that American Dream.

I see, Mr. Chair, an America that can rise again and become the economic power that we all know that it can be; but this will not happen as long as we try to build reliance on government rather than the rugged individualism that has made this country great.

Ms. DELAURO. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. TIPTON. In just a moment, ma'am.

Ms. DELAURO. Thank you.

Mr. TIPTON. We have an opportunity. We have a challenge. The question is, Will we rise to meet that challenge?

We have a $14.4 trillion debt in this country. Let's put that in a little bit of context. Sunday night, we saw the NBA finals. You had LeBron James, maybe one of the best basketball players the world has ever seen. He signed for $40 million a year to play basketball. Well, if he wants to earn just $1 trillion, he's going to have to play basketball for 25,000 years.

This is the burden that we have put on the backs of our children and our grandchildren that they can no longer afford. The recipe is not the Keynesian economics that my colleague has

brought up. The answer is going to be found in the very solutions that made us the richest, the freest, and the most powerful Nation on the face of the Earth. That is going to be the free enterprise system. Let's encourage it. Let's get our people back to work. Let's create those opportunities once again.

Ms. DELAURO. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. TIPTON. I yield to the gentlelady from Connecticut.

Ms. DELAURO. I thank the gentleman.

I would just talk about rugged individualism. And I will just quote to you from the Citizens for Tax Justice: 12 corporations, largest corporations in the Nation, pay an effective tax rate of negative 1.5 percent on $171 billion in profits.

Mr. TIPTON. I reclaim my time, and I thank the lady for bringing up that very point, Mr. Chair. This is the real challenge that we face, and she points to it directly. We have an oppressive, convoluted Tax Code that is stripping American business of that opportunity to be able to create wealth in this country. Let's simplify that Tax Code. Let's not punish success in this Nation, but let us reward success in this Nation to be able to get our people back to work.

Ms. DELAURO. Let's get them to pay their fair share of taxes.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Colorado controls the time.

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Chair, these are the challenges, and we have very distinct choices to be able to make. Will we continue to follow the pathway to poverty of government programs, government taxation, government solutions? Or will we follow that expressway to real enrichment in this country by getting the American people back to work?

Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I really want to thank Ms. DELAURO and Mr. FARR for their wonderful, unbelievable work.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the underlying bill. Mr. Chairman, nutrition programs did not run our economy into the ditch. Nutrition programs did not drive us into debt or stop the banks from extending credit. But my colleagues want to cut programs to feed millions of women, infants, and children. Who is next? I ask you, Who is next? The Republicans went after the seniors' Medicare. Now they are going after the babies. Who is next?

Mr. Chairman, the WIC program is a necessity. It is a lifeline. It is our obligation. This is not the way America treats our seniors. This is not the way America treats our mothers. This is not the way America treats our children. This is not the America we want to live in.

If we repeal the tax breaks for the wealthy for just 1 week, we could pay for this entire program. Make no mistake, this bill will reduce the number of people served by nutrition programs. Right now, over 50 percent of the children born in our country rely on this program every single day, every week. They serve almost 10 million people each year. My beloved brothers and sisters across the aisle know that, but they should also know that this bill will mean empty shelves at food banks and smaller portions at dinnertime—and not a dent in the deficit.

Make no mistake, make no mistake, this bill will hurt people. It will reduce the number of people who receive assistance. The poor, the sick, the mothers, these little babies. They didn't overspend our credit card. They didn't do it. They didn't overspend our credit card. Why are we doing this? Why are we punishing? Why are we cutting the WIC program? It is a lifeline. No one in this country should have to go hungry. It is not right. It is not fair. It is not the just thing to do. It's not the good thing to do.

The Atlanta Community Food Bank in my own district, in the heart of downtown Atlanta, is distributing 35 percent more food than last year. Their funding would be cut as well. Countless people are already on the waiting list. One such man in my own district, Johnny Battle, this man worked all of his life, and he worked very hard. Mr. Battle is 71, and his wife is 76. He can't look for work because his wife has fallen ill. He is her caregiver.

□ 1900

I say we should be their caregiver. We should look after those who are suffering through no fault of their own.

They receive emergency food assistance from Antioch Baptist Church when they can and receive only $16 a month in food stamps. Assistance from the food bank would make a huge difference in their lives.

Sixty thousand people depend on Atlanta Community Food Bank to make it through the month. We cannot allow more people to be pushed onto the waiting list like Mr. Battle and his wife.

Mr. Chairman, and my colleagues, our country is hurting. Our people are hungry. They need our help. This is not how America treats her children. This is not how America treats her seniors. This is not how America treats her little babies, the mothers.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote "no."

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Ohio is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Rugged individualism. Oh, am I glad the gentleman brought that up. Rugged individualism produces a heartless bill like this.

Now, if you look back to why we're in the dumpster economically, go back to the 1990s. Read Alan Greenspan, a great advocate of rugged individualism, and Ayn Rand; right? Just drive them into the ground. Make all of his friends rich. JPMorgan Chase, Wells Fargo, Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley—it's an interesting group of characters up there that took America to the cleaners. They took and outsourced our jobs. Now they took our home equity.

And now, it's getting so bad we even have a bill that's going to take food away from about 350,000 women and children. Now, whose fault is that?

Here's a little note from somebody in my district. She says—she signed up this plate at the food bank, the local food bank. She said: Without help from the food bank, I would be on the streets. I struggle every day to make ends meet so my kids have a place to lay their heads at night. I have a job, but with two kids, it's still very hard. I have a lot of trouble paying rent and bills. I just wish there were more help to parents like myself.

That's from the rural part of my district.

From the urban part of my district, a plate is signed at the food bank: My income is spent on bills, which leaves very little money for me to purchase food for myself and my two daughters.

Now, you know, the majority of people in this House are Christian. And I'm not pushing that, though I am one of them. But the first Beatitude says, "Feed the hungry." It doesn't say "rugged individualism."

I'm as individualistic as anybody else in this Chamber, but I'll tell you what. There's a heartlessness that goes with people who take everything for themselves and turn their back on the rest of the American people. So when Big Oil makes record profits and pays no taxes, there's something really wrong. There's something really wrong with the country, and the American people know it.

They didn't clean house here last November because they thought you were better; they just wanted a change. And they'll vote for it again if their lives don't get better. And their lives won't get better unless we fix what Alan Greenspan and Goldman Sachs and Bank of America and the whole rest of those buzzards up there did to this country. And they're taking bonuses. In fact, they're making so much money they take Members of Congress out. You know the average amount of a meal? $193, $193 a plate. These folks, a couple of bucks in a day they spend on food.

So I stand with the American people, not those wealthy interests who took the Nation to the cleaners. You know, those hedge funds? They pay at a 15 percent tax rate.

Mrs. LUMMIS talked about businesses in her district. They pay at a 35 percent rate. Why don't we hold those accountable up on Wall Street for what they did? Let them pay their fair share

of taxes. We couldn't even take one penny of their bonuses, not a penny. This was the most gutless institution.

And I'll tell you what. The real straw that broke the camel's back was 1998 when Glass-Steagall was thrown out, an act that had separated banking and commerce. And you know the name on that bill? There wasn't a single Democratic name. It was Gramm-Leach-Bliley, all Republicans, and they shoved it through this House. I didn't vote for it.

And then Wall Street, oh, my gosh. You talk about rugged individualism. They hurt the Republic. They hurt our country, and they have not been held accountable. George Bush's Chief of Staff, Mr. Bolton, he came from Goldman Sachs. He was there. He was there in the fall of 2008 when the Treasury was just opened up to them. Isn't that an interesting coincidence? Very interesting when you look back and see what really happened.

I refuse to have the people of my district or any district pay for what they did. I've got people who are lined up in our food banks because of unemployment, and I know who caused it. And I don't have enough power to hold them accountable, but I hope God does, because what they've done is unforgivable. Their rugged individualism is unpatriotic. It is un-Christian, and it hurt this country.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. KAPTUR. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the gentlewoman's striking the last word a second time?

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chair, reserving the right to object, I want to say to my friend, the ranking member, that I understand the passion on that side and a number of people who want to start speaking, or who have been speaking. But if we are going to start speaking twice, then I hope you will give me the courtesy of speaking twice. I just want to mention that.

I've just been informed Mrs. LUMMIS spoke twice while I was going to the restroom, so, once again, I will sit down.

If I could continue on my reservation, I want to explain to my friend from Ohio that I was concerned about Members speaking twice. But I understand that you've done that now with Mrs. LUMMIS, so I certainly will not object.

I withdraw my reservation.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Ohio is recognized for an additional 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Ms. KAPTUR. I thank the gentleman. I thank you for yielding. We may not agree on everything, but I think if we agree on some of the history that brought us to this point, maybe we can do something right for the Republic, and certainly for those people who are lined up across this country as victims of the abuse that came from that rugged individualism for which there has been no justice. There has been no justice to this date. What a sad thing for us to say institutionally.

If we look at this bill, nearly half of the babies born in our country rely on WIC, the Women, Infants and Children food program. They are in every district in this country. And I can guarantee you, for all the big shots that cleaned up at the expense of the American people, they've never even been to a WIC site. They've never seen sat with moms. They've never sat with families trying to figure out how they're going to make it from the beginning of the month to the end of the month on the few pennies that they have to live on.

So I think that the sad fact of this bill is that, rather than Big Oil paying their fair share of taxes, rather than us taking those bonuses from those who truly don't deserve them because of what they did to the Republic, for all the tax breaks that are going to companies that are locating jobs overseas and taking our livelihoods away from us, the answer isn't to take food away from those people that are paying the price.

So I want to thank my colleagues, and particularly Mr. KINGSTON for not objecting, to Mr. FARR for the great job you've done in trying to bring some justice to this bill, and to say, in closing, that there are many people who talk about life. Without decent nutrition, the children who will be affected, the hundreds of thousands of children who will be affected in this bill, their brains won't grow as fast. They won't have the kind of nutrients that produce strong bodies and strong minds for the future.

This is the time to stand up in defense for those who are defenseless. And particularly with this economy, the last place to cut is food. Every Christian in here knows that's true. We need to do better as this bill moves forward.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the bill on final vote, and I thank my colleagues for yielding me additional time.

I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1910

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Hawaii is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. HIRONO. I rise in opposition to the underlying bill.

Ours is a compassionate country. We have leaders who can put themselves in the shoes of Americans who are struggling, doing their best. We have compassionate leaders on both sides of the aisle. This is why it is so inexplicable that the underlying bill, as well as bill after bill brought by the Republican majority to this floor, makes cuts after huge cuts to people's programs—not corporate programs, not programs that hit Wall Street, but people's programs. And again today, in this agriculture spending bill, we are targeting cuts that hit women, infants, children and seniors in Hawaii and nationwide.

In my district in Hawaii, 19.5 percent of our residents experienced food hardship in the last year. Let me repeat: nearly one in five people in my district did not have enough money to buy food that they and their family needed in 2010. Today's bill would cut crucial nutrition programs for thousands of Hawaii's most vulnerable and hundreds of thousands all across the country. And while the richest in our country continue to get billions in tax breaks and the oil companies continue to get their billions in tax breaks, why are we balancing the budget on the backs of women, infants, children and seniors?

First, today's bill makes a $650 million cut to the women, infants and children, WIC, nutrition program for fiscal year 2012. This would cut as many as 350,000 eligible low-income women and young children from the program. WIC provides nutritious food, counseling on healthy eating, and health referrals to pregnant, postpartum and breast-feeding women and their children under age five. This program has had well-documented success in improving the nutrition and health of families in poverty. WIC has reduced low-weight births, anemia and hunger. Let's put ourselves in the shoes of 350,000 women and their children who depend on this program.

Second, the Emergency Food Assistance Program supports food banks on all of our islands and across the Nation to support the hungry. I have visited many of the food banks in my State, in my district; and we know that there is a growing need. There are many, many more families now relying on food banks; and yet this bill cuts $12 million from food banks at a time of great, great need. Let's put ourselves in the shoes of the hundreds of thousands of families all across our country who are relying on food stamps.

Third, today's bill cuts 20 percent from the Commodities Supplemental Food Program, which provides food packages to over 600,000 people nationwide, and 96 percent of these recipients are low-income seniors. You've heard others say ending tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires for just 1 week alone would save $866 million. That is enough to support poor women, infants and children for the entire year. And when we say this bill brought to us by the Republicans literally takes food from babies to give tax breaks to millionaires and billionaires, we are not engaging in hyperbole. This is what is happening in this bill.

Let's get our priorities in order. Balancing the budget on the backs of our most vulnerable is totally indefensible when we are giving tax breaks to those people, the richest people in our country, corporations that are making billions of dollars. It's indefensible. And where do we live? Do we live on Wall Street? People who want this bill, I think they live on Wall Street. Well, those of us who are opposing this bill,

we live on Main Street. That's where the majority of our people live; they live on Main Street. They expect us to support those people—working people, families, women and children all living on Main Street.

I urge my colleagues to oppose these anti-people, wrong-headed, downright cruel cuts to low-income women, infants, children and seniors all across our country.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Maryland is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. EDWARDS. I've been listening all afternoon and I've heard economic philosophy described as Keynesian and I've heard talk of fiscal conservatism and regulation and rugged individualism. We even heard talk of LeBron James. But one thing is really true, we haven't heard anyone on the other side of the aisle talk about hunger, and even LeBron James is not hungry.

So I want to talk about a really simple economic theory and it's called hunger. It means when you wake up in the morning and you're a young child in this country and your parents can't afford to feed you, you're hungry. The demand of hunger when you're going to school and you can't think through the school day because you're hungry. It's about going home on a weekend after receiving a school lunch on a Friday but not eating through the entire weekend because you're hungry. And really, Mr. Chair, that's the only economic theory we need to discuss this afternoon.

So just before I came to the floor, earlier in the day I had a physical. I had to go 10 hours without eating. I described myself as starving. But clearly, neither I nor any Member of this House of Representatives knows what it's like to be really hungry today. And so before I came to the floor, I had my piece of chicken. And you know what? That was more than the Republicans are prepared to give America's women, infants, and children.

And so I rise today in opposition to these extreme cuts to the Women, Infant and Children program and the underlying bill. We know the program is essential to providing nutrition to our Nation's most vulnerable children.

Now, I don't need a study to know what it means to be hungry; but studies show that women, infant and children programs reap tremendous benefits to the participants. They lead to fewer premature births, fewer fetal and infant deaths, and result in better cognitive and physical health for children. That's the difference between eating a nutritious meal and being hungry.

I also rise today in support of my colleague, LYNN WOOLSEY's, amendment to block the GOP's attempts to roll back our USDA nutrition standards for our children because not only are some of our children hungry, but we need to make sure that they are eating to a standard that allows them to learn in our classrooms.

The WIC program is essential to ensuring our youngest Americans receive the nutrition they need, and the underlying amendments will ensure that children continue to receive nutritious foods throughout their school day.

Now, when I first came to Congress, I worked with our then-chairwoman and our friend, ROSA DELAURO, to secure the Afterschool Supper Program in my home State of Maryland for hungry children. We have fed millions of meals through this program. And so I know that in my State and all across the country the Women, Infant, and Children program served 140,000 women, infants and children every month in the last year.

The program serves 9.2 million low-income families across the country. And as our Nation continues to recover from a recession, the benefits provided to these families are an essential safety net for our vulnerable populations. And according to Feeding America, there's a 50 percent increase in need amongst families, seniors, and children right now. This is a time when ensuring the economic security of the American people is critical, and we can't stand by the Republican pledge to cut essential safety net programs.

It's no surprise to the American people that the Republican Conference selected yet another vulnerable group to slash while continuing to support big oil companies, farm subsidies and huge tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires instead of supporting women, infants, and children.

In this 112th Congress, this new and bold Republican majority began with an attack on women. They proceeded to attack our seniors with a plan to eradicate Medicare, and now they are committed to an attack on our neediest and the health of our neediest infants and children.

□ 1920

It's actually really shameful. It's even hard to talk about because it's hard to believe, in America, that even those who sit on the other side of the aisle are willing to take away nutrition programs for needy women, infants and children rather than take away the tax breaks for billionaires and take away the subsidies for oil companies while our gas prices rise. I think that those on the other side of the aisle should be absolutely ashamed of themselves. I know that some of my colleagues have quoted Bible passages. I don't know. Maybe quote the Statue of Liberty. What is happening in this House is not American at all. It doesn't hold to the values that we hold to take care of our neediest, to take care of our poor.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. EDWARDS. I'll be gaveled down, but we need to support Women, Infants and Children and to stop the slash and burn on the Nation's neediest children.

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HINCHEY. I rise in opposition to the underlying bill.

People across this country have agreed that we have to reduce our deficit, but they also understand that we shouldn't do it on the backs of working and middle class people who are already struggling to make ends meet. The Republican-sponsored Agriculture appropriations bill, on the other hand, cuts all the wrong things at exactly the wrong time. Here are five reasons that I plan on voting against it.

First, this bill will raise gas prices by cutting anti-speculation efforts: With speculation at an all-time high, American families are paying now more than 60 cents more per gallon at the pump than they should be; but instead of ramping up anti-speculation efforts, this bill cuts almost half the funding for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission—the very agency charged with policing oil speculation.

Second, this bill takes food out of the mouths of low-income mothers, babies and kids, cutting WIC for about 15,000 people just in New York State alone: The bill cuts food assistance for pregnant women, infants and children by $650 million, or 10 percent, denying food and health counseling for up to 475,000 low-income women, infants and young children throughout America over the course of the next year if this bill passes. The bill also would cut food aid for low-income seniors and would cut help for food banks.

Third, this bill increases the risk to our food supply by cutting safety inspections: As many as 48 million Americans are sickened every year by contaminated food. That's why, with my support, last year we stepped up efforts to increase the inspections of food manufacturing plants and imported foods. With new strains of E.coli sickening hundreds throughout Europe, now is not the time to be gutting the funding for food safety inspections; but this legislation would do just that, making it impossible to implement the new safety standards and guaranteeing millions more Americans will get sick from bad food.

Fourth, this bill cuts anti-childhood obesity efforts: Childhood obesity has tripled in the past 30 years. It's an epidemic. Obesity costs our country $147 billion a year in medical costs, and for the first time in American history, life expectancy for the next generation is going to be lower than for the current generation. But instead of boosting efforts to combat this problem, the Republican bill eliminates funding for the Healthy Food Financing Initiative, designed to combat childhood obesity by bringing healthy foods to underserved urban and rural communities.

Finally, this bill raises the cost of prescription drugs: By severely cutting funding for the Food and Drug Administration, American consumers will get food and medical products that are less

safe due to the erosion of essential oversight and prescription drugs that are more expensive as a result of the agency's limited ability to approve less costly generics.

Just for those five reasons, obviously big reasons, this bill should not be passed. While I oppose these cuts, I do support responsible ways in which we can reduce our deficit, such as cutting wasteful subsidies and give-aways for the oil industry, ending special tax earmarks for Wall Street bankers, and allowing Medicare to negotiate for bulk rate discounts on prescription drugs for seniors in the context of Medicare. These reforms in and of themselves—just those few—would save hundreds of billions of dollars without harming working and middle class Americans who are already struggling to get by.

This Agriculture appropriations bill accomplishes the goal of deficit reduction in the wrong way. Let's move forward with a plan that does it in the right way.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I think it is easy for my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to forget that this bill deals with programs on which the most vulnerable in our society rely.

My Republican colleagues are proposing about $650 million in cuts to the WIC Program. This action would essentially kick 200,000 to 350,000 women, infants and children off the rolls. Now, the Republicans claim that getting our fiscal house in order requires shared sacrifice. However, they are only requiring the sacrifice of those most in need. In fact, the cost of funding this program for 1 year is less than the revenue that would be generated by ending the Bush tax cuts to millionaires for just 1 week. Now you tell me, is that considered shared sacrifice?

If we want to talk about being fiscally responsible, then there is almost no better investment and choice we can make than the WIC Program. For every dollar invested in WIC, $1.77 to $3.13 in health care costs are avoided in the first 60 days after an infant's birth. Doesn't this alone make fiscal sense?

The WIC Program is preventative. It's preventative in terms of public health nutrition. It is a mission-driven program that seeks to improve birth outcomes, improve the nutrition of women and children, and provide nutrition education and food packages tailored to meet the needs of low-income women and children. I can't think of anything that is more preventative in nature and that ultimately saves money.

WIC serves approximately 8.9 million low-income pregnant women, new moms, babies, and children under 5 who have been determined to be nutritionally at risk. Are these really the people that my Republican colleagues want to carry the burden and weight of shared sacrifice?

What do the Republicans expect? I mean, do you honestly expect your constituents to find relief if they're not willing to provide even the most basic of services? You don't even want to provide basic services for people in need. Where are they going to get relief in this economic downturn that we face right now?

If my Republican colleagues continue to pursue this kind of action, they're going to have hundreds of thousands of hungry and malnourished women and children on their consciences—and I really mean that, on your consciences—and that's not something that I am willing to accept.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this appropriations bill and to give the necessary support to our Nation's most vulnerable members.

I yield back the balance of my time.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. DELAURO

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 2, line 14, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $136,070,000) (reduced by $136,070,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Connecticut is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. My amendment offered with my colleagues, Representatives KAPTUR, BOSWELL, FARR, COURTNEY, LARSON, and WELCH, would restore full funding for the President's request to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

The CFTC's mission is to protect the American public from fraud, manipulation, abusive practices, systemic risk related to derivatives, including speculation in the oil markets that drive up gas prices, and to foster open, competitive and financially sound markets. Funding the CFTC at the President's request will put 159 more cops on the beat, will provide the agency with the updated technology it needs to properly regulate the multi-trillion-dollar derivatives market in order to protect American consumers, and will curb excessive speculation by Wall Street banks and oil companies.

The current version of the bill, by gouging the CFTC by as much as $136 million, makes it clear that the majority is putting profiteering and special interests above the basic, commonsense priorities of the American people. Three years ago, we suffered an economic meltdown brought on by greed, corruption and a total lack of regulation in the Wall Street derivatives market.

□ 1930

We are still dealing with the economic ramifications of that collapse today. Millions of jobs disappeared, millions of homes foreclosed on, millions of families are struggling every day to get by.

If that were not burdensome enough, the same families are paying excessive prices at the pump right now because of dangerous oil speculation. Goldman Sachs has found that unregulated speculation adds over $20 per barrel to the price of oil. Even Exxon's top executive recently conceded that the price of gas has been surging due to speculators, who now make up nearly 70 percent of the market.

Because of all the bad behavior by Wall Street, we passed the Dodd-Frank financial reform bill in the Congress last year which would reintroduce transparency and accountability in commodities markets and protect the public from future malfeasance. Among these reforms was the strengthening of the Commodities Futures Trading Commission, their ability to regulate derivatives and to prevent speculation in oil. Yet in this appropriations bill the majority is now trying to starve the CFTC of the resources that it needs to do the job.

The decision helps Wall Street firms and big oil companies. If it passes, Wall Street can continue the risky manipulation of derivatives that brought on the last collapse. Big oil can continue to enjoy inflated profits every year due to artificially swollen oil prices. The losers are Americans families forced to pay more at the pump with this decision, or worse. Eviscerating the CFTC here, the majority is setting up taxpayers to pay for yet another costly bailout of Wall Street.

The choices made in this legislation are reckless and disturbing, more to do with ideology than basic economics. Yet it is part of a pattern by this majority. Under their watch, gas prices reached an average of around $4 a gallon across the country, up dramatically from the $2.78 national average in 2010. And yet they still rush to protect billions in oil company subsidies, even as they cut the budget of the agency we know can do something about this speculation.

CFTC has already made a difference. Earlier this year they charged five oil speculators with manipulating the price of crude, netting them more $50 million, even as oil prices climbed towards record highs of $147 a barrel in the summer of 2008. We need this type of accountability in our oil markets to protect American families. What we do not need is a Congress that puts the profit margins of Wall Street and oil speculators over the needs of American families and the American economy.

We came here to represent the American people, not banks and oil companies, and that means giving the CFTC the resources that it needs to do its job properly. I urge my colleagues to put Main Street before Wall Street and to support this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chair, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman will state his inquiry.

Mr. KINGSTON. I accept the amendment and was wondering if we could go ahead and call the question and move on.

The Acting CHAIR. The Committee is proceeding under the 5-minute rule and debate will proceed on the amendment.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. It is interesting. I want to read this amendment, because I have heard some comments about this bill isn't serious or whatever. Well, look at this amendment. I don't think you could call it serious. It says on page 2, line 14, ''after the dollar amount insert increased by $136 million, reduced by $136 million.''

The effect of this amendment is nothing. It is a legitimate vehicle on a parliamentary rule to discuss something. But if there is a problem with the CFTC not doing its job or being unable to do the job because of this, there should be an amendment that addresses that. This is not an amendment. This is just a discussion. But I will enter into the discussion.

First of all, I want to quote Michael Dunn. He is a Democrat member of the commission. Here is what he had to say as far as oil speculation goes. ''The CFTC staff has been unable to find any reliable economic analysis to support the contention that excessive speculation is affecting the markets we regulate.''

That is from the Democrat member of the CFTC. If I quoted a Republican member and they said the same thing, then the Democrats would be crying, no, no, no. But that was the quote of the Democrat member of the commission.

Now, why are the Democrats so interested in blaming high energy costs on the CFTC? It is because they have opposed our own development of energy domestically. We do not want to explore for oil in Alaska, but the President of the United States goes down to Brazil and apparently understands or in his view believes that they are maybe technologically superior to Americans, that they can drill for oil off the shore of Brazil, and they can do a better job than the good people in Louisiana or Texas or Florida can. So the President of the United States, a Democrat, goes down to Brazil and says, drill for oil here, and we will lend you the money, and we want to be your best customer.

Now, if we want to decrease the price of domestic energy, then we need to explore for our own energy, instead of this phony argument that somehow—and, by the way, I am not sure, but I think Goldman Sachs is a huge supporter of President Obama. In fact, I think they were his second-largest contributor. I am not 100 percent sure on that. I am sure somebody over here might be very quick to correct me if I am wrong.

But I know this: that I have heard over and over again that somehow Goldman Sachs is the problem with this bill. I wasn't listening to every single speech, but that was one of the things that we kept hearing. But if we want to decrease the cost of energy in the United States of America, you need to increase the supply and the production of domestic energy and get away from this, well, it is the CFTC is not getting enough money.

And I want to say this, which is very important about this budget number. The budget of the President of the United States, a Democrat, failed in the Senate, which is also run by the Democrats, by a vote of 97–0. Now, I keep hearing, not this bill, not here, not now. Well, where? The Ryan budget is the only budget that has passed either body. It has not passed the Senate. But the President's budget failed 97–0. So if the Democrats are concerned, then why aren't they working on a budget that is acceptable to them?

We had a number of budget votes here. None of them passed. There was one budget proposal, the RSC, Republican Study Committee budget that was Mr. GARRETT's and Mr. JORDAN's, and it failed because they felt the Ryan budget did not go far enough. But the Ryan budget did get a majority of votes. The President Obama budget did not. And what did the President and HARRY REID do when their budget failed? Nothing. They left. That was it. If they are concerned about funding for the CFTC and the USDA and the FDA, why aren't they working on a budget that is more acceptable? Isn't that what leadership is all about?

So what we are having here now is, because we won't explore for our own energy and we won't develop it, we are going to blame it on the CFTC's funding level. I think that this amendment, although it does nothing, I think we should move on to more serious discussions.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I move to strike the requisite number of words.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Massachusetts is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, having heard the subcommittee chairman's discussion of this amendment, I now understand why he didn't want to have a discussion of this amendment. He wanted simply to accept it so he would not have had to say nothing. Since it was not accepted, he did say nothing, he just took 5 minutes to say it.

I take it back, he did say one very important thing, and it defines this issue. He apparently believes that speculation in oil is no part of the reason that oil prices go high, and he quoted a Democrat. He found a Democrat, one of the three Democratic members of the commission. The other two, of course, vehemently disagree.

By the way, we did not say that this is something Goldman Sachs doesn't like. Goldman Sachs is on the gentleman's side. Goldman Sachs opposes regulation of derivatives. Goldman Sachs merely mentioned in an analyst report that they believe that $20 a barrel of the cost of oil comes from the speculation that they engage in. Maybe they were bragging. They certainly weren't objecting.

Here is what speculation means. By the way, in our legislation that the Republicans are trying to undo and in what the CFTC is trying to do, people who use oil are not regulated. An airline trying to hedge against volatility in prices, they are left alone.

Here is what we want to say. If you do not use oil, if you never go near a barrel of oil, in fact, if you are one of those people whole never goes near the gas pump because you have got somebody to pump it for you, if you never touch a barrel of oil and never use it, please do not buy it up, through derivatives, so that you put up only a little bit, large amounts so that you can keep it off the market and the price goes up. That is what we want to do.

□ 1940

The CFTC, we think, should be able to say to people who don't use the commodity, Please don't buy it up and hold it off the market so you can then sell it when the price goes up and make a profit. The gentleman from Georgia says speculation is not an issue. He says it's drilling. Mr. Chairman, I do not know a thoughtful person who thinks that complex issues like the price of a commodity have a single explanation, except the gentleman from Georgia. I wouldn't want to violate the rules by suggesting that I would exclude him from the ranks of the rational, but every other rational person says that things like the price are set by a number of factors.

No, I do not think speculation is the major cause. Neither does Goldman Sachs. Neither does Wilbur Ross, the great investor. They say it's perhaps 20 percent. So we're not saying we're going to cut the price in half. We are saying you can reduce it by 20 percent. And, by the way, it's not just oil. We just had a debate about food. Well, frankly, the WIC program that they are cutting wouldn't cost so much if we would also limit speculation in food prices.

And here's what we are talking about. Well, maybe the gentleman from Georgia speaks for his party. I've heard no dissent. The apparently official Republican position is: Speculation is fine. Let's not interfere with speculation. It's people who do not use the commodity, who don't use oil, who don't use the foodstuffs, if they want to buy it up and keep it off the market so they can then sell it when the price goes up—why else would they buy it? They're not collectors. This is not stamps. This is not a hobby. It's a way to make money. And how do they make money? By driving up the price of the commodity by buying it and withholding it and then selling it when

they can make a profit. What we want is for the CFTC to tell people who don't use it, No, there are limits on what you can buy. And we believe that contributes to the price of oil, unlike the gentleman from Georgia, who said, No, price only has to do with exploration and drilling. No one I think really thinks that—maybe not even the gentleman from Georgia. What they do is to say, No, the CFTC won't have that money. They in fact in their budget will give the CFTC less money in the next fiscal year than they have this year.

We have given the CFTC new powers under the financial reform legislation, which they don't like, to cover swaps. By the way, it's not simply speculation that's at risk here. AIG helped plunge this country into an economic disaster by an absolutely irresponsible use of derivatives. And that's something, again, we would like the CFTC to be able to regulate. They were allowed to get in way over their heads.

So what we have here is part of a one-two punch from the Republicans. They want to do it legislatively—and that will come up later—but here they're telling the CFTC, You should get less money as we give you this complicated issue of derivatives than you had before. And by the way, they also have added a Catch-22. If you read the current Republican arguments, they are very critical of the CFTC for not moving quickly enough. They aren't using the authority they've got.

So, first, you complain that they aren't doing enough. Then you reduce the money that they need. And by the way, these are complicated things. They need to be able to hire very smart people. They need to be able to hire important information technology. You cannot have dumb people regulating. And I will give credit to those people out there manipulating derivatives and speculating—they're very smart. They have state-of-the-art equipment. And you want to put the CFTC in shackles. It is an effort to make speculation free of any regulation, with a consequent increase in food prices and energy prices. And I hope the bill is defeated.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of this amendment. We are slowly rebounding from a financial crisis that crippled our economy and left millions of Americans out of work. Clearly, consumer protection is important now more than ever. The Commodity Futures Trading Commission, known as the CFTC, is an independent agency that protects market users and the public from abusive practices related to derivatives. This includes helping regulate oil speculation and food price speculation.

Now, more than ever, we need a well-resourced CFTC. As Mr. FRANK pointed out, this is new legislation. The agency is growing by hiring people who are going to be regulators, and expects by September 30 of this year to have in place what we have given the money for last year, which is 720 full-time equivalent positions. They will help ensure that the public is protected from fraud, manipulation, and systematic risk, and they will make sure that Americans aren't paying exorbitant prices at the pump and grocery stores. And the CFTC can do just that.

In the past 3 years, the CFTC has obtained over $1.3 billion in judgments for Americans who have been victimized by thousands of profit-hungry investors around the country. And yet now, in fiscal year 2012, this bill, the Agriculture appropriations bill, slashes the budget of the CFTC by 44 percent. So the first time that we begin to regulate an industry, we are going to cut it back by 160 jobs they will have to let go.

Now, remember, they're regulating an industry that is seven times larger than all regulated industry and regulated markets today. Seven times bigger than all regulated markets. This job cut will dangerously undermine the CFTC's regulation of commodities and contribute to rising oil and food prices, as Mr. FRANK pointed out. This is blatant fiscal irresponsibility because here's what these cuts mean. The CFTC can't put enough cops on the beat to prevent the big banks from making risky bets that could lead to another financial crisis. So the American taxpayer will foot the bill to bail out Wall Street all over again. This puts the needs of Wall Street over the needs of Main Street. But you know what else it means? It means Americans will be exposed to manipulation of oil and food prices at the very time when folks are scraping together pennies to pay for rent and cover groceries.

Our job here in Congress is to be the best possible stewards of taxpayers' dollars. And this shortsighted cut will yield absolutely no return on investment. In fact, we could be lining ourselves up to lose big all over again. I urge my colleagues to support the DeLauro-Kaptur-Farr-Larson-Courtney-Welch-Boswell amendment to restore funding to the CFTC and avoid this misguided attack on the American taxpayer.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOSWELL. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Iowa is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

Mr. BOSWELL. I rise to support the fair and necessary funding for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. The CFTC acts as a Wall Street watchdog, overseeing American markets that directly impact our Nation's workers, businesses, and families. Refusing to responsibly fund this Commission puts our constituents in danger of higher gas prices, higher food prices, and a greater likelihood that Wall Street will once again take advantage of them. While the derivatives market has grown by 400 percent over the last 10 years, the U.S. Government has failed to match that growth in regulators. Now the majority wants to take even more cops off Wall Street, and as someone has said, it's like putting the Little League champions up against the New York Yankees. With speculators making up 70 percent of market players and an industry that invests $25 billion in technology each year, the Commission that regulates behavior on Wall Street cannot afford to be left behind. Our taxpayers cannot afford to pick up the bill again.

To monitor and regulate this market, and to protect American taxpayers, last Congress we passed the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform Act. And I might add that that was not a knee-jerk operation. We took months and months, many, many hearings, as you well know, working across the aisle together to try to do something that would prevent a re-happening of what we were going through and still have the aftereffect of.

As ranking member of the subcommittee that oversees the CFTC, I have heard from countless witnesses, including Chairman Gensler himself, that we must properly fund the CFTC to protect American consumers and market end-users. They need and must have the tools and the resources to do their job. Adequately funding the CFTC would allow the Commission to increase staff to do the job that Congress directed them to do, which is to prevent another 2008 financial crisis. It would allow the Commission to keep pace with the growth of the market they are charged to regulate and invest $66 million in technology to improve oversight of electronic trading.

Still, the majority is dead set on delaying and defunding the CFTC. This legislation returns the CFTC to their 2008 level funding—the same level of funding that led to the taxpayer bailout of Wall Street and only allows half of what they need now to do the job correctly. Defunding and delaying this implementation is the majority's handout to Wall Street millionaires and billionaires, who have already been caught red-handed gambling with the pension plans of middle class Americans and speculating the cost of oil $20 a barrel beyond actual cost.

□ 1950

This is why I support and have cosponsored the amendment to increase CFTC funding to the fair level of $308 million. To fund the CFTC at 2008 levels is an insult to the American taxpayers who were asked to foot the bill in 2008 as a result of Wall Street's reckless behavior.

Our Nation has seen the effects of the 2008 funding level and what happens when our market lacks proper oversight. We must protect our constituents from the vulnerable situation that

led to a financial collapse, and we must fairly fund the CFTC.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Nebraska is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentleman from Nebraska.

I just want to say I find it incredible that I'm hearing people say that the fault of the Wall Street meltdown was because of the CFTC's not doing its job. I cannot believe that the meltdown and the financial situation is now being attributed to the CFTC and, to avoid it, we have to put in more money for the CFTC.

I voted against the Wall Street bailout. The President of the United States voted for it as a Senator, and again as President he wanted part two of it. So I'm not buying that the Wall Street bailout—AIG was mentioned earlier. That was done by the Fed. The Bear Stearns bailout, that was done by the Fed. The bailout of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, that was done by the House Democrats.

So I don't need to be sitting here listening to people preach to me about bailouts and that the solution to lower gas prices is to fund a bureaucracy. It's a group that has been averaging about four regulations a year and between now and late summer 34 regulations.

I understand that those in the Big Government circles of Washington love more regulations, more government growth; but to say to the taxpayers that funding CFTC at a higher, unprecedented level is going to avoid the need for bailouts is ridiculous. And, again, Mr. Chairman, I'm somebody who has consistently voted against these bailouts and these stimulus programs.

I don't believe that government is the answer. I think the market still has the answer. I did not support the Dodd-Frank bill. What this is—a lot of it is just an overreach, more government telling people how to conduct their business.

Do I think there's a role for CFTC? Certainly I do. And can CFTC be effective? Yes. But their own Democrat member says, and I will quote again: ''The CFTC staff''—not his personal opinion but the CFTC staff, which is over 700—''has been unable to find any reliable economic analysis to support the contention that excessive speculation is affecting the markets we regulate.'' Now, that's not my opinion; that's what the Democrat commission member says the CFTC staff has reported.

Should we be concerned about speculation? Yes, we should. But I don't think it is fair for any Member of Congress to go back home to the taxpayers and say, I'm going to bring down the price at the pump because I have put millions of dollars into a Washington bureaucracy and they're really going to get tough on that Wall Street crowd now.

If we want to bring down the price of energy in America, we have to increase our supply. And I don't know of any other way to do it. Supply goes up and the cost goes down. If we want to help the consumers at the pump, we have got to explore and develop our own domestic energy resources. And discussion about CFTC funding comes second, third, fourth, fifth tier to that. So if the objective is to bring down the price of gas at the pump, let's don't pretend that increasing spending for the CFTC is going to achieve that.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Chairman, let me add as well it's a little difficult for me to sit here quietly and listen to the pontificating about Wall Street bailouts. I didn't support the Wall Street bailout either.

There are now five banks who control over 50 percent of the assets, deposited assets, in the country. Those banks that were deemed ''too big to fail'' in reality are too big to succeed. It's the Main Street bank that's under constant competitive pressure from these large institutions that have been empowered by further consolidations by the actions of this very body. So it's very difficult to sit here and take that.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COURTNEY. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Connecticut is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of this amendment, as someone who also voted against the Wall Street bailout.

I, however, would certainly disagree with the conclusion that speculation is not a factor in the price of oil and certainly the huge swing that we have seen just in the last 6 months in this country. And I would cite ExxonMobil as my validator in terms of that point.

On May 14 in Forbes Magazine, hardly a Democratic left-wing publication, there was a story regarding an interview with Rex Tillerson, the CEO of ExxonMobil, who stated that the real price with traditional supply and demand for oil and gas should be roughly between $60 and $70 a barrel, not $115 a barrel, which it was back in mid-May. And this is what the article said: that Mr. Tillerson stated that the reason it's above $100 a barrel is due to the oil majors using futures contracts to lock in current high prices and speculation that is engineered by the high-frequency trading of quantitative hedge funds.

Again, traditional supply and demand, according to ExxonMobil, suggests that the price of oil and gas should be roughly $60 to $70. Well, how will the CFTC bring us back to a market that is actually connected to supply and demand forces as opposed to the market that we have today?

Under Dodd-Frank, what the CFTC was given was the authority to impose position limits on noncommercial interests that have swamped the commodities trading markets of this country since Congress foolishly deregulated the commodities markets back in 2000. Today, the number of noncommercial traders in the commodities markets is twice what it was in 2000 and using virtually no money down, because the margin limits are almost nonexistent. They have basically hijacked this market so that real end-users, the people who depend on futures trading to lock in positions, whether it's airlines or back home in Connecticut whether it's oil delivery guys who are trying to figure out whether they can offer lock-in contracts for next winter, they have been basically driven from this market. In Connecticut today you cannot get a lock-in contract for next winter because of the fact that these traders now have absolutely no confidence in whether or not this market will be in any rational place 6 months or 8 months from now.

So the need for the CFTC to reimpose some reasonable ''appropriate limits,'' which is what the Dodd-Frank bill empowers them to do, is the reason why their staff needs to be put into place so that we can have a market that existed back in the 1990s, our parents' commodities trading market, which was a stable market which was basically for the use of end-users and not for people who were using high-frequency trading, which the CEO of ExxonMobil cited as the cause of the swing in prices that we're seeing.

And let's be clear here, folks. Supporting this budget from the majority is not about being a deficit hawk. Secretary Ray Mabus from the Navy testified before the House Armed Services Committee that every $10-a-barrel increase of oil costs the Navy, in terms of annual fuel costs, $300 million a year. If you look at what the CEO of ExxonMobil says, the Navy right now is overpaying easily on an annualized basis anywhere from $300 million to $500 million a year, and that's just one branch of the military. The Air Force uses a greater amount of fossil fuels of oil and gas than the Navy does.

So if you are truly a deficit hawk, if you really want to make sure that the Pentagon, which is going to be going through some gut-wrenching decisions about whether or not to provide for the Warfighter in this country and protect weapons platforms that we need to defend this country, then we need a high-functioning CFTC to make sure that the Pentagon as well as the rest of the government at the State and local level are not overpaying for gas and oil.

The taxpayer has a huge stake in making sure that this agency, the CFTC, has adequate funds to do its job because the savings to not just consumers and small businesses but the savings to the taxpayers will be in the billions and billions of dollars. It far exceeds any of the claimed savings that this budget seeks to obtain through the

cuts, through the unbelievably shortsighted cuts to the CFTC in terms of being able to do its job.

We should oppose this budget. We should support this amendment which is on the floor of this House.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. COURTNEY. No, I will not yield.

Not only small businesses and consumers but the taxpayer needs us to act to make sure that we have a rational oil trading market that is tied to real traditional supply and demand, which the CEO of ExxonMobil has told us is overpriced today to at least $20 to $30 a barrel.

□ 2000

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I was listening to the previous speaker's arguments, and I'm glad to hear that he's concerned about the U.S. Navy's energy supplies, and I was going to ask him, if he had been kind enough to yield to me, whether he was in favor of us starting to develop our own energy resources here in the United States.

We've got a tremendous amount of energy that our Creator has given us here in this country off the northern coast of Alaska, in the Western United States, in the gulf coast, and certainly, I would like to see the oil prices drop. The best way to get those oil prices to come down to a reasonable level is for us to start developing our own energy resources here in this country. Certainly, our oil and natural gas resources need to be developed, clean coal energy, alternative sources of energy, nuclear energy, all these other things.

And I just hear all this pontification from my colleagues on the other side about the CFTC and the oil speculators. The best way to make the oil speculators lose money, which they would do when they increase the prices of oil by speculating on future prices, is by producing more oil here in this country. We've got a tremendous amount of uncertainty with all the things that are going on in the Middle East today, and that causes speculators to think the price of oil is going up.

Now, I'm not one who's here arguing for the speculators by any means. I believe in the marketplace. I believe that the marketplace, unencumbered by government regulations and taxes, is the best way to control quality, quantity, and cost of all goods and services, including oil. And the best way to do that is to lower the cost of oil here in this country, natural gas and all of our energy supplies for the U.S. Navy as well as for the Federal Government and for everybody, to lower the cost of gasoline at the pump. It's best to develop our own natural resources, our God-given resources that are plentiful in this country.

But I have seen in, now, three Congresses that I have been here my Democrat colleagues block every effort that we have made to develop our own resources. I never will forget in 2008, while we were coming during the August break and talking about the Republicans' all-of-the-above energy policy, that a Democratic staffer said that the Democrat Party's energy policy was drive a small car and wait for the wind. That's not an energy policy.

We need to develop the God-given resources that we have here in this country, to lower the cost of gas at the pumps, to lower the cost of heating oil, particularly for our elderly citizens and poorest people across this Nation that this winter are going to be suffering, suffering tremendously economically because of the high cost of oil.

It's not the speculators and the CFTC that's going to do that. Drilling for oil and natural gas and developing our own natural resources here in this country is going to be the solution. And I just encourage my Democratic colleagues to join with me and others here on our side, let's develop these resources, not just talk about the CFTC, not just talk about more regulations on the marketplace, because the more regulation we put on the marketplace, the higher the cost goes. So let's get the regulatory burden off of the energy sector so that we can start developing our own God-given resources here in this country.

So, if the gentleman had been kind enough to yield, I would have asked him and congratulate him on being concerned about our U.S. Navy and how much extra they're paying for oil, for all the energy sources that our military has to spend. We've got to stop this outrageous spending that the Federal Government's been doing, and the way to do that is lower the cost of energy here and that will help everybody.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. KAPTUR. I move to strike the last word, Mr. Chairman.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Ohio is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. I rise to associate myself with the fine efforts of Congresswoman ROSA DELAURO and Ranking Member SAM FARR to point out the anemic funding that is contained in the base bill for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. The Republican bill reduces below the President's request by 44 percent the necessary funding for staff for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission and provides significantly fewer resources for the agency to do the job America expects.

Now, why is this important? The CFTC is supposed to regulate betting, B-E-T-T-I-N-G, because really what's going on is all the American people know is a very sophisticated type of gambling that when the bettors lose, rather than absorbing their losses, they come to the American people, but they're very powerful and they create new mechanisms. They create mechanisms. They don't call it betting, but they have a term, ''collateralized debt obligations.'' That gives it a kind of luster. And from that, they might drive a credit default swap.

But in the end, as the book by Joe Nocera, ''All the Devils Are Here,'' recounts what we really have is a Wall Street and a Chicago futures market that has run amok, where market manipulation, speculation, and outright fraud led our country into the worst economic recession since the Great Depression.

Make no mistake about it: These folks are very powerful, and one of the most important trades involved in this very sophisticated gambling is oil. This particular chart shows the profits being made by the major oil companies and compares the profits in the first quarter of last year to this year. If you look at ExxonMobil, over $10 billion more profits this year than last year. And the list goes on. Whether it's Conoco at $2 billion, whether it's BP at $7.2 billion, these folks are not hurting.

President Obama said, back in April, that part of the oil problem and the gas price problem is speculation. He's absolutely right. Even Goldman Sachs, one of the big beneficiaries of the betting, admits that a huge portion of the increase in the gas price is due to betting. And of all people, the chief executive officer of Exxon admitted in testimony in the other body recently that $60 to $70 per barrel of oil, whether it's $60, $70, $80, $90, $100, is actually due to speculation. So even those involved in it are admitting they're crying for help. So let's give it to them. Let's give them the help they want and desperately need.

This Commodity Futures Trading Commission has been charged with shining a bright light into the dark recesses that Wall Street and the futures markets would love us to ignore. In fact, I think the currency markets actually got themselves exempted, so there's huge sections of trades that are going on in our world today that aren't even the subject, even if we were to have the staffing we need over at the CFTC, that would not be affected by it.

But I ask myself: Could it perhaps be the intent and consequence of this restrictive funding proposal at the CFTC to prevent robust regulation of this market? If we look at what happened with mortgage-backed securities and all the derivatives that flowed from that, we know absolutely for certain that the lack of regulation is the reason for our demise.

We must make sure that the CFTC is able to take on speculation in the markets, and there's no more nontransparent market than this one in oil. So when the American people go to the pump and they cuss, they have to think about this little agency called the Commodity Futures Trading Commission that back in 2000 tried to get the

right to regulate derivatives, and they were denied that right by a vote right here in the Congress, and most Members had no idea what they were voting on because it was included in an omnibus appropriations bill.

□ 2010

Isn't that interesting? Legislating on an appropriation bill, and nobody found it. Well, they must have a lot of power in order to do that. So if we look at a few years ago when these derivative markets were worth about $13 trillion—now nobody I represent, including myself, can even imagine $13 trillion. But that derivative market grew from the mid-nineties to the present where it was about $40 trillion, and we had 475 employees over at the CFTC trying to figure out what was going on in all these markets. Well, today that market is over $600 trillion in notional value and 15 times more than before, and there's not sufficient staff in order to regulate these markets. It's pretty obvious where we need support in order to rein in these abuses.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. WATT. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from North Carolina is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WATT. Mr. Chairman, I don't come to the floor very often anymore to debate. I have kind of changed my pattern. Eighteen years ago, 19 years ago, when I saw egregious things, I would be right here in the heart of the debate, ranting and raving, some people would say.

When my colleagues and sometimes my constituents now ask me, Have you lost your passion, I tell them that there are some reasons that I don't come to the floor anymore. One is that I find that most of the time, my colleagues on the opposite side are tone deaf. They are not really listening to what anybody is saying to them. They are off on some radical right undertaking, falling off the right edge of the Earth, and they are not listening to anything I say.

They don't share my values, and they don't really care about this debate that we had, 3 hours of talking about women, infants, and children going hungry. They really don't much care about that, I say to my constituents. And, third, they just make up stuff. You know, they have this—you know, if we repeat it enough, it's got to be true, and we will convince the American people of about anything if we just keep saying it over and over again. Or they . . . have convenient memories that forget that it was President Bush——

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman will suspend.

For what purpose does the gentleman from Nebraska rise?

Mr. FORTENBERRY. The gentleman has accused our side of the aisle of lying. Is that a cause for having his words taken down?

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair construes that as a demand that words be taken down. All Members will suspend. The gentleman will take his seat.

The Clerk will report the words.

□ 2020

Mr. WATT. Mr. Chairman, in the interest of time, some people have said that I called somebody a liar and, obviously, that would be in violation of the rules. I am aware of that. So if I did, I ask unanimous consent that those words be removed from the RECORD.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from North Carolina may proceed in order.

Mr. WATT. Can the Chair tell me how much time remains in my 5 minutes?

The Acting Chair. The gentleman from North Carolina has 3 minutes remaining of his 5 minutes.

Mr. WATT. All right. Well, let me try to pick up essentially where I was without offending anybody else.

There's some conveniently forgotten items that I think we need to be reminded of. Number 1, that it was President Bush who requested the government bailouts. That occurred on his watch. It was President Bush that was responsible for the tax cuts for the rich that got us out of surpluses as far as the eye could see and into this deficit spending. And it was rampant speculation and abuse of derivatives on Wall Street that resulted in a meltdown that made Dodd-Frank and the CFTC regulation that we're here debating necessary. Those are the three important things that I think we need to take note of.

It also resulted in a tremendous economic downturn that resulted in more people needing food stamps and the benefit of the WIC program. So these two things are really not disconnected from each other, the 3 hours of debate that we had previously and the debate on whether we are going to adequately fund the CFTC, which has been given authority under the Dodd-Frank legislation to rein in the speculation that is taking place that's driving up food prices, oil prices, and if we're not careful, will result in the same kind of economic meltdown that we experienced that got us into this in the first place.

So this whole process of being in denial about this and ignoring the facts is something that I think we should not countenance on this floor. We need the CFTC to regulate derivatives and speculation. And to the extent that we cut the staff and the funding of the CFTC, we could be replicating exactly what led President Bush to say we needed a bailout in the first place.

So, that's what this debate is all about. I think it's terrible that we are cutting funds under this bill for women, infants, and children, the most vulnerable in our society. But it's even more terrible that we are going to run the risk of allowing the same kind of rampant speculation, unregulated, to get us back into another meltdown that will result in our being back here trying to figure out how to dig ourselves out of this ditch. A year from now, 18 months from now, 2 years from now we'll be right back here again.

Now, this is not rocket science. It's all just connected to each other. And my colleagues can deny it all they want. They can say that this is about drilling for oil in the United States. That's not what it's about. All of the science I've seen says there's more supply of oil now than there is demand, and if we were operating in a regular domestic market on regular economics, the price of gas would be going down.

We need to regulate the CFTC. We need to have them regulating derivatives and speculation.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting Chair (Mr. REED). The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. It seems that if I'm the American people watching this on C–SPAN tonight, I think we have a very clear picture of the difference between what the Republicans want and what the Democrats want.

Now, as my good friend from North Carolina very eloquently laid out the scenario of how we got to where we are, the question becomes: How do we solve this problem? The Democrats are saying we got into this problem because we did not have the proper oversight to abusive practices, to manipulation, to the use of derivatives, and allowing them to use a leveraging position that brought great havoc to our economic system in a way that brought about a havoc to our economic system not seen since the 1930s and the Depression.

The American people, under the leadership of President George Bush and his Treasury Secretary Paulson, came to our Financial Services Committee with just one little piece of paper, but on that piece of paper it said, We need to be able to bring some oversight and regulation to this new area of derivatives and credit default swaps. It is tearing a hole in our economy. We moved. We moved and we passed the Dodd-Frank bill.

Now, what we have before us now is a continuation of a very misguided policy by the Republicans. Let me remind you, this same scenario was carried out to cut Medicare. It's all been cutting programs, cutting efforts to respond to the basic needs of the American people.

Now, my issue is this: If my Republican friends were very sincere about what they were doing—and let me qualify that because I don't want my words taken down. But ''sincerity'' is a very important word here. And my sincerity point is this:

If they were sincere, why would they advocate cutting the very programs

that the American people need at the time and, at the same time, saying we're in such dire budget consequences but yet we can give billionaires and millionaires $2.5 trillion, but we cannot adequately fund the CFTC to go in and have the power to put forward the very controls needed so that we will never have the kind of meltdown that we had before?

That is the hypocrisy here, Mr. Chairman. That's what the American people are watching tonight on C–SPAN in this debate, and I hope they see a very clear message of who it is that's standing up for the American people at their time of need.

□ 2030

And there's no greater need than to rein in these speculators who have been a primary cause to the high rise in gasoline. That's what they want us to do, and that's what we're doing. But the Republicans want to cut the budget so that we will not be able to have the staffing, so that we could go into the dark corners and the crevices and be able to shine the light and pull out these speculators that are driving up these gasoline prices to $5 a gallon.

So I hope that tonight, after this debate, the American people will clearly see who's on the side of the American people. Without any question, without any doubt, it is the Democrats who are standing in the way to make sure that we do all we can to make sure the CFTC, our primary regulator, will be able to put in place those entities, those regulations that will prevent this meltdown from happening before and will rein in these speculators and give the American people the day that they deserve, a better day in the sun.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Nebraska is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Chairman, I think it's important to address this issue of who's on the side of the American people. We have a $1.6 trillion deficit this year. Over 40 cents on every dollar that the government is spending is borrowed. We have $14 trillion of debt. This is a very tough Agricultural appropriations budget. I don't like it.

The CFTC is a very important organization; it does very important work. I think as well there are structural flaws in the commodities markets. Futures markets that are designed to decrease volatility and mitigate risk are actually increasing volatility and causing risk. There's a structural problem there. But the issue comes down to what are we going to prioritize and where.

The CFTC has received—since the recklessness of Wall Street in 2008 and those bailouts that were voted on by a majority of this body—has received a 53 percent increase in its funding. I wish it didn't have to be reduced, but it's being asked to share in this overall budget of reducing the entire cost of the Agricultural appropriations bill by a margin that is actually less than other parts of the bill.

It's a tough budget. I don't like it either. But we've got to try to tighten our belt in a responsible manner. And given the increases that have occurred, I think it's important to have some historical perspective here.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, I represent metropolitan Detroit. And not too long ago I took some corporate officials for a tour of neighborhoods on the city's east side near where I grew up. I showed them blocks of big, beautiful brick homes, three and four bedroom homes. And when you got up close to those homes, you realized that none of them had windows, none of them. There were blocks and blocks and acres and miles of neighborhoods that have been devastated, devastated.

Now, I'm a member of the Homeland Security Committee. My duty is to protect metro Detroit from terrorist attack or tornado or some other natural disaster, but it wasn't a flood or a fire that destroyed those neighborhoods. They were devastated because of foreclosures, foreclosures that this body—that I accused when I was a member of the Michigan legislature of not effectively addressing the housing crisis. But also foreclosures that were caused in part by a lot of rich folks around here who are hoping, praying, gambling, wishing, betting that homeowners would lose everything that they have. What kind of country is this that we encourage people to make money—billions of dollars—off people losing everything? That's outrageous. That's not American. Come on, people. We want folks to get rich because families lose their homes and other neighbors stay in their homes but they lose their entire life savings that they invested in it? Of course not.

This is why I ask us to support the Rosa DeLauro amendment, because the Commodity Futures Trading Commission needs more staff, it needs more resources. And some of you are saying, well, we can't afford it. But look at the cost, the cost to our families, the cost to our local units of government that can no longer afford to hire police and fire, the cost to our taxpayers who are now living in fear of crime because they don't have the protection of their first responders. That's a cost that we cannot afford to bear.

I urge all of you to support the DeLauro amendment. It's something that we need, and it's right for this country. We want people to earn money from offering value, not by destroying neighborhoods. I'm appealing to the best in you, support this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Chairman.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. KINGSTON. Isn't it true, for the record, that we do support the amendment?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman has not stated a parliamentary inquiry.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. I rise in strong opposition to the underlying bill and in support of the DeLauro amendment.

Mr. Chairman, hardworking families all across America have been whipsawed in recent years by Wall Street and special interests who have had free rein to place bets on mortgages and place bets on future oil prices. And you know what? We fought back. We fought back, and we passed a Wall Street reform law that outlaws risky financial practices by banks and lenders and that protects consumers.

Taxpayers should never, ever again be left on the hook for Wall Street's reckless actions, and yet my GOP colleagues propose to do just that with this bill, let Wall Street off the hook and put consumers and our economy at risk again. This bill significantly cuts the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. The CFTC is a major piece of the landmark Wall Street reform law because the law put cops back on the financial beat into areas where the financial industry was left largely unsupervised. And you know who suffered because of that? American families suffered the firsthand consequences of an unsupervised and unregulated Wall Street.

And now they're proposing a real double whammy to the American family, because my GOP colleagues are pairing their push to put consumers at risk and threaten their economic security with their GOP plan to end Medicare as we know it and undermine retirement security.

I would have hoped that we would have all learned a lesson and that you do not return to the policies of the past that led to the financial meltdown and the economic hardship for all Americans, but it appears that some have not learned that lesson.

And you have to ask why, why are we trying to go back to the same policies that led to the meltdown and led to such pain all across the country that started back in 2007?

□ 2040

I'll tell you why.

I have an article that was published during the debate of the Wall Street reform legislation. It is dated December 8, 2009. The headline reads: ''House Republicans Huddle with Lobbyists to Kill Financial Reform Bill.''

The article continues: ''In a call to arms, House Republican leaders met with more than 100 lobbyists at the Capitol Visitor Center on Tuesday afternoon to try to fight back against financial regulatory overhaul legislation.''

Now, in another article written during the consideration of H.R. 1, the headline reads: ''Industry Looks to Derail Dodd-Frank Enforcement.''

It continues: Republicans ''make no bones about their goal: to defang Dodd-Frank,'' our landmark Wall Street reform law that was put in place to protect consumers and hardworking American families.

[From Roll Call, Dec. 8, 2009]

HOUSE REPUBLICANS HUDDLE WITH LOBBYISTS TO KILL FINANCIAL REFORM BILL

(By Anna Palmer)

In a call to arms, House Republican leaders met with more than 100 lobbyists at the Capitol Visitors Center on Tuesday afternoon to try to fight back against financial regulatory overhaul legislation.

House Minority Leader John Boehner (R–Ohio) kicked off the 4 p.m. meeting, along with Minority Whip Eric Cantor (R–Va.) and GOP Reps. Kevin McCarthy (Calif.), Scott Garrett (N.J.) and Jeb Hensarling (Texas).

''The message was [House Financial Services Chairman Barney] Frank and the Democratic majority are ruining America, ruining capitalism, and stand up for yourselves,'' said a lobbyist who attended the meeting. ''They said, 'Look, you all oppose this bill, but only a few of you have come out publicly.' ''

In addition to asking trade associations to get their members in Congressional districts to write letters opposing the legislation, Republicans asked for companies and trade associations to use their Democratic consultants to gather intelligence on where members of the Congressional Black Caucus and the Blue Dog Coalition are in supporting the legislation.

INDUSTRY LOOKS TO DERAIL DODD-FRANK ENFORCEMENT

(By Kelsey Snell)

Wall Street and the banking industry, unable to stop Congress from passing the huge Dodd-Frank financial reform law last year, might get better traction this year by squeezing regulators through the budget process.

For the second year in a row, President Obama is pushing for big budget increases at the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. But Republican lawmakers are headed in exactly the opposite direction, and they make no bones about their goal: to defang Dodd-Frank.

Both the SEC and the CFTC received broad new powers to regulate the financial industry, especially the vast and largely unsupervised swaps market for financial derivatives. Both agencies need to hire hundreds of additional people to both make and enforce a sweeping array of new rules and to revive their depleted enforcement ranks.

But Congress has frozen their budgets at 2010 levels, and House Republicans now want to slash them even more.

In a multi-pronged assault, banks and other financial firms have been blanketing lawmakers with testimonials and industry-funding ''studies'' that warn about the lost jobs and lost economic growth that new financial regulation could cause.

But the real battleground is the budget.

Under Obama's budget, the CFTC would see its budget nearly double from about $169 million in 2010 to $308 million. The SEC, which has new responsibilities to oversee hedge funds, private equity funds, and complex new market tools, would see its budget jump from $1.1 billion to $1.4 billion.

House Republicans would move the other way. Under the House GOP's stop-gap spending bill to fund government operations for the remainder of this fiscal year, the CFTC's budget would be slashed to just $112 million and the SEC's budget would be essentially frozen at $1.07 billion.

At a hearing Tuesday of the House Financial Services Committee, Republican lawmakers made it clear they wanted to stop the agencies in their tracks.

''When you look at this freight train of rulemaking that is running down the track to a July deadline, I think not enough alarm has been raised about the potential devastating impact this rulemaking could have on the U.S.-based derivatives marketplace,'' said Financial Services Capital Markets Subcommittee Chairman Scott Garrett, R–N.J., in his opening statement.

Mr. Chairman, we need to ask ourselves: Who is being represented here in the Nation's capital? Do we come to this House to represent the people or do we come here to represent the special interests and the high-flying financiers of Wall Street who have already caused so much damage to this economy?

The financial meltdown caused many people to lose their life savings, their pensions, their homes. I have had six foreclosure prevention workshops since 2008 in Florida. These were largely middle class Americans, our neighbors, and we are here to fight for them and not for those who caused the damage to the economy.

But do you know what?

Since January, under this new majority, day after day, we have to come to the floor of the House to fight the misguided agenda of the majority that wants to roll back policies that are beneficial to the middle class—roll back Wall Street reform and end Medicare as we know it. Big Oil gets to keep its tax break, and companies still get breaks for exporting jobs overseas.

Meanwhile, the GOP majority has not brought one bill to create jobs across our great country, and instead thinks it is wise to undermine the economic and retirement security for American families, end Medicare as we know it, and roll back consumer protections under Wall Street reform—take the cops off the beat.

Mr. Chairman, I think it is time for Representatives to represent their neighbors back home, to get their priorities in order—to represent these hardworking American families and put their interests before the special interests on Wall Street.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I strongly oppose the underlying bill, and I support the proposed amendment.

Earlier today, we had a long discussion about one portion of the bill that dealt with Women, Infants and Children and the way in which the legislation inadequately funds the necessities for pregnant women, infants and children to lead healthy lives. We are now on to another issue that is extraordinarily important.

In the '90s, the idea of deregulation took hold and was expanded throughout the 2000 to 2008 period, so much so that we had the financial meltdown. We had Wall Street bankers and hedge funds running wild, gambling on the future, and America was the great loser in that gamble.

Over the last several years, we have seen the derivative market increase from a $30–$40 trillion notional value to an over $300 trillion notional value today. Every day across the Wall Street tickers—across the wires—and in the back rooms of the hedge funds and the big banks, $300 trillion of risk is traded back and forth, risk that is not backed up by assets but by bets that are made. It is the great crap shoot in the alley of Wall Street—$300 trillion.

Where is the money? Where is the enforcer to make sure that the bet against Greece and the bet against the price of oil is going to be backed up? It's not there. It is the shell game of all shell games. There are no assets. I was the insurance commissioner, and we understood a couple of things very clearly: If an insurance company were going to make a bet that something would go wrong, then they had to have the asset to pay if that bet ever came to pass.

That's not the case here. There is no regulation of this market.

Understanding the need for this back in the 1930s, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission was established to make sure that, if bets were made on the future price of grain, somebody would be able to pay if that bet had to be paid off. It worked okay until the great period of deregulation. Let's understand the definition of ''insanity.'' It's when you repeat what you did before and expect a different answer.

This bill is asking us to, once again, repeat the deregulation of the derivative market by defunding, not providing adequate funding, for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. We are betting that things are going to work out, that this $300 trillion of notional value out there in the derivative market is somehow going to work out okay. We learned in 2007 and 2008 that it doesn't work out okay—literally collapsing the entire financial market of the world.

Okay. Speculation? Let it rip. We did that once before. It is insanity to assume that this time it's going to work out okay.

This amendment puts back in the necessary money for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to adequately regulate a huge market beyond the imagination of all of us. We need

this money. We need the systems in place to make sure that this derivative market is adequately regulated so that we do not, once again, find this Nation bailing out or falling into a great recession and depression yet again.

Mr. KINGSTON. Will my friend yield for a minute?

Mr. GARAMENDI. No, I don't think so because, I suspect, I'm pretty much out of time.

Let us understand what is at stake here. It is the very nature of our economy to be able to survive in an era of rapid speculation that has driven up the price of oil. We know from Goldman Sachs and we know from the CEO of Exxon that some $20 of the $100-per-barrel oil price today is speculation. We can take a look at the other markets where speculation is also running rapid, and it is the Commodity Futures Trading Commission that is specifically under Dodd-Frank required to rein in the excesses of this market, to end the speculation, to ultimately make a rational market out there for the futures market.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. NUGENT. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NUGENT. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I want to point out to my friend from California of a number of the previous speakers who keep speaking about the DeLauro amendment. The DeLauro amendment does not do anything. We accept the DeLauro amendment, but I'm not sure that the folks over there who are speaking for the DeLauro amendment have read the DeLauro amendment because, if they had, they would know that it does nothing to restore the funding.

I will be glad to yield to my friend from California because I understand your speech was right, but that's not what the amendment did.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida controls the time.

Mr. NUGENT. I reclaim my time, and yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Let us understand that the underlying bill does not provide the necessary money for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to conduct the necessary oversight and regulations to adequately control the derivative market.

Are we in agreement on that?

Mr. NUGENT. I reclaim my time, and yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. We are not in agreement on that. No, I did not support the Dodd-Frank bill, and I can tell you some of the problems with it.

The gentleman sounds like somebody who has studied the CFTC; but as you know, of the many rules which they are planning to implement under Dodd-Frank, some of them actually were implied under Dodd-Frank and not specifically laid out. A number of them have no cost-benefit analysis, and a number of them will strap American companies and not the Asian or the European markets.

□ 2050

The reason why that is important is because you are a market. You know, it is not like a manufacturing plant where you are making automobiles or tanks or something like that. The commodity business is more computers. So if you change the rules in an international marketplace where American companies have to deal with things at one level and their Asian and European counterparts and competitors don't have to, then what is going to happen is these companies are going to go overseas.

We keep talking about jobs, and the gentleman knows that this is the one-year anniversary of the summer of recovery, when I guess we were—I am not sure what we were celebrating last year because the jobs were not created. But this runs off jobs, and that is what we are concerned about.

The CFTC has averaged four regulations a year, and this year they want to put in 36 regulations. I am concerned about the cost-benefit analysis. I am concerned that American companies will have a different set of rules than their competitors. I am concerned about the overreach. I am concerned about the way the rulemaking sequence is going.

The gentleman also knows there is a lot of terms that they haven't even defined, like who is a swap dealer, a mega-swap dealer, a swap participant. And, by the way, I am not trying to filibuster. I think that franchise does not go to the Republican Party tonight.

Mr. NUGENT. I reclaim my time, if you would allow me to speak just for a second.

States and counties and cities have figured out that they don't have the money to spend. America has got to figure out, the Federal Government has to figure out that we in fact have to cut spending. I hear this across the aisle all the time, that we all agree that America has a debt of over $14 trillion and a deficit of over $1.4 trillion.

We hear the same arguments, but we never hear how are we going to do it, other than one gentleman that was up here earlier that said we just need to raise taxes. That is the answer to all of our problems. That is not the answer. The answer to our problems is really about using the dollars that we have, spending them efficiently and looking at ways to maybe work harder with less.

I will tell you, as a sheriff, we had to cut our budget and we worked harder with less. And, do you know what? The Federal Government doesn't believe in that. The Federal Government believes that how we solve a problem is to throw more people at it, to spend more money. And I think what the American people were telling us, what the American people told us back in November, was that we have got to get our house in order. We have got to get our spending under control. It is not about taxing us to death. It is not about over-regulating us. It is about bringing common sense back into the Federal Government that has been sorely lacking.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Hawaii is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the irresponsible cuts this bill makes to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission budget and in support of the DeLauro amendment which allows us to debate this issue.

These cuts to CFTC indicate that the majority believes that CFTC can carry out its duties with even less funding this year than they had last year, or that their duties aren't of great importance to the American people to begin with.

For those of us who may have forgotten, the financial crisis was the result of some very bad bets, bets made by Wall Street firms in the unregulated $300 trillion derivatives market. The bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers, the collapse of the mortgage market, and the bailout of AIG and other firms are all a result of these bad bets. The 14 million unemployed, the still weak job market, and the tremendous loss of hard-earned home equity and retirement savings are also a result of these bad bets. That is why we worked so hard this last Congress to pass the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. This act gives CFTC tremendous responsibility for making sure that the public never again has to bail out the Wall Street firms that rolled the dice with taxpayers ending up holding the bag.

CFTC's new responsibilities are important, and so is the job that CFTC already does. The current role of the CFTC is to regulate the commodity futures and options markets in the United States. What began as a market for buying and selling agricultural products has become a complex, wide-ranging market for financial contracts. These contracts are based on commodities like oil, wheat, livestock, metal, and cotton, the types of products that we all use every single day. We have to prevent unnecessary increases in the cost of these necessities, increases brought about by speculation.

Preventing speculative price increases for basic necessities is vital to consumers in Hawaii. As the only island State in the Nation, we must import 85 percent of our food and 90 percent of the oil we use for energy. We know what $6 a gallon gasoline is like in some parts of my district, and we constantly face higher prices than the mainland for food.

So I am strongly opposed to underfunding CFTC, the cop on the beat that watches out for price manipulation. Without a strong CFTC, prices will increase for our basic necessities while speculators pocket millions of dollars. Make no mistake about that. We know this is true because the oil executives, themselves, have told us this is so. At a recent congressional hearing, the Exxon CEO testified that oil should ''only'' cost—''only,'' that should be in quotations—$60 to $70 a barrel. Instead, the price has hovered around $100. Why? Because of speculation.

Clearly, to protect the public from fraud, manipulation, abusive practices, and systemic risks, we need to fully fund the President's request for CFTC. This bill not only cuts $30 million from the current CFTC budget, it seeks to deny the agency the vital resources that it needs to meet its new responsibilities under Dodd-Frank. This bill is a de facto repeal of Dodd-Frank. What the Republican majority can't do up front, which is repealing Dodd-Frank, they are seeking to do by the back door by making sure CFTC can't do its job as the cop on the beat.

To keep things in perspective, the Republicans are taking a meat ax to people's programs to address the $14 trillion debt, and yet they are perfectly happy to give Wall Street traders a $300 trillion unregulated playground. Talk about going backwards. Cutting the funding for an agency with such important responsibilities is a roll of the dice, and, again, the people of America will be the ones who lose.

Once again I ask: Where do we live—on Wall Street, which is where cutting CFTC is, or on Main Street, where the rest of us live?

I urge my colleagues to vote against the underlying legislation and the defunding of CFTC.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I am listening to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and I am really saying to myself, who are they kidding? They are saying that this effort to cut the CFTC is for deficit purposes because, of course, all agencies have to be cut in the name of cutting the deficit. But you have to look at everything, every cut and every agency in terms of what it actually does.

And we all know, we all know what the GOP is up to. The Republicans side with big banks and Wall Street and big insurance companies and Big Oil and against the middle class. So here we go again. They are siding with the Wall Street speculators and the profiteers by cutting the CFTC.

Well, what does the CFTC do? It is responsible for policing commodities trading and speculation, including oil and food products. Well, I have to tell you, last week we were at home, we weren't in session, and what did I hear from my constituents? All of them are very concerned about the price of oil going up and about the price of food going up. So you are basically taking money out of the middle class people's pockets.

□ 2100

The average American has got to pay more for oil because of speculation. And more for their food. And it hurts the economy because if people have to pay more money for that, then industry, for example, has to pay more if they want to function, because the oil costs more. And it has a downward effect on the economy. It not only impacts individual people and our constituents who can't afford to pay more for gasoline and for food, but it also has a downward impact on the economy itself because it means that businesses don't expand, they don't invest, and as a consequence we don't recover from the recession.

The Agriculture appropriations bill reduces CFTC funding by $136 million. That's from the President's request. What it essentially does is cripple the agency's ability to do its job. And make no mistake about the Republican intentions. They're defunding. And that's the same as deregulation. And deregulation will allow the speculators and profiteers to engage in the same reckless actions that caused the financial meltdown on Wall Street. The end result with commodities is higher gas prices and higher food prices. The Wall Street speculators get rich while everyone else pays at the pump and the grocery store. The speculators treat the markets like a casino, but the risk of another market meltdown is harm to everyone else.

Some industry experts say that speculators have added $15 to a barrel of oil. Goldman Sachs put the figure higher at $27 a barrel. The bottom line is that the Dodd-Frank bill brought more oversight to Wall Street and provided resources to empower the CFTC to police speculators. The Republicans are trying to cripple the CFTC by slashing its funding so much that it would force layoffs of one-third to one-half of its staff. They're not doing this because they're trying to save money, save the taxpayers' money, trying to the reduce the deficit. They're doing it because they want to cripple this agency, force layoffs of one-third to one-half of its staff.

In case there are any doubts about the Republicans' motives, they're also pushing legislation that would delay all the reform measures in Dodd-Frank. Terms like derivatives, leveraged positions, future markets, buying long and buying short, these are foreign to many Americans, but it's a vocabulary of practices that can be abused as easily as they are used. Most Americans know that allowing Wall Street bankers to run wild contributed to financial chaos and the recession. What they need to know and what we're stressing more and more on the floor is that allowing commodity traders to run wild contributes to higher gas and food prices.

I am shocked, frankly—I shouldn't be, but I am—that my colleagues on the other side, when you go home, didn't you hear complaints about higher gas prices? Didn't you hear people complaining about higher food prices? That's what I heard when I went home. People want us to stand up for them. They want us to stand up for the little guy. They don't want us to stand up for the speculators. They don't want us to stand up for those people that caused the recession to begin with. And by doing this, all you're doing is prolonging the pain—the pain for the average American who's got to pay these higher prices and the downward impact on the economy. Because we know in the last couple weeks that the economy is struggling once again. We were starting to recover. But now signs are not good. So why in the world would you try to contribute to the same problem that caused this recession to begin with? A very simple answer: All you care about are the big banks, Wall Street, the big insurance companies, and Big Oil. The special interests. That's who you're for, and that's who you're always going to be for.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Chairman, this underlying bill muzzles the Federal watchdog agency now responsible for regulating agriculture, energy, and financial markets while letting speculators run loose. By cutting 44 percent from the President's budget request for the CFTC, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission that we've been talking about, we're saying it's just okay to have fewer and less qualified regulators to protect us from market abuses, to protect our constituents from market abuses. Haven't we learned any lessons?

Speculation on Wall Street has caused massive harm on Main Street. Not sufficiently funding the CFTC will hamper our efforts to recover from the recession and hinder middle class prosperity. Commodity futures and options markets are complicated systems. We know that. They require a complicated skill set to understand. Some of the smartest people are engaged in doing this. But this bill ensures that the playing field is tilted toward those who are in favor of the same risky practices that led to the financial crisis.

Without full funding the CFTC will have 159 fewer full-time employees and an inability to procure the technology needed to properly regulate the derivatives market. If the last 5 years has taught us anything, we need more consumer protections, not more market speculation that will drive up gas prices, food prices, and play Russian roulette with our financial system.

What is disturbing, Mr. Chairman, is that this bill continues the House majority's assault on lower- and middle-income families who are struggling to put food on the table and gas in their cars. I cannot support, I will not support, a bill that refuses to protect American families. And so I urge my colleagues to please review this bill carefully and join me in opposition.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TONKO. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I rise today in support of my colleague from Connecticut to properly fund the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, otherwise known as the CFTC. All eyes are upon us. Well, at least we hope they are. Unfortunately, the regulatory eyes of the speculating process are slowly being closed. The CFTC represents the cops on the beat, the regulators in charge of overseeing Wall Street speculators, the eyes of the watchdog, specifically as it relates to the price of oil we're asked to pay.

Let me be clear. Without a proper cop on the beat, the roads are not safe and wrongdoers will get away with whatever mischief they can. In the same way, without a cop on the beat of Wall Street, oil speculators will run rampant and drive the cost of oil and gasoline even higher than it is today. Make no mistake. Fluctuating oil prices with extremely high peaks make many on Wall Street extremely rich. But their gain becomes our loss. Their profit drains our pockets. Their greed causes our pain. Their joy drives our sticker shock at the pump, estimated to increase the cost per gallon by some 67½ cents due to speculation.

To his credit, President Obama has asked for increasing the investment in cop count on the beat of speculators. Not only does the Republican bill reduce the President's request, but it ends up providing less funds than we have available this year, all while the CFTC is supposed to prepare itself to take on the enhanced powers and responsibilities granted to it under the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform bill. This will mark the third time this year that House Republicans will vote to effectively cripple the CFTC by draining funds it needs to do its job.

Since 1990, the number of oil speculators has more than doubled—from 30 percent of the market to nearly 70 percent today. Even oil executives admit that oil prices are higher than they should be, with Exxon CEO Rex Tillerson recently testifying before Congress that a barrel of oil should cost some $60 to $70 based solely on supply and demand, not the $100 like it is today. Yet the Republicans are once again choosing Wall Street over Main Street. This bill chooses more pain at the pump over reason and fairness.

The world's largest commodity trader, Goldman Sachs, recently admitted that speculation was to blame for higher oil prices, telling its clients that it believes speculators, like itself, had artificially driven the price of oil as much as $27 higher than supply and demand would dictate. Nearly 90 percent of all traders betting on rising prices are speculators, while about 12 percent of those bets were held by producers, merchants, processors, and users of the commodity.

Our families and small businesses simply cannot afford the Wild, Wild West of Wall Street that runs roughshod over our wallets and family budgets. That is why I commend my colleague from Connecticut for her leadership on this issue and implore this body to increase the number of cops on the beat, not lessen them. And who wins in this scenario? The profit-rich oil industry, which is on pace to make over $100 billion in profit this year alone.

□ 2110

And who loses? You got it—working families and middle class Americans that work hard and play by the rules and now are asked to pay for this free rein that keeps driving up prices.

We cannot keep mindlessly handing billions of tax breaks to big oil companies that don't need it while they're raking in record profits at our expense. Again, we simply can't afford it.

The best way we can control gas prices is by developing alternative technologies that will drive down our demand and compete in the marketplace. We can better use the billions going to oil companies in the form of tax breaks on clean energy alternatives that have the potential to make a real impact on our energy costs and on our wallets and will create jobs in the process.

With that, Mr. Chair, I urge a ''no'' vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I rise to support the gentlelady from Connecticut's amendment and thank her for her vision.

I thank my good friend from Georgia who is the chairman of this committee, and I thank the manager who has represented our good friends very well tonight. I thank them for their courtesies. And I thank our ranking member, Mr. FARR, for his passion about ensuring that every person in America has an opportunity for good and healthy food. The Agriculture Department and the work that the Agriculture Department does is both domestic and international.

But today we rise because there is an inequity and an unfairness. It is complicated to discuss something called the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. What is that and how does that have an impact on making sure that Americans have a quality of life that they are deserving of, hard-working, everyday Americans that get up at the sign of dawn and carpool their children and go to work and return at the end and attempt to be able to provide for their families? The Commodity Futures Trading Commission is that arbiter. It's the entity that will implement the consumer protection and armor that was given during the Dodd-Frank legislation.

And how in the world can you work on behalf of consumers and Americans if the legislation that is before us obliterates this commission, eliminates 600 positions that would allow these hard-working Americans to gain what they deserve? And what is that? A better quality of life.

I am glad my good friend from New York cited the energy industry as recognizing themselves that the price of oil has gone beyond reason, that the gasoline prices have gone beyond reason. But who is gaining? Speculators whom you cannot see. You couldn't find a speculator if you tried. And that is the purpose of a commodity trading commission, which is to find the individuals that want to cripple the system and make sure that the American public suffers.

Look at this document that I'm holding in my hand. It lists the States and the districts that have the highest degree of poverty, States and districts that, in essence, have individuals who do not eat, for example, who have to borrow from one payment or one bill to take care of another need. So maybe the electric bill goes or the home mortgage or the rent goes so they can actually feed their families. Or they put the car up and cannot get to work because they cannot afford the gasoline.

This is what the underfunding of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission will do. It will pile onto people who cannot afford any more pile-on; 600 workers taken away from implementing legislation and laws that protect the consumer from the daggers of high gasoline prices, the daggers from high food prices, and the daggers from a poor quality of life.

There are people in the United States that go hungry. And in talking to seniors while I was home, you cannot understand their life until you talk to them one on one. When they get their benefits that they worked so hard for and they have to parcel out dollars for their needs and they go to the grocery store and the food prices are soaring, that is speculation. That's the speculators raising food prices. So seniors can't eat. Families that are on a single income, disabled persons, single parents, they can't have a nutritious meal; compounding them with the high costs of moving around, gasoline prices, the high cost of rent, and, of course, the difficulty sometimes in finding work.

Let me say this. This administration and Democrats have been working hard to shove jobs out on this economy. And if you listen to the economists, they

believe that as bad as it is and how sympathetic we are and how we know that we can't rest, that we've got to put a jobs bill out here, there is some suggestion that those businesses will be hiring because we've tried to make sure that we study the economy. Do you think they'll be hiring with 600 jobs thrown out of the commodity commission that is supposed to regulate to ensure that consumers can get the best deal; that if you do get a job, you can pay for the gasoline; that if you're in need of a healthy meal, you can go to a grocery store and actually pay for it because the speculators haven't raised the prices of food?

This is what we are talking about when we are arguing against the underlying bill and the elimination of $136 million to devastate this commission so that consumers cannot be protected.

Mr. Chairman, it's time to recognize who's boss. It is the American people. And I like them being a boss. I'm going to stand with my boss, the good boss, and fight for them to be protected. This bill does not do that.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. I yield to the gentlewoman from Connecticut.

Ms. DELAURO. I thank the gentleman.

In 2002, Warren Buffett called derivatives ''financial weapons of mass destruction.'' As Wall Street firms used these derivatives to construct highly leveraged speculative positions in 2008, these positions generated losses so large across the financial system that the Federal Government bailed out Wall Street to prevent a financial and an economic collapse. The cost of the bailout was $800 billion. By choosing not to sufficiently fund the CFTC, and we are talking about $130 million, the Republicans are ensuring average American taxpayers will once again have to bail out their friends on Wall Street potentially to the tune of $800 billion.

Tonight on this floor, we heard a colleague say that the savings to the Navy in taking speculative trading out of the market would result in billions of dollars saved with regard to the cost of fuel. We are talking about $130 million to protect taxpayers.

The 2012 Defense bill is $118 billion for two wars the American people did not support. The previous administration spent hundreds of billions of dollars without paying for it, and this majority is unwilling to pay $136 million to prevent another financial collapse.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle like to think that they're talking seriously about deficit reduction, about a country going broke, and that what they're here to do is to save money.

Well, in trying to save $130 million, why don't we, once again, take a look at the $8 billion that we supply for agricultural subsidies, not to small farms like dairy farms in my community or specialty crop farms, but to big agribusiness? What about the $8 billion to the multinational corporations to take their jobs overseas? Why aren't we closing that loophole? What about the $41 billion to the oil industry where they're reaping profits hand over fist and speculating, driving up the costs so that American taxpayers cannot afford to go to work, can't afford to get their kids to school?

That's what this is about. If you're really serious about it, do not permanently extend the tax cuts to the wealthiest 1 percent of the people in this country. That costs $750 billion, none of which is paid for. It only adds to the deficit.

□ 2120

You do not want to spend $130 million tonight. This is a false construct. The people of this country see right through what it is you're doing, and it is about protecting banks. It's about protecting the oil interests. It's about protecting the oil companies—that's where you come down—and not protecting the American people and American families who are struggling, struggling day in and day out to be able to provide a decent economic future and security for their family.

Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the DeLauro amendment.

The underlying bill slashes Commodity Futures Trading Commission funding to levels well below what is needed to implement the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. Dodd-Frank will ensure the CFTC receives information on swap trading and it also directs the CFTC to set position limits on swaps and futures. These provisions are crucial to monitoring and understanding the role of speculation in the energy commodity markets.

Oil rose above $140 per barrel in the summer of 2008, only to fall below $40 per barrel six months later. The prices of commodities rise and fall; however, it is difficult to explain a 70 percent price drop without wondering about the role of speculators. Just 10 years prior to that oil shock, in 1998, hedgers—producers or commercial users of commodities who use the markets to offset price risk—outnumbered speculators by a ratio of three to one. Now speculators outnumber hedgers by a ratio of four to one.

CFTC Commissioner Barton Chilton feels that the increased amount of speculation in the market is a reason to put limits on speculation. CFTC Chairman Gary Gensler has stated that it is necessary to ''address excessive speculation through aggregated position limits.'' Even Goldman Sachs reported that speculators could be driving up oil prices by up to $27 per barrel, saying that there was an eight to 10 cent increase in the price of oil for every million barrels of oil held by speculators.

With all this in mind, I cannot understand why Congress would move to handcuff the CFTC. Earlier this year, oil topped $110 per barrel and gas prices hit $4 per gallon. Previous oil price spikes have come in the summer, and already in April working families had to make tough decisions as gas prices approach the all-time high. While speculators may not be the single driving force behind dramatically increasing oil and gas prices, I do believe their role is not insignificant and that we must ensure the CFTC has the resources it needs to keep speculators in check.

I believe it is unconscionable that while Americans face the prospect of a summer of record-high oil prices, this bill would deny funding to the CFTC for putting in place position limits that could help deter, detect, and measure any inappropriate speculation that might drive up the costs of oil.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the amendment by Representative DELAURO to H.R. 2112, the FY 2012 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, which would fully fund the Commodities Futures Trading Commission (CFTC). By gutting funding for the CFTC, the underlying bill would fulfill the Republican agenda of dismantling the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010.

As Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Capital Markets and Government Sponsored Enterprises, I am very concerned that in the absence of this amendment, we will continue to see the same unregulated, unchecked, and unmitigated speculation in the derivatives market that led to the financial collapse, the impacts of which included:

Over $10 trillion in household wealth destruction, with the average household losing 23 percent of its stored wealth;

Nearly 10 million lost jobs;

Wage losses of approximately $3,250 per household;

12 million expected foreclosures; and

A 30 percent peak to trough decline in home prices.

Moreover, by underfunding the CFTC, this bill would contribute to the high gas prices that are already harming our economy and our constituents. The CFTC wants to set position limits on speculative trading, including speculation on gasoline. Without adequate funding, the CFTC will not be able to do this.

We know that consumers felt the pain of runaway speculation at the pump. According to a recent poll by the Associated Press, 71 percent of Americans said rising prices will cause some hardship for them and their families, including 41 percent who called it a serious hardship. While gasoline prices have recently declined—several weeks ago the average cost of a gallon of gasoline in Los Angeles was $4.27—if speculation on gasoline rises to the levels it was several weeks ago, gasoline prices will shoot back up.

According to Goldman Sachs, speculation on gasoline alone added $20 to the price of a barrel of oil. The CFTC has a proposed rule that would prevent this type of abuse. But by underfunding the CFTC, H.R. 2112 would stop that rule, an action that will ensure that our constituents continue to feel pain at the pump.

As you can see, Mr. Chair, it is our constituents who suffer the consequences of unregulated derivatives. Underfunding the CFTC is not only irresponsible, it is a slap in the face to the taxpaying Americans that bailed out the institutions that cost them their retirement funds, their jobs, and their homes.

This is why I support the amendment by the gentlewoman from Connecticut. If her amendment is not adopted, passage today of H.R. 2112 will come at the expense of these Americans, who will see higher oil prices as a direct result of this bill.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. DELAURO

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 2, line 14, after the aggregate dollar amount insert ''(reduced by $200,000)''.

Page 3, line 4, after the dollar amount insert ''(reduced by $300,000)''.

Page 3, line 10, after the dollar amount insert ''(reduced by $100,000)''.

Page 3, line 19, after the dollar amount insert ''(reduced by $300,000)''.

Page 7, line 17, after the dollar amount insert ''(reduced by $50,000)''.

Page 8, line 7, after the dollar amount insert ''(reduced by $50,000)''.

Page 51, line 18, after the aggregate dollar amount insert ''(increased by $1,000,000)''.

Page 53, line 17, after the dollar amount insert ''(increased by $1,000,000)''.

Ms. DELAURO (during the reading). I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Connecticut?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. My amendment would transfer $1 million to the Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition at the Food and Drug Administration. The funding would come from the U.S. Department of Administration from several of the administrative accounts: Office of the Secretary, the Chief Economist, Budget and Program Analysis, Chief Information Officer, Office of Communication, and General Counsel. The intent is that it will be used to protect the American public from E. coli sickness originating from FDA-regulated foods. This is something we have to do. Our primary responsibility as the people's representatives is to protect the health and safety of American families, and the current funding level for the FDA in this bill puts these at risk.

We know that food-borne illnesses are always a major public health threat. They account for roughly 48 million illnesses, 100,000 hospitalizations, and over 3,000 deaths in our country each year. Put another way, one in every six Americans becomes sick from the very foods they eat each year.

Specific to E. coli, well over 200,000 sicknesses every year are because of this one type of food-borne bacterial sickness, and the threat of a more serious outbreak is also very real. Right now in Europe we are witnessing just such a lethal outbreak. In Germany, thousands have been affected, hundreds have become sick, and 37 have died from an E. coli outbreak. Just this morning, a 2-year-old German boy perished from kidney failure as a result of E. coli poisoning, which authorities think began with raw bean sprouts in northern Germany.

This sort of fatal outbreak could all too easily happen here. In many ways, we have been extraordinarily lucky that it has not happened more often. In recent years, all types of food have become contaminated and forced into recall from Froot Loops to SpaghettiOs and salami to eggs. We have to be continually vigilant on the food safety front to keep families safe.

That is also why we passed the Food Safety Modernization Act last year, to give FDA the tools to better respond to food-borne illness outbreaks and to hold industrial food production facilities to higher standards. But for no budgetary purpose to speak of, this legislation would undo all of these overdue and much-needed improvements.

In so doing, it effectively ties the hands of the FDA, ensures it will not have the funds to implement or enforce the Food Safety Modernization Act or to fulfill its mandate to guard against contaminated foods. Once again, we will be stuck with the status quo, and that status quo means that people will continue to become sick and people may die.

With so much food coming in from overseas, we should be improving our food safety system right now. For example, the GAO recently issued a report highlighting the shortcomings in our ability to ensure the safety of imported seafood.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this amendment to restore $1 million in funding to food safety efforts at the FDA. We should be doing more, not less, to keep our fridges and our kitchen tables safe.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. And I wanted to say food safety is something that we all place a very high priority on and we're very concerned about, and we have been watching this situation in Europe daily as we're all concerned, and our prayers are with the people who have suffered and those who have died.

I do want to read a quote that Secretary of USDA Mr. Vilsack said yesterday, and I will just quote: Secretary John Vilsack said he is ''reasonably confident'' that U.S. consumers won't face the same sort of E. coli outbreak now plaguing Germany. And we're doing a lot and have done a lot in the last 15 years to make sure that we address potential E. coli infection. For example, the type of ground beef that has had a repeated problem with it has actually been cut in half.

Also, I want to say I do have concerns about the FDA implementation of food safety. We hear quite often that 48 million people have suffered from food-borne illnesses—a very high number, a number that we're all very concerned about—but only 20 percent of these are from known pathogens. If you look at it even further, 60 percent of the illnesses from known pathogens come from norovirus.

And how do we address this? Well, CDC said on March 4, to update the norovirus, that appropriate hand hygiene is the likely most single important method to prevent norovirus infection and control transmission. Reducing any norovirus present on hands is accomplished by thorough hand washing with running water and plain antiseptic soap.

Now, in the FDA 630-page budget request, there was not one single mention of norovirus. I would ask anybody, isn't that odd to you? That's something we need to be concerned about. Why would they not mention that, if nearly 60 percent of the illnesses are from norovirus?

Second highest cause of illness is from salmonella. And under the authority that FDA had before the Food Safety Modernization Act and the authority that the FDA has right now, they finalized the salmonella egg rule in July of last year, almost a year ago. According to the FDA's own press release, FDA said that as many as 79,000 illnesses and 30 deaths due to consumption of eggs contaminated with salmonella may be avoided each year with new food safety requirements. They have that authority right now, and that was last year's budget. They can still do it this year with this budget.

The third highest cause of food-borne illness comes from crossbreeding, and crossbreeding is mentioned one time in FDA's 2012 budget request as it was related to food defense. And the reason why this is important is because the FDA always seems to be ready to take on new initiatives, and yet it doesn't seem to be tackling the food safety challenges that we have right now in an orderly fashion under its current budget.

Now, the CDC statistics, which we got through hearings, go back to that 48 million food-borne illnesses a year, 128,000 hospitalizations, and 3,000 deaths, very high numbers, numbers that we are all concerned about. But if you look at 311 million Americans eating three meals a day, that would be 933 million meals eaten daily or 340 billion eaten each year. If you do the math on this, the food safety rate is 99.9 percent safe.

Why is that relevant? Because something's working without the FDA and without the USDA and without the nanny state saying we're in charge of everything. And that's how the private sector—the private sector is a dirty word for many people in Washington, D.C. But food processing companies are very concerned about food safety and their customers' safety, because the way you keep your customers coming back to buy more is to keep them happy, and that means to keep them safe.

□ 2130

And it would be hard for me to believe that some of the leading companies in America, such as McDonald's or Burger King or Coca-Cola, have anything on their minds except for food safety.

So I appreciate the gentlewoman offering this amendment, but it's only $1 million. And if it were a serious amendment, certainly it would be more than that. But based on what we've seen so far, I don't think this amendment is going to do anything.

[From USA TODAY]

VILSACK: U.S. LARGELY SAFE FROM EUROPEAN E. COLI OUTBREAK

(By Dan Vergano)

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said he is ''reasonably confident'' that U.S. consumers won't face the same sort of E. coli outbreak now plaguing Germany.

But the European episode ''reinforces that we need to remain vigilant here about food safety,'' Vilsack said Monday, speaking with the USA TODAY editorial board.

Public health experts, however, warned that another serious outbreak in the U.S. is just a matter of time and luck.

''Could it happen here? It already has,'' says infectious-disease expert Larry Lutwick of SUNY-Downstate College of Medicine in Brooklyn, citing past U.S. outbreaks that involved strains of E. coli other than the one that has struck Germany.

He points to last year's romaine lettuce-related outbreak of an E. coli strain that sickened 26 people, and the 2006 fresh spinach-related episode that hospitalized 199 people in 26 states.

In Germany, officials backtracked Monday for the second time in a week and said testing ruled out bean sprouts from an organic farm as the possible source for the outbreak that has killed 22 people and sickened more than 2,330 people across Europe. Testing earlier ruled out cucumbers from Spain as the culprit.

''This investigation has been a disaster,'' Michael Osterholm, director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota, tells the Associated Press.

''This kind of wishy-washy response is incompetent,'' he says, accusing German authorities of casting suspicion on cucumbers and sprouts without firm data.

Some U.S. health experts say government assurances face constant trials.

''Food isn't just grown locally, it comes from all over the world, which poses a lot of challenges'' for food safety, says epidemiologist Elaine Scallan of the University of Colorado-Denver. She notes the current system heavily relies on rapid responses to outbreaks but is not as well positioned to prevent them.

''We are relying on state and local health departments to pick up these outbreaks, just like their equivalents in Europe,'' she said.

In January, President Obama signed a food safety act ramping up Food and Drug Administration authority to police food imports.

But Caroline Smith DeWaal of the Center for Science in the Public Interest warns those inspections may be cut in the ongoing congressional budget battle.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Connecticut will be postponed.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE OF TEXAS

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 2, line 14, after the dollar figure, insert ''(increased by $25,000,000)''.

Page 5, line 5, after the dollar figure, insert ''(reduced by $25,000,000)''.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order on the gentlewoman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

The gentlewoman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I thank the distinguished chairman from Georgia, who I am hoping will be inclined to recognize the importance of this amendment and work with those of us who are interested in healthy food.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment would fund and seek to have the Secretary of Agriculture focus on the healthy food funding initiative. This initiative would increase the availability of affordable healthy foods in underserved urban and rural areas and, as well, particularly through the development or equipping of grocery stores and other healthy food retailers.

We call these ''food deserts.'' And the reason why I am standing next to this tragic picture of the disasters that have hit the American public is to emphasize what Americans go through. In this instance, we see a disaster of unbelievable proportion, from Missouri to Alabama to the flooding that occurred up and down the Mississippi. I can assure you that these individuals are suffering from the lack of access to healthy food. We've got to get them back on their feet.

This idea of food deserts impacts rural and urban areas, but it also impacts the millions of Americans, thousands upon thousands of Americans who have recently been impacted by disaster. Everything is gone. And although they are now probably experiencing the distribution of food from food centers sponsored by FEMA and volunteers, they will come back to a food desert. Particularly in the African American and Hispanic communities, for example, food comes from fast foods and convenience stores. And as I indicated before, those fast foods come from, if you will, the places where the expiration dates are sometimes way over the time of expiration.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 80 percent of black women and 67 percent of black men are overweight. African American children from low-income families are at a much higher risk for obesity. Why? Because there is no access or limited access to good food. The CDC also estimates that African American and Mexican American adolescents ages 12 to 19 are more likely to be overweight at 21 percent and 23 percent, respectively.

This amount of money will allow us to focus on the importance of correcting food deserts.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture identified 92 food desert census tracks in Harris County alone, and that is in the 18th Congressional District. These areas are subdivisions of a county with between 1,000 to 8,000 low-income residents, with 33 percent of the people living more than a mile from a grocery store.

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, 32 percent of all children in Texas are overweight or obese. These statistics underscore the staggering effect food deserts have.

I am asking that we look at the idea of ensuring healthy food. Targeting Federal financial assistance to food desert areas through the Healthy Food Finance Initiative will provide more healthy food to affected areas.

We can create jobs, we can help farmers, and we can bolster the development in distressed areas. It is an easy fix, and the fix is to find a way to cooperate, collaborate—not do a handout, not dole out—to make sure that we provide the incentives to come into our areas to ensure that we have a healthy child.

This is a healthy child, we hope, getting access to health care. But I can assure you that their health is based upon not only health care but the food that this little one will eat.

I can tell you, Mr. Chairman, that I represent communities that have the inability to access good food. This initiative will increase the availability of healthy food alternatives to the 23.5 million people living in food deserts nationwide.

We must be reducing the deficit, I agree, but cutting programs that provide healthy food—and create jobs, because it would certainly create jobs by adding access to healthy food and sites for healthy food, meaning grocery stores, farmer's markets. All of those will be part of this initiative. And it would assist the many, many census tracks in Houston, alone, that are now suffering from the lack of access to good food.

Just a picture of green vegetables inspires us to support this amendment. I would ask my colleagues to support this amendment.

I thank the Chairman for this opportunity to explain my amendment to H.R. 2122, which allocates an additional $25 million to the budget of the Office of the Secretary, in order to fund President Obama's Healthy Food Funding Initiative (HFFI).

Funding HFFI will increase the availability of affordable, healthy foods in underserved urban and rural communities, particularly through the development or equipping of grocery stores and other healthy food retailers.

These "food deserts", communities in which residents do not have access to affordable and healthy food options, disproportionally affect African American and Hispanic communities. Fast food restaurants and convenience stores line the blocks of low income neighborhoods, offering few, if any, healthy options.

Many of my colleagues across the aisle have made arguments about the economic climate, and the need for budgetary cuts, and I agree that we must work to reduce the deficit. We cannot, however, continue to make irresponsible cuts to programs for the underserved, lower income families, and minorities.

Since the mid-1970s, the prevalence of overweight and obesity has increased sharply for both adults and children, and obesity is a grave health concern for all Americans. However, food deserts have taken a toll on low income and minority communities and exacerbated growing obesity rates and health problems.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 80 percent of black women and 67 percent of black men are overweight or obese. African American children from low income families have a much higher risk for obesity than those in higher income families.

The CDC also estimates African American and Mexican American adolescents ages 12–19 are more likely to be overweight, at 21 percent and 23 percent respectively, than non-Hispanic white adolescents who are 14 percent overweight. In children 6–11 years old, 22 percent of Mexican American children are overweight, compared to 20 percent of African American children and 14 percent of non-Hispanic white children.

Food deserts have greatly impacted my constituents in the 18th Congressional District, and citizens throughout the State of Texas. Texas has fewer grocery stores per capita than any other State. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) identified 92 food desert census tracts in Harris County alone. These areas are subdivisions of the county with between 1,000 to 8,000 low-income residents, with 33 percent of people living more than a mile from a grocery store.

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, 32 percent of all children in Texas are overweight or obese. These statistics underscore the staggering effect food deserts have on the health of low-income and minority communities. In Houston and other cities across the country, local programs have proved that well targeted funding and assistance can create viable business outcomes and increase access to healthy food.

Targeting federal financial assistance to food desert areas through the Healthy Food Funding Initiative will provide more healthy food to affected neighborhoods, open new markets for farmers, create jobs, and bolster development in distressed communities.

The Healthy Food Funding Initiative is not a handout or a crutch. Funding through this program is intended to provide financial and technical assistance in support of market planning, promotion efforts, infrastructure and operational improvements, and increase availability of locally and regionally produced foods.

This initiative will increase the availability of healthy food alternatives to the 23.5 million people living in food deserts nationwide. Yes, we must work toward reducing the deficit, but cutting programs that provide healthy food to those who simply do not have access to nutritional options, is not the way.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word, and I wanted to object to this and explain the point of order.

The Acting CHAIR. Does the gentleman continue to reserve his point of order?

Mr. KINGSTON. I continue to reserve.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. KINGSTON. The reason is that the amendment may not be considered en bloc under clause 2(f) of rule XXI because the amendment proposes to increase the level of funding and outlays in the bill. And under the House rule, the amendment has to be budget neutral with budget authority and with outlays. This only does one of those.

I know the gentlewoman has worked very hard on this, and that was the intent. But because the budget authority and outlay both have to be considered, that is what the problem is under rule XXI. I know the gentlewoman is an expert in this, has put a lot of time and a lot of compassion in it, and it is something that the committee is not turning our backs on at all. But that's why we're objecting to it.

And I know that my friend from Houston is very passionate on this and will be back again doing other things to try to make sure that we address food deserts and so forth. I appreciate her conviction on that, and I wanted to explain that.

The Acting CHAIR. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the point of order?

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I would, Mr. Chairman.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Texas is recognized.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. First of all, let me thank the ranking member, Mr. FARR, as well as his staff for recognizing the importance of food deserts. And let me thank Mr. KINGSTON. If I might, I would offer, out of your thoughtfulness, I would even ask for the point of order to be waived in the face of 23.5 million individuals who live in food deserts.

I will make the argument, in speaking to the point of order and, particularly, procedurally, of course, that, you know, it was a challenge to be able to frame language that would allow us to address this crisis. So I believe we made every effort to ensure that we were in compliance.

It is my understanding that the language or funding for this initiative was not in this legislation or pulled. We wanted to give the discretion to the Office of the Secretary to not leave places like this, that I just lifted up, disasters, suffering from not having access to food.

I would simply ask the gentleman in this moment when I'm asking for a waiver of the point of order to have the ability to work with this great subcommittee to think of this as a valuable issue and to work on this point that has to do with helping those who live in food deserts.

I yield to the gentleman.

□ 2140

Mr. KINGSTON. I reluctantly have to insist on the point of order. It's actually scored by CBO at $5 million, and that is beyond my authority to waive anything. And it's not a numerical thing. It's just a rule.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Do you have an interest in working together?

Mr. KINGSTON. Let me say, we'll see what we can do. I'm not fully versed on it. But the gentlewoman knows that the door is always open to my office, and we'll continue to work with you. But I do have to insist on the point of order.

The Acting CHAIR. Members may not yield or engage in colloquy on a point of order. The Chair is prepared to rule on the matter.

To be considered en bloc pursuant to clause 2(f) of rule XXI, an amendment must not propose to increase the levels of budget authority or outlays in the bill. Because the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas proposes a net increase in the level of outlays in the bill, as argued by the chairman of the Subcommittee on Appropriations, it may not avail itself of clause 2(f) to address portions of the bill not yet read. The point of order is therefore sustained. The amendment is not in order.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

OFFICE OF TRIBAL RELATIONS

For necessary expenses of the Office of Tribal Relations, $423,000 to support communication and consultation activities with Federally Recognized Tribes, as well as other requirements established by law.

EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ECONOMIST

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Chief Economist, $10,707,000.

NATIONAL APPEALS DIVISION

For necessary expenses of the National Appeals Division, $12,091,000.

OFFICE OF BUDGET AND PROGRAM ANALYSIS

For necessary expenses of the Office of Budget and Program Analysis, $8,004,000.

OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY

For necessary expenses of the Office of Homeland Security, $1,272,000.

OFFICE OF ADVOCACY AND OUTREACH

For necessary expenses of the Office of Advocacy and Outreach, $1,209,000.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Chief Information Officer, $35,000,000.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. FORTENBERRY

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 3, line 19, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(reduced by $1,000,000)''.

Page 39, line 10, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(increased by $1,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Nebraska is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Chairman, before I begin the discussion on the amendment, I'd like to correct the RECORD in regard to something I said earlier. The CFTC budget is actually decreased by a slightly higher amount than the overall Ag budget, rather than a slightly lower amount.

In addition to that, I do wish to address a number of charges laid before the chairman of the Ag Appropriation Committee. We've heard for hours that this bill is about supporting Wall Street, Big Oil and tax breaks at the expense of food security. I think it's very important to note that food security is an important American value. It's important to me. It's important to many of us. So much so that in a time of very tight budgets, this bill actually raises food and nutrition spending by nearly $7 billion, approximately 7 percent more than current levels, because there are many vulnerable Americans out there who now qualify during these very tight economic times.

Secondly, I also wish to reiterate, I did not support the Wall Street bailouts. Many of us didn't, both Democrat and Republicans. Five banks now control more than 50 percent of the deposited assets in this country. Main Street banks, many of whom had no role in the reckless behavior on Wall Street, are now under the constant competitive pressure from those banks that were deemed too big to fail, but in actuality are too big to succeed.

Mr. Chairman, I'd also like to point out that I did not vote for the tax deal passed at the end of last year, an 11th-hour deal that was cobbled together because of the mismanagement of this institutional process. We could have done much better for the American people, both Democrats and Republicans.

So the reality is this is a very difficult process we're in now to right-size our budget and make government more efficient and effective. In that regard, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to offer an amendment that invests in renewable energy in rural America.

Clearly, America needs a bold new energy vision, and this amendment, I believe, can help. A sustainable energy future must include the integration of conservation and new technologies, powered by clean renewable sources such as wind and solar, geothermal, biofuels, and biomass. Increasing our energy portfolio and the diverse range of opportunities available to produce energy domestically is all the more important in light of skyrocketing fuel prices. Rural America should continue to play an important role in this regard.

Specifically, Mr. Chairman, my amendment would transfer $1 million from the United States Department of Agriculture Office of the Chief Information Officer to the Rural Energy For America Program, also known as REAP. While I recognize the importance of funding for the Office of the Chief Information Officer, and its role in providing enhanced technology for the USDA, I believe it is appropriate to transfer a small amount by Federal standards, $1 million, to our Nation's renewable energy efforts.

The REAP program funds a wide range of renewable energy projects that stimulate rural economies, help create jobs, and address environmental concerns. This funding promotes energy efficiency and renewable energy production, and is directed to farming communities and rural small businesses.

Mr. Chairman, renewable energy is changing today's agriculture and rural communities. It is clearly in our national interest to help rural communities integrate a wide variety of renewable energy sources and technology as we move toward energy independence and environmental security.

New development and signs of interest in renewable energy production are booming, Mr. Chairman. This amendment strengthens Congress' resolve to creatively develop new energy options throughout America, and I urge its adoption.

I want to also thank my colleague from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) for his support of this amendment, a native son of Nebraska.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. We do accept the amendment with reservations. I want to say to my friend from Nebraska, he's been working very hard on this amendment, particularly in the last 5 hours. But we had a debate about this in the full committee. Ms. KAPTUR offered an amendment that restored funding for the REAP account. It was my intention to zero it out because I do want to reduce the number of Federal programs that are out there. The full committee did restore it. I'm not sure what $2 million in that account will do.

I do support renewable energy, but I will say that there are dozens of programs and dozens of research channels available to people for renewable energy, particularly in the rural area.

So I want to say to my friend from Nebraska and from Minnesota that we'll accept the amendment, but you need to keep your eye on us because it's not a program I particularly like. And I'm very serious about eliminating as many programs as possible. So we need to continue talking about that.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the gentleman from Georgia, first of all, for his generosity to us. And we certainly understand the position you're coming from.

And I think yes, it's probably a small amount of money, but I think all of us recognize too the need to send a strong clear signal of the importance of these programs to the Senate and let them take a look at it over there.

So with that, I do rise in support of the gentleman's amendment. I want to thank my colleague from Nebraska for his hard work on behalf of all rural communities.

I certainly urge support of this amendment. It restores $1 million to the REAP program. And the gentleman's right. It is a small amount, but these are important programs.

And I'd like to also thank Ms. KAPTUR from Ohio for putting that back in this program. REAP's vitally important for rural communities. Farmers and rural small businesses in my district use REAP grants and loan guarantees to cut their energy bills and improve energy efficiency. REAP allows farmers and small businesses to help move our country to cleaner energy future by building wind, solar, biomass, anaerobic digester, geothermal, and cutting edge technologies that were funded by this.

I think all of us recognize it's far better for us, Mr. Chairman, to get our energy needs and control our energy future from here at home instead of putting our national security, our energy security in the hands of countries that don't like us. We spend $400 billion a year on imported oil from countries that hate us. They'll hate us for free. We can keep the money at home through programs like this, investing in diversity to keep the jobs at home.

And I want to say that I've seen this through the energy manufacturing supply chain in my district, that the spin-off from these jobs in the private sector is incredibly valuable.

□ 2150

Unfortunately, while I think the REAP amendment is a good one, the underlying bill I don't believe reflects the priorities of rural America.

Our farmers and ranchers clearly understand that we've got to tighten our belts, cut our budgets, and become more efficient. I simply think this piece of legislation puts a disproportionate burden on those that are doing so much for this country. A 25 percent cut over the FY10 bill is irresponsible. In fact, I would argue that if it doesn't ensure that a safety net is there, that abundant, safe and affordable food supply that we keep talking about will be put in jeopardy.

This bill decimates farm bill conservation programs, takes money away from proven nutrition programs, and strips, as you heard for the previous 3 hours, the CFTC of critical resources it needs to regulate irresponsible behavior. For that reason, I'm going to have

a difficult time supporting the overall bill.

But I do believe the REAP program does give America a way to move towards energy independence. I have seen these programs that have worked in my district. I believe it lets us take control of our energy future, lets our farmers and ranchers be part of the solution, and lets us get back on the track to prosperity.

So I want to thank the gentleman from Nebraska for his work on this and other issues in rural America, and I truly do thank the gentleman from Georgia for indulging us and for hearing us and letting us put it forward.

Mr. BOSWELL. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of this amendment and to stand up for rural America and our Nation's farmers.

The appropriations bill in front of us today eliminates a program that helps rural communities invest in energy-efficient and renewable energy projects to improve their quality of life and local economies.

The Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) has given Iowa farmers and businesses more than $57 million in grants and $74 million worth of loan guarantees since 1993 when it started, according to the USDA.

The majority of the projects have helped growers purchase higher-efficiency grain drying equipment which saves them thousands in propane costs. Additionally, helps farmers install geothermal heating and cooling systems and wind turbines. Just this year, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the Department would begin award grants to rural gas stations to install gas pumps for ethanol-blended fuel.

Iowa is the largest beneficiary of REAP funds, and I am committed to working with my colleagues in the House and Senate to reach a compromise on its funding. REAP has already been cut by 25 percent for this fiscal year and the majority's intention to reduce its funding from $75 million to $1.3 million is unacceptable.

When the House Appropriations Committee passed this legislation, Members chose to dismantle a program that helps rural communities thrive and their economies grow in order to maintain tax breaks for oil and gas companies and incentives for companies that outsource American jobs. This is not about reducing spending. It is an outright attack on Middle America to protect Corporate America.

I will not stand by as appropriators blindly cut spending in programs that truly grow the economy and support rural businesses and communities.

Every American needs an affordable and accessible food supply grown in the most efficient way possible. Effectively terminating the REAP program will reduce efficiency in food production, increasing prices in the grocery store, and, in the end, hurting every American family, not just rural America.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment which will slowly rebuild the REAP program and send a message to the Senate that this program is important to every American.

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, $5,310,000: *Provided*, That no funds made available by this appropriation may be obligated for FAIR Act or Circular A–76 activities until the Secretary has submitted to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives a report on the Department's contracting out policies, including agency budgets for contracting out.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. SESSIONS

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 3, beginning line 22, strike the proviso relating to FAIR Act or Circular A–76 activities.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chairman, I know that the Federal Government employs some 2 million executive branch, non-postal full-time and permanent employees; 850,000 of these employees hold jobs that are commercial in nature. Of the 850,000 commercial jobs, only a handful have been characterized as government employees or private sector workers who can perform these activities more efficiently and more cost effectively.

My amendment strikes the current insourcing language found in this legislation which, as drafted, would prevent the funds spent by this bill from being used to conduct public-private competitions or to direct A–76 conversions for any program, project or activity within the United States Department of Agriculture without a contracting report to Congress by the Secretary.

Two weeks ago, the House voted in favor of striking similar problematic and anti-competitive A–76 language from H.R. 2017, the Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill. The same change and reversal of bad policy which I undertook at that time should also be implemented in this legislation by striking this anti-competitive, free market language.

The A–76 process provides a valuable option for taxpayers and requires real competition. A former assistant director at USDA, Shawn Kingsbury, managed information technology programs at the Department. Mr. Kingsbury, in his tenure, implemented A–76 by transitioning to the first performance-based project management organization within the USDA, and it resulted in over $100 million in savings.

Without the ability to add competitive insourcing, ballooning deficits and out-of-control spending will continue in our government. It is time that Congress explores and gives all solutions to save taxpayers and the managers of the business in the government their hard-earned money.

The Heritage Foundation has reported that subjecting Federal employee positions which are commercial in nature to a public-private cost comparison will generate on average a 30 percent cost savings regardless of who wins that competition. Rather than preventing market competition that would improve service and lower costs, we should be encouraging agencies to find the best way to deliver services to citizens of this great Nation. The role of government should be to govern, not to operate businesses inside the government.

Our Nation's unemployment rate stands at 9.1 percent. We must allow the private sector the ability to create jobs without an unfair disadvantage. We must get more results for our money.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this commonsense, taxpayer-first amendment and ensure cost-saving competition is available to the managers within this agency. Congress should be looking to use all the tools that it can find to help save taxpayer dollars.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this bill primarily because if it ain't broken, don't fix it.

This has been a law for a long time. It allows our committee and the public to know what the A–76 circular review did. The report is on the Department's contracting-out policies and its budget for contracting out, that information, which Congress has been getting year after year without any problems. The language has been in the bill for many years, and we have always received the report allowing the contracting-out activities to proceed. It hasn't stopped anything.

The language specifically requires a report to go to the authorizing committee reflecting the agreement reached with the former Republican chairman of the Oversight Committee many years ago. It was his amendment that did this.

I have to say personally too that I've done the A–76 circular contracting out. We have a military base in my community, the Defense Language Institute, and the city of Monterey surrounds it. We ended up with an A–76 review, ended up where the city could provide the base operation services much cheaper than the Federal employees on the base, saving the Army about $4 million a year and having much better services delivered.

So, again, delivering this report to Congress seems to me hasn't been a problem for anyone. And it ain't broke, so I don't think we ought to support fixing it with Mr. SESSIONS' amendment.

I urge a ''no'' vote.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas will be postponed.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, $760,000.

OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

For necessary expenses of the Office of Civil Rights, $19,288,000.

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration, $683,000.

AGRICULTURE BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES AND RENTAL PAYMENTS

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For payment of space rental and related costs pursuant to Public Law 92–313, including authorities pursuant to the 1984 delegation of authority from the Administrator of General Services to the Department of Agriculture under 40 U.S.C. 121, for programs and activities of the Department which are included in this Act, and for alterations and other actions needed for the Department and its agencies to consolidate unneeded space into configurations suitable for release to the Administrator of General Services, and for the operation, maintenance, improvement, and repair of Agriculture buildings and facilities, and for related costs, $209,505,000, to remain available until expended; of which $151,396,000 shall be available for payments to the General Services Administration for rent; of which $11,452,000 shall be available for payment to the Department of Homeland Security for building security activities; and of which $46,657,000 shall be available for buildings operations and maintenance expenses: *Provided*, That the Secretary may use unobligated balances from prior years to cover shortfalls incurred in prior year rental payments: *Provided further*, That the Secretary is authorized to transfer funds from a Departmental agency to this account to recover the full cost of the space and security expenses of that agency that are funded by this account when the actual costs exceed the agency estimate which will be available for the activities and payments described herein.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. FARR

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 5, line 5, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $342,000)''.

Page 5, line 10, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $342,000)''.

Page 17, line 25, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $300,000)''.

Mr. FARR (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to waive the reading.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I am offering this amendment to move funding from the Agriculture Building and Facilities and Rental Payments account and investing that money in the Organic Data Initiative.

Organic agriculture is a very important and growing sector of our farm and ranch community. It has continued to grow at a double-digit rate since Congress passed the Organic Act in 1990.

The office collects and disseminates data regarding organic agriculture through the Agricultural Marketing Service, the Economic Research Service, and the National Agricultural Statistics Service. The organic sector should have the same access to data available to all agriculture—a building block to a successful U.S. agricultural economy.

As the industry surpasses $29 billion, this information is vital to maintain stable markets, create proper risk management tools, and negotiate equivalency agreements with foreign governments. It is imperative that we continue to collect information gained by ODI.

The AMS collects organic prices and disseminates the data through Market News Reports.

□ 2200

NASS conducts surveys and collects data used for the Census of Agriculture. The ERS published the consumer survey ''Marketing U.S. Organic Foods: Recent Trends from Farms to Consumers 2009,'' and continues to produce reports which used the data collected by AMS and NASS in addition to surveying Americans about their organic consumption patterns.

This amendment is needed for the following reasons:

The AMS needs to continue to expand organic price reporting services to more commodities and price points and distribute the data through Market News, creating price stability.

The NASS will be collecting more information on organic production in the next agricultural census.

It is needed to understand the size of the organic industry and create risk management tools.

The ERS is continuing organic economic analysis and expanding to include organic trade data needed to expand export markets.

The President's fiscal year 2012 budget requests $300,000 specifically for AMS to continue the collection of and distribution of data.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support this amendment to continue the Organic Data Initiative.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MR. BROUN OF GEORGIA

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 5, line 5, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $20,900,000)''.

Page 5, line 6, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $20,900,000)''.

Page 80, line 2, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $20,900,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. This amendment simply reduces by 10 percent the account for Agriculture Buildings and Facilities and Rental Payments.

My friend from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) and I have partnered to bring this commonsense amendment before the House, and I would like to thank him and his staff for all their hard work.

Mr. Chairman, we are in an economic and fiscal emergency. The Federal Government spends too much money. It is irresponsible and immoral to keep spending beyond our means. Not only do we need to reduce our deficit, but we need to begin to make an impact on eliminating the huge debt that has been accumulating over the last few years.

I greatly appreciate the effort and the difficult decisions the Appropriations Committee must make. That said, we must continue to make meaningful cuts to show the American people and the President that we are serious about controlling spending and serious about the future of our Nation.

I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense amendment. Let's show the American people that we are serious about controlling spending and stopping the outrageous spending that has been going on here in Washington under Democrat as well as Republican leadership. I encourage a ''yes'' vote on this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR (Ms. FOXX). The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. I normally wouldn't oppose this because it cuts from the account that I just tried to cut from, but I only cut $300,000 to pay for something. This amendment cuts $20 million, and it pays for nothing. I just think that that's not a very good proposition.

We have an awful lot of facilities that are around this country. Agriculture is everywhere—in every single

State and in almost every congressional district. I happen to represent the leading agricultural State in the United States—California—where we grow some 40, 50 crops that no other State grows in addition to hundreds and hundreds of other crops, so we need facilities out there.

I know this is an account that is easy to be offset, and as I said, I tackled the same account myself. Yet, since the gentleman opposed my amendment, I think it's only good quid pro quo that I oppose his.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Chairman, I rise in support of the gentleman from Georgia's amendment to cut $20.9 million from the Department of Agriculture's Buildings and Facilities and Rental Payments account and redirect those funds for deficit reduction.

I commend the Appropriations Committee, Chairman ROGERS and Chairman KINGSTON for crafting a bill that is $5.041 billion or 22.6 percent less than the President's FY 2012 budget request, and $2.672 billion or 13.4 percent less than the FY 2011 enacted level. However, I believe the financial catastrophe facing our Nation today requires us to do even more.

Recently, the CBO released their annual Budget and Economic Outlook report which projects that the FY 2011 deficit will reach an all time record high of $1.48 trillion; the third year in a row our Nation's budget deficit has exceeded $1 trillion. Our national debt is a staggering $14.2 trillion, almost more than our entire economy.

We are borrowing nearly 42 cents of every dollar we spend, much of it from the Chinese, and sending the bill to our children and grandchildren. Every child born today already owes $45,500 in debt they didn't create.

Now, more than ever, it is clear that we must be bold and take the steps necessary to tackle the unprecedented deficits and debt facing our country and get our economy moving again. I urge my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to work together on this bill to cut spending where we can, get our fiscal house in order, and protect the American Dream for our future generations.

In light of the looming and ever growing Federal deficit, an amendment like this is simply common sense. It merely cuts $20.9 million a modest cut of only 10 percent; a very measured step that reduces spending without threatening the mission of the Department of Agriculture.

Our country has a spending problem—not a revenue problem; support the Broun Amendment.

Mr. FARR. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BROUN).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses of the Department of Agriculture, to comply with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (42 U.S.C. 9601 et seq.) and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (42 U.S.C. 6901 et seq.), $3,393,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That appropriations and funds available herein to the Department for Hazardous Materials Management may be transferred to any agency of the Department for its use in meeting all requirements pursuant to the above Acts on Federal and non–Federal lands.

DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For Departmental Administration, $23,900,000, to provide for necessary expenses for management support services to offices of the Department and for general administration and other miscellaneous supplies and expenses not otherwise provided for and necessary for the practical and efficient work of the Department: *Provided*, That this appropriation shall be reimbursed from applicable appropriations in this Act for travel expenses incident to the holding of hearings as required by 5 U.S.C. 551–558.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. CLARKE OF MICHIGAN

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 6, line 11, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(reduced by $5,000,000)''.

Page 46, line 22, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(increased by $5,000,000)''.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan (during the reading). Madam Chair, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. This amendment would restore $5 million to the Women, Infants and Children Farmers Market Nutrition Program. This would allow low-income pregnant women and low-income women who have just given birth to purchase food directly from farmers to benefit their young infant children up to age 5.

This is very important in many areas around the country, especially in the area that I represent, the city of Detroit, where you don't really have that many markets around. Many times, families—even young mothers—have to go to gas stations and drug stores just to purchase groceries. That's not acceptable. That really encourages poor eating habits, poor nutrition, and it really increases our health care costs that all of us as taxpayers ultimately bear.

So I urge you to consider this amendment. It's a fair proposal, and it's very cost-effective. It provides low-income mothers and their children with good nutrition, which is the best medicine for health care—helping to get better nutrition to prevent people from getting sick.

The other thing, too, is that, throughout the entire debate on this budget, many of the speakers would say that those who benefit from these programs—low-income women, infants and children—really don't have a voice, so many of us here in Congress have to be their voice. I'd like to say, though, that the people who have benefited from these programs do have a voice.

My mother, Thelma Clarke, was a single parent, and she raised me. She was a child of the Great Depression. Ironically, during the Great Depression, she passed out in her school classroom because of malnutrition. It was during the 1930s, and times were very dire in the city of Detroit. She was experiencing tough economic times all the while I was growing up as a young kid and as a teenager. She vowed what happened to her would never happen to me, so she provided me with all the food I wanted—great meals with groceries that she purchased with food stamps. It worked for our family, so I want to say this, not just about this amendment but about the role of government.

□ 2210

I think the reason why this country is so great, and I thank God that my dad immigrated to this country, the United States, as opposed to another one, we are so great because we understand the value of pooling our tax dollars together to help each other. That makes this country stronger. It provides everyone, everyone, with an equal opportunity. That is what makes this country one of the most extraordinary in modern civilization. So I ask for $5 million. Let's give every child that same chance.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. I was going to ask my friend if he is planning to offer his other amendment. Don't you have another related amendment?

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Well, it relates to a different issue. It deals with food safety, and that comes right after this. It does amend page 6 as well.

Mr. KINGSTON. You don't have anything else on this section of the bill?

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. At least not dealing with this specific subject matter. I do have an amendment that amends this same page, page 6, and page 17, but that deals with reinstating funding on a food safety bill.

Mr. KINGSTON. You are taking from the same account twice?

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Let me consult with our staff here.

Mr. KINGSTON. I wanted to explain to my friend about it. I am uncertain about this current amendment, but

that departmental account, as unglamorous as they are to all of us, has been cut about 15 percent, and then this cuts it, and then your food safety amendment will cut it as well. So that is what my dilemma is at the moment. I don't know if anybody over there has actually heard from the department. I am assuming they are going to be against it.

Also I want to point out to my friend that one of the things that I think our authorizing friends should do is combine this program with food stamps anyhow, because there is duplication and overlap.

I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. FARR. The concern here is that this amendment double dips from the same account. Maybe we can work something out here. Mr. BROUN took money out of this account. I took money out of this account.

Mr. KINGSTON. Reclaiming my time, we were talking earlier about some of the overlaps in these Federal food assistance programs. To me, this is a case where this is a program where there is a lot of overlap with food stamps, and we should look at that, realizing that that is the authorizing committee's jurisdiction. There is not much more that I can do than comment on it.

I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Thank you very much, and I will ask for a vote on this.

Mr. KINGSTON. With that, I withdraw my objection, and we accept the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CLARKE).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. YOUNG OF INDIANA

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 6, line 11, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(reduced by $2,390,000)''.

Page 80, line 2, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(increased by $2,390,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Indiana is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Madam Chair, this amendment is quite simple. The amendment would simply reduce by a modest 10 percent that part of the USDA's budget used for ''general administration and miscellaneous supplies.''

This category of spending is so broadly defined that Washington bureaucrats could use this money as a sort of gift card for these general administration and miscellaneous expenses. My amendment would put over $2 million of the money back into the spending reserve account to reduce our Federal deficit. That, of course, will lead to lower future taxes, lower future interest rates and thus a lower future unemployment rate.

I was sent here by the great people of Indiana's Ninth Congressional District to focus like a laser on creating jobs and to get our Federal spending under control so that we can keep our tax burden low. That will serve to the benefit of businesses and all that work for them around our country. Since being sworn in on January 5, that has been my mission, and I know it has been the singular focus of many of my colleagues.

So this simple amendment advances this mission by trimming more bureaucratic fat from Washington, and it signals to all job creators and to our financial markets that we in Congress are serious, very serious, about cutting unnecessary spending wherever we can find it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. Does any Member wish to speak in opposition to the gentleman's amendment?

If not, the question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CONGRESSIONAL RELATIONS

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations to carry out the programs funded by this Act, including programs involving intergovernmental affairs and liaison within the executive branch, $3,289,000: *Provided*, That these funds may be transferred to agencies of the Department of Agriculture funded by this Act to maintain personnel at the agency level; *Provided further*, That no funds made available by this appropriation may be obligated after 30 days from the date of enactment of this Act, unless the Secretary has notified the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress on the allocation of these funds by USDA agency: *Provided further*, That no other funds appropriated to the Department by this Act shall be available to the Department for support of congressional relations activities.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

For necessary expenses of the Office of Communications, $8,058,000.

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

For necessary expenses of the Office of Inspector General, including employment pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978, $80,000,000, including such sums as may be necessary for contracting and other arrangements with public agencies and private persons pursuant to section 6(a)(9) of the Inspector General Act of 1978, and including not to exceed $125,000 for certain confidential operational expenses, including the payment of informants, to be expended under the direction of the Inspector General pursuant to Public Law 95–452 and section 1337 of Public Law 97–98.

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL

For necessary expenses of the Office of the General Counsel, $35,204,000.

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND ECONOMICS

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics, $760,000.

ECONOMIC RESEARCH SERVICE

For necessary expenses of the Economic Research Service, $70,000,000.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. CHAFFETZ

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 8, line 15, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $43,000,000)''.

Page 8, line 18, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $85,000,000)''.

Page 9, line 5, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $650,000,000)''.

Page 49, line 23, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $1,040,198,000)''.

Page 80, line 2, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $1,818,198,000)''.

Mr. CHAFFETZ (during the reading). I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Utah is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Madam Chair, this amendment deals with three different services within the Department of Agriculture. The idea and the goal of the situation here is that perhaps they could take a reduction in funding, not totally zero them out, and really look at these duplicative programs as being something that can be ultimately unified over the course of time. My amendment simply drives down the cost of these, and the hope and desire is that they will somehow unify to do and accomplish what these duplicative services are. This relates to the Agricultural Research Service, the Economic Research Service, and the National Agriculture Statistics Service.

□ 2220

Now, the one other one that I would also point out that is funded is the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, where we are not suggesting a reduction in the amount. But the overall goal here is to reduce the amount of the expenditure here 50 percent from 2011 and 43 percent from the current bill. I think this is common sense.

We have to make difficult decisions. We recognize the value the Department of Agriculture brings. A lot of people rely on these types of statistics and information that is needed so that we can make sure that we have the very best Department of Agriculture that we can.

But in these tough and difficult economic times, it is imperative that we make difficult decisions. And sometimes that means we are looking at duplicative programs, maybe scaling those back a little bit, and refocusing the mission so that they can actually do what matters most and prioritize their own mission.

So we think it is the financially responsible thing to do. I would urge my colleagues to look closely at this. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. This amendment cuts ERS by $43 million, and that's the Economic Research Service for Agriculture. Then it goes on to cut another $85 million out of the National Agriculture Statistical Service, which is essentially the census of Agriculture. And then it goes on and cuts $650 million out of the Ag Research Service, which is two-thirds of the entire budget—and a budget that is absolutely to keep America competitive.

This is an agrarian world we live in. If we're going to stay ahead of the competition and not have all our food imported, we've got to stay ahead of the curve. That's the think tank, the creativity of America. It's also where we know whether we're getting all the bugs and infestation that's coming in. That's what agriculture research is all about.

It zeroes out the Food for Peace program. My God, in the world that we're living in now, we don't want to have any friends left? It puts all that savings into a spending reduction account, does nothing to help anybody except do a lot of damage for agriculture, for all the economics of agriculture, the research of agriculture, and the Food for Peace program. I think this is a very bad amendment, and I hope we strongly oppose it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Ohio is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JORDAN. I first want to thank the committee, and in particular the chairman of the subcommittee, for the good work he's done on the bill overall. But I support the gentleman from Utah's amendment. Any Member of Congress can do this in their district. You're at any group giving any speech and you say, Do you think maybe there's a little redundancy, maybe a little duplication, maybe a little overlap in the Federal Government? And the whole audience begins to laugh and everyone raises their hand because they get the joke.

In fact, we just had a hearing in the Subcommittee of Oversight dealing with regulation and overspending and the GAO was in there and they had done a study and we asked them, How many different means-tested social welfare programs are there? And they said, Well, we really can't give you a number because we can't tell; it's so ridiculous in government. But there are over a hundred.

They couldn't even tell us. But what they did tell us was there's a lot of redundancy, a lot of duplication, a lot of overlap. The gentleman from Utah's amendment just seeks to deal with that and says, Look, it recognizes a couple of facts. It recognizes that, yes, there is redundancy, but also we're broke. In fact, it's not we're going broke. We are broke. And we have to cut some spending, just like every single family, every single small business in this country has had to do over the last several years.

Remember some of the numbers because at some point something has to give. And we've got to be willing to cut spending. We've got a $14 trillion national debt. We've run trillion-dollar deficits for the last 3 years in a row. The three largest deficits in American history have been in the last 3 years, and $200 billion we're paying each year in interest. Right now, interest rates are at lowest levels—historically low levels. They're going to go up.

Something has to give. And the gentleman from Utah has a basic amendment which says, Let's reduce the spending in five programs that the Federal Government doesn't need and, frankly, cannot afford. And it would save the taxpayers of this great country $1.8 billion at a time when we're going broke. Some people would say we are broke.

So this is a commonsense amendment, something we should do. It builds on the good work that the gentleman from Georgia is getting ready to speak on, the gentleman from Georgia, who's the chairman of the committee, has already done. But it builds on their good work and respects the taxpayers.

I would urge a ''yes'' vote on the amendment.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, frankly, I think that statement is a flat Earth statement because it doesn't even look before you leap. It just says, Let's whack because there's redundancy. There is redundancy in our own body. We've got two eyes, two ears, two arms, and two legs. Why don't we just whack one of them out because you've got the other one.

Look at the consequences. ARS is the Agricultural Research Service. Do you know what they do? They look at how we can make a plant structure more healthy, how we can combat the bugs that come in. I represent a county where we have glassy-winged sharpshooters that affect the wine industry. It's a multimillion-dollar eradication program. We wouldn't know how to eradicate it without the research. We have the brown apple moth that infects nurseries, multimillion dollars of attacks. This is a war, just like those disasters you have been seeing on television that are natural disasters. These are natural disasters, only they're small little bugs. Or E. coli that we've talked about. Why would you want to cut the very service that keeps American agriculture healthy and competitive? This amendment wipes out two-thirds of the entire budget.

I'm one of those that thinks there's a lot of redundancy in government, but what I do is try to get the agencies together in my district and figure out where they overlap and how we can consolidate them, how we can get them to do joint operations. I think if you want to really consolidate a lot of Federal Government, it's going to take a lot more than just whacking away with an amendment making a list of zeroing out money for economic research for the census for agriculture. That's the last thing we want to do. It's a huge, huge market. You've got to have market information. As I said, you certainly don't want to whack ARS. That's the competitive arm. That's where America stays ahead of the rest of the world.

So redundancy is a problem, but it's not always smart just to knock off something because there's more of it, just like your arms, legs, and eyes. I ask for a ''no'' vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GRAVES of Georgia. Madam Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRAVES of Georgia. I appreciate the gentleman from Utah bringing this forward. This is a time when we've got to be looking for every opportunity to be wise stewards of the taxpayers' dollars. And all we're asking here is $1.8 billion out of trillions of dollars of spending here in the Federal Government, $1.8 million more. I think the taxpayers understand that. They expect that.

I don't know that anyone here has criticized the use of these funds, where it is going. It's not that. It's just the fact that the money is not there. How can you continue spending money you do not have? I think back on the average American families at home. They have to make difficult decisions. There are a lot of things that the average family would like to do each and every week; but if they don't have the resources to do it, they wait until they can save up and do it at another appropriate time. They enjoy it at a later date when they have the ability to do that.

Madam Chair, right now we do not have that ability as a Federal Government. For far too long we've spent too much. It's not a partisan issue, necessarily. Both parties are responsible for the reckless spending that's gone on in Washington. But this is the day, this is the time that we can correct that course. We can correct the path. We don't have to continue down this same path that's been going on over and over and over again. The status quo is not acceptable.

In fact, the American people, they deserve better. We have an opportunity

right now to send a strong message to the American people that $1.8 billion is being sent back to the taxpayers. Just imagine that—taking money from the Federal Government that it's used to absorbing from the taxpayer and allowing the taxpayers to choose how they wish to spend it. What a great concept. How novel is that, to allow the taxpayers to choose how they invest their money, where they might spend it. Which leads to the number one issue facing this Nation—and it's jobs and the economy.

If we want to see the economy improve, if we want to see revenues here in Washington improve, it's not through tax increases. It's through the economy improving. It's through the GDP, the engine of this Nation moving once again. And how do we do that? We release the dollars we hold as a Federal Government and the additional dollars that we're borrowing from foreign countries and we allow the private sector to hold that, allow the private sector to make those investments, allow them to be the dreamers. Those that have the ideas, those that have the ideas, entrepreneurs, allow them to be the risk-takers, the job creators we know they are and they want to be.

□ 2230

Instead, we hear again opposition which says, no, we know better as the Federal Government. Let us keep that money. Let us take it from your wallet. Let us distribute it out as we know best. I think I heard a speaker earlier today say the Federal Government is better at making decisions than the American people. I mean we've heard that concept expressed here already, that we know better. Well, the fact is the American people know better how to spend their money.

So the gentleman from Utah brings up a great amendment that says $1.8 billion in additional cuts, saving the taxpayers once again additional money. That only adds to the savings that the chairman of the subcommittee has already fought for, and I'm happy to serve with him on the committee. He's done a fabulous job of taking us back to 2006 spending levels, an amazing effort on behalf of the subcommittee, and this just takes it back just a little bit further. Surely we can do that for the American people tonight in this House.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I rise in opposition to this amendment.

I heard a very instructive quote. Even as important as this legislation is, in actuality it appears that my friends on the other side of the aisle simply want to zero out this whole appropriation for the important agricultural work that is done in this Nation, just zero it out. Mr. CHAFFETZ's amendment seeks to zero out a very important program, which includes zeroing out Food for Peace, and it apparently ignores the basic purpose and the crisis that we're facing dealing with food insecurity in the world.

The United Nations World Food Program acknowledges severe acute malnutrition affects an estimated 20 million children under the age of 5 worldwide and is responsible in whole or in part for more than half of all the deaths of children. Malnutrition kills approximately 1 million children each year, or an average of one every 30 seconds.

This is not the direction we want for the world or the United States. There are priorities. And I ask my colleagues, what are their priorities?

Now, I have a deal for them. Let's make a deal. Let's take the $10 billion that we're spending every month in Afghanistan and spread it out on deficit reduction. I will take up that challenge and accept that challenge. In fact, we will be able to put $1 billion or $2 billion every week for a 4-week timeframe in deficit reduction if we bring the troops home from Afghanistan. And while we do that, we'll have the opportunity to answer the question that I'm asking to my colleagues: Who will stand by while a child dies, one every 30 seconds around the world?

Food for Peace is a program that our farmers have bought into from the perspective of the service and the Good Samaritan that they do by providing the goods of the world's bread basket. The United States is the world's bread basket. We have been blessed with the bounty of topography and weather, in spite of the disasters we've now faced, to be able to feed the world. And Food for Peace is that program.

Just a few hours ago, I stood on the floor of the House and I mentioned my colleague, the Honorable Mickey Leland. Some of my new friends should read about this unselfish man. I know she didn't ask me to call out her husband's name, but those of us who knew Mickey knew that he loved Congressman Emerson and Congressman Hall. They had a passion for finding out how can we stop the devastation of hunger. So they circled around programs that dealt with it, programs like Food for Peace or the Select Committee on Hunger or a number of other programs around the Agriculture appropriations, not to waste money but to partner between the great agricultural agrarian society of the United States, and its ability to grow food, to also be able to provide for those who cannot.

Do I have to say it again? We buy the food from our farmers. Let me make it very clear. In the very places where, as I showed earlier today, the devastation of tornadoes and floods, these people are trying to come back. Some areas did not suffer. They're trying to get their goods to market. It cuts here in the very jobs that we are saying that we want to keep. We're cutting jobs. We're throwing people out of work, the work that farmers love. You try to get a farmer off his land or her land. They don't want to go because they love the soil. They love producing food. They love helping people. Yet my friend wants to come and cut this program that creates jobs, buys the food, and sends it to starving, dying children.

I don't understand. In the legacy of our friends, some of them you did not know, but if you read about them, you will understand their passion and their heart. Mickey Leland used to bring us to tears because he would leave the devastation of Fifth Ward, Houston, where there was poverty, and he'd get on an airplane to deliver food to the dying around the world. He lost his life in the course of delivering food.

My final word, Madam Chairman, is to ask my colleagues not to support this amendment and to support Food for Peace and support the underlying message of providing the jobs and a helping hand.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chairman, I oppose this.

I want to say to my friends who have offered it, I did support this budget on the House floor and did support this 302(b) allocation in full committee. However, as I pointed out several times to my Democrat friends during the course of the debate today, the only budget that has passed is the Ryan budget. The President's budget failed in the Senate 97–0. The RSC budget fell on the House floor. The Congressional Black Caucus budget fell on the House floor. The Progressive Caucus budget fell on the House floor.

Our job is to try to move this under the circumstances that we have and the restraints that we have. The bill before us represents a cut in discretionary money of 13.4 percent, which is one of the largest cuts that we will be considering in the 12 appropriation bills.

I want to point out also that in terms of P.L. 480, that account alone has been cut 31 percent. And I met with the World Food Program three different times now and certainly expressed lots of concerns about America's role around the globe. We need to be engaged in the countries that we are engaged in. Sometimes this program is oversold as national security, which I believe it contributes to. It is not necessarily everything people want it to be in national security, but it is a program that keeps America engaged around the world and therefore promotes stability around the world. And when you have instability, there is a concern in terms of national security. It also actually does have an implication for the merchant marine because there's a cargo preference clause to it. It keeps the American merchant marine healthy, and those are the ships

that take our military equipment overseas during engagements such as what we have going in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Ms. JACKSON LEE had raised some of the points about the war. I voted for the Kucinich amendment the other day because I do not think we should be in Libya at this time. I'm very concerned that that's going to be one of those classic cases of mission creep, that right now we're saying no troops on the ground, but after we get through blowing up their buildings, who do you think is going to rebuild it? It's going to be America. So that mission is going to morph into troops on the ground in one form or another. That's why I thought the Kucinich amendment was appropriate.

I want to just conclude, though, that I think the spirit of the gentlemen—and they're very consistent in terms of their fiscal restraint, but, again, the only budget that has passed any body is the Ryan budget.

□ 2240

One of the balancing acts of this, if you go too far, you lose votes; if you don't go far enough, you lose votes. The Ryan budget got over the finish line and did not get all the Republicans voting for it, so I'm going to have to oppose this amendment, but I want to say to my friends, I appreciate the vigor in which you've offered it and your consistency on things.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Wyoming is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I yield to the gentleman from Utah.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Thank you. I will be brief, Madam Chair. I recognize the spirit in which you are doing this, and I appreciate the process and the back-and-forth.

I did want to say for the record, I would join with the gentlewoman from Texas, and I have advocated for a long time that we pull out of Afghanistan and that we put that towards deficit reduction. But I also think we have to bring back discretionary spending even further.

And I would like to mention to this body that really what happens with the so-called Ryan budget, the budget that this House passed, is that sets ceilings but it doesn't set floors, and I believe that one of the greatest threats in security to our future is the out-of-control debt and deficit that this country is encompassing.

Let's also remember that we spend in the neighborhood of $40 billion on U.S. aid. We haven't been able to take care of our own pocketbooks in our own country, and so it's very difficult to justify not only a very healthy and robust USAID budget—by the way, having conducted oversight is not necessarily accountable. You can't go back and actually look at the accounting and see where all this money is flowing and what it's doing. But let's also remember that then we still have tens of billions of dollars to help people across the world. We have 149 countries in this world that are getting USAID money. They're getting aid from the United States of America through various programs.

So, again, I would just want to briefly say I do think we can do better. I think we have to do better. The out-of-control spending in the past puts us in a perilous position where we spend $600 million a day just in interest on our debt. And so when I look at $1.8 billion in reduction and I look at the fact that our interest payment is $600 million a day, the best thing we could probably do for the world and certainly for ourselves is to get that deficit under control. We could do a lot more good in this world if we were to take care of our own financial pocketbooks, and we have not yet done that.

I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me. I appreciate the spirit of this body allowing me to add this extra comment.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Utah will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. BROUN OF GEORGIA

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Madam Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 8, line 15, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $7,000,000)''.

Page 80, line 2, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $7,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Madam Chairman, I rise to offer my amendment that would reduce the budget for the USDA's Economic Research Service by $7 million. We don't know what's going to happen with the previous amendment, but whether it passes or fails, this would cut another $7 million. It's just a modest 10 percent that would help end some of the duplicative research the USDA is currently conducting.

For example, the USDA has four separate services that conduct research, as Mr. CHAFFETZ has already spoken about here on the floor. All four of these entities have numerous overlapping issues, and it would be more fiscally responsible to simply consolidate them, and I wish we had done so.

The American people have demanded that we cut the outrageous spending that's going on here in Washington, and we must cut the spending in every corner of the budget possible. They deserve our very best efforts in being good stewards of their tax dollars. I urge my colleagues to support my amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. You know, it's very easy to just go through and start cutting these services because they sound like they're sort of bureaucracy offices, but, in fact, we've been on the committee a long time and we get, you know, oversight of these budgets. We get the Economic Research Service to come before us. And I remember a couple of years ago when they were before us, and I think the committee really got engaged because this is the research service that does the study on the WIC program, what the economic effects are, does the study on the economic conditions of rural America, something that's totally ignored. We've been finding out from them that essentially rural America has been in a recession for the last 10 years, maybe even a depression.

So, if you're going to have strategies which are going to include the Federal Government as part of your strategy, it's also going to include local and State government, you've got to have the economic data on which to build those strategies. And I think to just go and take $7 million out of there because you can and get no benefit out of it and hurt what they do, I mean, these services, whether they be the Economic Research, that information is also used in our marketing activity.

Now, it's a little bit different than the census stuff that we talked about earlier, but I think that this is really a cut that does a lot more harm than the gentleman who's introducing it intends to do, and I think if he really understood what the full scope of the Economic Research Service was he wouldn't ask that he take 10 percent out of that Department just merely to reduce the amount of money that we're spending.

So I oppose this amendment, and I think it does big harm to rural America.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BROUN).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

For necessary expenses of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, $149,500,000, of which up to $40,000,000 shall be available until expended for the Census of Agriculture.

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses of the Agricultural Research Service and for acquisition of lands by donation, exchange, or purchase at a nominal cost not to exceed $100, and for land exchanges where the lands exchanged shall be of equal value or shall be equalized by a payment of money to the grantor which shall not exceed 25 percent of the total value of the land or interests transferred out of Federal ownership, $993,345,000: *Provided*, That appropriations hereunder shall be available for the operation and maintenance of aircraft and the purchase of not to exceed one for replacement only: *Provided further*, That appropriations hereunder shall be available pursuant to 7 U.S.C. 2250 for the construction, alteration, and repair of buildings and improvements, but unless otherwise provided, the cost of constructing any one building shall not exceed $375,000, except for headhouses or greenhouses which shall each be limited to $1,200,000, and except for 10 buildings to be constructed or improved at a cost not to exceed $750,000 each, and the cost of altering any one building during the fiscal year shall not exceed 10 percent of the current replacement value of the building or $375,000, whichever is greater: *Provided further*, That the limitations on alterations contained in this Act shall not apply to modernization or replacement of existing facilities at Beltsville, Maryland: *Provided further*, That appropriations hereunder shall be available for granting easements at the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center: *Provided further*, That the foregoing limitations shall not apply to replacement of buildings needed to carry out the Act of April 24, 1948 (21 U.S.C. 113a): *Provided further*, That funds may be received from any State, other political subdivision, organization, or individual for the purpose of establishing or operating any research facility or research project of the Agricultural Research Service, as authorized by law.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. NUGENT

Mr. NUGENT. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 9, line 5, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(increased by $2,000,000)''.

Page 48, line 11, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(reduced by $2,500,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NUGENT. Madam Chair, every night millions of families sit down to meals where ingredients are produced here in the United States. The Agricultural Research Service is a vital part of our Federal Government's continued efforts to help farmers, producers and, ultimately, consumers.

I firmly believe that the Federal Government has a terrible spending problem and that tough decisions must be made.

□ 2250

I have the utmost respect for Chairman KINGSTON and all of the members of the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee. They have done a great job of crafting this piece of legislation.

My amendment would reduce $2.5 million from the Foreign Agricultural Service and transfer $2 million of that money to the Agricultural Research Service. By adding these funds back to ARS's budget, we will be helping guarantee that our farmers remain competitive with farmers from other nations. We should be supporting increased food production here in America and maintain our domestic independence in this area of our economy and not increasing our usage and demand for foreign agricultural imports. There is still important work to be done by ARS, and that must be continued. There have been significant cuts made to the budget of ARS that jeopardize research already in progress.

During my 5 months in Congress, I have had the great pleasure to meet and interact with many farmers and ranchers in my district. These men and women are some of the hardest workers that I know. They are the first up and the last to go to bed. Research must continue to be funded in order to guarantee that America's agriculture community is independent, that it remains the most productive and the greatest agricultural producer in the world.

ARS's work has resulted in an oat-based cholesterol fighter, a replacement for blood plasma, a biofungicide to help prevent apple and pear rot—and I'm sure on grapes from California—and is a method to increase production of penicillin and other antibiotics.

As you can see, ARS's research successes are not just limited to the agricultural community, but they help all Americans. So my goal is to make sure that America remains strong as an agricultural producer, that we don't outsource agricultural production to other nations to provide our food, and maintain a safe food source for Americans.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. I am very interested. One of your colleagues just cut the heck out of this Department, and you want to add money back in. I am kind of for that. But I am kind of curious because I understand—and the question is, do you intend in the general provisions of this bill later to add some language regarding cattle research?

Mr. NUGENT. We have withdrawn any other amendment. There is no other amendment.

Mr. FARR. So there is no other amendment? This hasn't to do with an earmark to try to stop closure of—

Mr. NUGENT. Sir, there is no other amendment. We withdraw that amendment.

Mr. FARR. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. I want to clarify some things on this that are important. Number one, I want to make sure that we all realize that ARS is currently, in this bill, funded at $993 million and that the Foreign Ag Service is at $175 million. And the Foreign Ag Service actually does have an invaluable role in representing U.S. agriculture overseas. And it's not all about importing their products as much as it is working and making sure that it's kind of a two-way street.

But I wanted to yield to the gentleman if he wanted some more time to explain it. My inclination is to take the amendment—although ARS, as I am saying, has a pretty big funding level already. And I just wanted to invite you to speak a little bit more and maybe warm us up a little, because I am like Mr. FARR. There's a lot of criticism of ARS. So somebody coming in to increase it, the amendment is paid for. I don't know that $2 million is going to help significantly one way or the other.

Mr. NUGENT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. NUGENT. Our goal with regards to strengthening ARS is to make sure that we strengthen the American ability to produce goods within this country. It is simple and focused. It's about keeping American agriculture strong. While we may be asking to reduce what we send overseas, I think it's more important that we have a strong agricultural base here.

I will tell you, just in my home State, that agriculture accounts for over a third of the income to the State of Florida. It is one of the three legs that support Florida. One is tourism, the other one is industry, but the third one that has been there for Florida in this downturn economy has been agriculture. So our goal is to make sure that Americans can depend upon American sources of food that are safe for Americans.

Mr. KINGSTON. I will accept the amendment. I want to say to my friend from Florida, we're going to be looking at all this as the process goes on, and we'll certainly work with you. We, Mr. FARR and I and the committee, do appreciate all the research that the ARS does and all of the good things. And I am glad to know that you are following them because I do think it's a significant agency within the USDA.

Mr. NUGENT. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. NUGENT).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE OF TEXAS

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 9, line 5, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $681,750,000'').

Page 44, line 19, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $681,750,000'').

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I reserve a point of order on the gentlewoman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. A point of order is reserved.

The gentlewoman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. As the gentleman rises, I ask myself the question and I ask this body, Who will speak for the children? And that's why my amendment attempts to fully fund the Women, Infants, and Children program that provides food for the Nation's children. It provides Federal grants to States for supplemental foods, nutrition, education, and health care referrals to low-income pregnant and postpartum women, infants, and children up to 5 years old.

We must remember that children have always been the largest category of WIC participants. Of the 8.7 million people who received WIC benefits, each month in fiscal year 2008, about 4.33 million were children, and 2.2 million were infants. This bill cuts $650 million out of WIC, and I am so glad my good friend from Georgia—and I appreciate his friendship—just got up and said the Agricultural Research Service is pretty darn well funded, $900 million.

I am simply asking to address the question of the staggering devastation of malnutrition in our children. And I have indicated that when you look at worldwide numbers, malnutrition can kill. But here in the United States, there are children that go to bed hungry. There are women that do not eat properly. There are babies that do not get nourishment.

In Texas alone, between 23,000 and 40,000 people are expected to be dropped from the WIC program if the funding is not restored; and each and every State in the Union is going to receive that kind of devastating impact. Can you imagine 40,000 women, infants, and children not being able to eat because we won't restore full funding? Texas has three of the top 40 districts with the highest national food hardship rates; and in the 18th Congressional District, there are 159,000 food insecure people. The food insecurity rate is 23 percent, and Texas stands 32 in the Nation out of 435 districts. We are 32 in food insecurity.

So, let me just say, alongside of obesity, eating wrong, we have to face the actual question of hunger. Children who are served by the WIC program in Texas are less likely to eat fast food in comparison to children who are not in this program.

□ 2300

Again, I want you to look at this picture. Healthy children need to eat healthy. And I ask my colleagues why, in fact, would we not want to fully fund the program of women and infant children?

I will say that the impact of not eating healthy is obesity and poor health. This healthy baby, healthy-looking baby has a future that is undetermined when you have an issue of lack of healthy food and access to such.

So $650 million, when we're, in essence, funding research for $900 million, I believe you can share a little, because the WIC program is beneficial in helping the most vulnerable in our country.

I ask the question: Who will speak for the children? It is important that the WIC program, 9.2 million through 10,000 clinics, among this group, 4.9 million children, 2.1 million infants, and 1 million women have the ability to be served around the Nation. It's a complementary program, having healthy mothers, healthy pregnant mothers to give birth to healthy babies, to raise healthy children, not obese, nourished and ready to be leaders in this Nation. Who are we if we are not going to speak for our children?

And I ask my colleagues to consider waiving procedural issues to ensure that children are served. I believe that is an important issue. And in my district, in the 18th Congressional District, with 1,000 census tracts of people who are food insecure, I am arguing vigorously for the full funding of the WIC program to help our women, our infants, and their children.

Who will speak for our children? What will their future be, and how will they lead this country if we do not invest with them today?

I ask my colleagues to support this amendment.

I rise today in support of my amendment to H.R. 2112 ''Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2112,'' as it restores full funding to the Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) program.

As the Founder of the Children's Caucus and a Member of the Women's Caucus, I have firmly stood in support of the nutritional needs of our Nation's families. As a country we must protect and safeguard the health and nutrition of our Nation's low-income families. Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) provides Federal grants to states for supplemental foods, nutrition education, and health care referrals to low-income pregnant and postpartum women, infants, and children up to age 5 who are found to be at nutritional risk. During the final quarter of Fiscal Year 2009, the number of women, infants, and children receiving WIC benefits each month reached approximately 9.3 million. We must remember that children have always been the largest category of WIC participants. Of the 8.7 million people who received WIC benefits each month in Fiscal year 2008, about 4.33 million were children and 2.22 million were infants.

WIC is essential because it affords many women, especially women of color in lower income brackets, the opportunity to care for themselves and their newborns after birth. Without programs such as WIC, many mothers would not be able to maintain a healthy lifestyle during pregnancies and after childbirth.

Because of WIC, mothers can afford the nutritional foods they need to sustain their pregnancies and avoid miscarriages, stillbirths and defects caused by malnourishment during pregnancy.

Today, I am proud to support a full restoration of funding to WIC. This program, which is distinctly American, demonstrates that we place a high value on feeding our Nation's children and tending to the needs of our Nation's poor.

Thomas Jefferson wrote in the Declaration of Independence that we are endowed ''with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. . . .'' I believe that it is no coincidence that life is listed first—for without it, the Founders realized, no other rights can be realized. Over many years, the millions of Americans who could not access medical services were denied their right to life—a life with access to quality and affordable health care.

Let me set the record straight, WIC is good for the American people and will go a long way in ensuring access to quality and affordable care to those millions of Americans who will need access to proper nutrition. WIC helps to ensure that our country will not succumb to one of the most staggering causes of death in children around the world: Malnutrition. Malnutrition remains a significant problem worldwide, particularly among children. It should not be a problem within the United States; that is why we have programs like WIC. According to the United Nations World Food Programme, severe acute malnutrition affects an estimated 20 million children under the age of five worldwide and is responsible in whole or in part for more than half of all deaths of children. Malnutrition kills approximately one million children each year, or an average of one every thirty seconds. This is not the direction we want to take the United States.

Madam Chair, when I stand here today and reflect upon what we are about to embark upon, I cannot help but think of some of the last words that the Great Senator Ted Kennedy shared in his letter to President Obama. The Senator said, ''And so because of your (Obama's) vision and resolve, I came to believe that soon, very soon, affordable health coverage will be available to all, in an America where the state of a family's health will never again depend on the amount of a family's wealth. And while I will not see the victory, I was able to look forward and know that we will—yes we will—fulfill the promise of health care in America as a right and not a privilege.'' Well, Senator, your life's work shall today be proven to not be in vain. I continue to stand by protecting the health needs of low income families. And, yes, this program ensures the health of infants and children will never again depend on the amount of their family's income.

In the words of the great President John F. Kennedy, ''the voters selected us, in short, because they had confidence in our judgment and our ability to exercise that judgment from a position where we could determine what were their own best interests, as a part of the nation's interest.''

Madam Chair, while my colleagues on the other side of the aisle seem to believe that

without a cut to WIC this will harm Americans, nothing could be further from the truth. This bill is indeed in their best interests:

There are 110 million school-aged children suffering from hunger every day, and they are counting on America's leadership and generosity to provide them with an opportunity to break the cycle of poverty. The WIC program provides that leadership and generosity and it is for this reason that I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for restoring full funding to WIC.

In the words of the great civil rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., ''We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now.'' We cannot wait. We will not wait to protect the lives of our children. We can not delay in providing the most vulnerable citizens of this great Nation access to proper nutrition.

FACTS ON WIC—THE 18TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

In Texas, between 23,000 and 40,000 people are expected to be dropped from the WIC program if the funding levels are not restored.

Texas has 3 of the top top 40 districts with the highest national food hardship rates. In the 18th Congressional district there are 159,000 food insecure people. The food insecurity rate is 23% and ranks 32nd nationally.

WIC COMBATS OBESITY

Let us remember that 1 in 3 American adults is overweight or obese and more than 9 million children are struggling with obesity. WIC aims to improve the eating habits of Americans, particularly our children through programs that provide children with healthy food. At its core, H.R. 2112 decreases funding for nutrition programs for children.

Obesity is associated with 35 major diseases including chronic and life-threatening conditions such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease. It is important to keep our nation healthy by providing access to high consumption of vegetables and fruits to the future of our great country, our children. By supporting WIC we assure a healthy consumption of nutritional foods for children whose only crime is that their families are poor.

Children who are served by the WIC program in Texas are less likely to eat fast food in comparison to children who are not in the program. These children are also more likely to eat home cooked meals. When children reduce their consumption of less fast food then they drastically lower their chances of developing heart problems, diabetes, and obesity which could again end up saving billions of dollars in the healthcare system. All the health issues that are currently contributing to health disparities among minorities in this country.

Certain minorities have a higher rates of diabetes-related complications and death, in some instances by as much as 50 percent more than the total population. It is truly an epidemic. Combating obesity in from childhood utilizing programs like WIC is vital to decreasing health disparities.

24% of Texans were obese in 2001, the 3rd highest rate in the nation. Nearly 31% of African American girls in the 4th grade were overweight and 52% were overweight or ''at risk of overweight'' in Texas in 2001. 13% of Houston high school students are overweight and 17% are at risk. Over 71% of African American Texans are overweight or obese.

Over 34% of African American women are obese, compared to 19% of white women.

44% of African American women are projected to be obese by 2020, and 47% by 2040.

OBESITY

Although the obesity rates among all Americans are alarming, as Chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, I am especially concerned about the childhood obesity epidemic among African-Americans. More than 40 percent of African-American teenagers are overweight, and nearly 25 percent are obese.

When ethnicity and income are considered, African-American youngsters from low-income families have a higher risk for obesity than those from higher-income families. Since the mid-1970s, the prevalence of overweight and obesity has increased sharply for both adults and children. Eighty percent of black women and 67 percent of black men are overweight or obese. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), among African-American male adults aged 20–74 years the prevalence of obesity increased from 15.0% in 1980 survey to 32.9% in the 2004.

There were also increases in overweight among children and teens. For children aged 2–5 years, the prevalence of overweight increased from 5.0% to 13.9%; for those aged 6–11 years, prevalence increased from 6.5% to 18.8%; and for those aged 12–19 years, prevalence increased from 5.0% to 17.4%.

Government reports indicate that an estimated 17 percent of children and adolescents aged 2–19 are obese. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, African American and Mexican American adolescents ages 12–19 are more likely to be overweight, at 21 percent and 23 percent respectively, than non-Hispanic white adolescents who are 14 percent overweight. In children 6–11 years old, 22 percent of Mexican American children are overweight, compared to 20 percent of African American children and 14 percent of non-Hispanic white children.

IMPACT OF OBESITY ON HOUSTON, TEXAS

The obesity epidemic has also heavily impacted my district in the city of Houston. In 2005, Men's Fitness Magazine ranked Houston the Fattest City in the Nation. In 2006, Houston ranked as number five and in 2007, it was ranked the sixth fattest city in the Nation.

These statistics underscore why we must continue to vigorously identify ways to address the childhood obesity crisis, by starting with programs such as WIC, that provides proper nutrition to low income families.

As the debate over how to address the rising childhood obesity epidemic continues, it is important to continue to target and aid children who are nutritionally at risk.

H.R. 2112 CUTS MORE THAN $650 MILLION FROM THE WIC PROGRAM

Since this bill seeks to cut more than $650 million from the WIC program, countless scores of women, children, and infants will also no longer have the same access to healthy food. According to the National WIC Association between 200,000–350,000 people will be cut from the program. That is hundreds of thousands of women, infants, and children who will not get the assistance they need. This is not simply about adding and subtracting numbers on a page this is a family tragedy. We cannot ignore the nutritional needs of our children; we should not starve low income families. As our economy awakens from this long, cold, slumber we must ensure that our nation's children are fed. This is a moral question.

As financial hardships continue to impact millions of families, now is not the time for us to turn our backs on them. This is the time to show our compassion. I urge the full funding of WIC, because it will impact hundreds of thousands of people nationally, but also because it will end up costing billions more in the long run if we will have a nation of unhealthy families. Consider the consequences of children who lack the necessary nutrition as they grow into adults who have high health costs.

THE WIC PROGRAM HELPS FAMILIES

The WIC program has been beneficial in helping some of the most vulnerable members of our country.

Among the WIC's goals is to improve health care access for low and moderate income women and children at risk of developing health problems which include obesity and type 2 diabetes.

WIC served 9.2 million through 10,000 clinics. Among this group were 4.9 million children, 2.1 million infants, and 1 million women.

WIC works with pregnant mothers to help reduce costs of prenatal care. Preterm births cost the U.S. over $26 billion a year. As a result of pregnant women getting the services they need, the National WIC Association states that Medicaid costs are reduced on average between $12,000 and $15,000 for every low birth-weight incident prevented. It is also estimated that $3.6 billion would be saved if current U.S. exclusive breastfeeding rates increased to at least 50% at 6 months.

FACTS ON WIC CUTS

If WIC funds are not fully restored the impact on low income families will be devastating. An estimated 200,000 to 350,000 will be cut from the WIC program. That's 200,000 to 350,000 low income Americans who will be denied access to nutrition.

The cuts in the WIC program touches every state in this country. In my State of Texas between 23,000 and 40,000 people will be left out in the cold. We should be able to provide food to the young children of our country.

Of the top 40 districts with the highest national food hardship rates, Texas has 3 of them. In the 18th Congressional district there are 159,000 food insecure people. The food insecurity rate is 23% and ranks 32d nationally.

In 2005, in Harris County, there were 62 pregnant women who had prenatal care in the first trimester. In the State of Texas there were 64 women. Without the WIC program, many of these women might not have been able to get the services they needed.

WIC children in Texas are less likely to eat fast food over non-WIC children. WIC children are also more likely to eat home cooked meals compared to non-WIC children. Children who eat less fast food drastically lower their chances of developing heart problems, diabetes, and obesity which could end up saving billions of dollars in the health care system.

As financial hardships continue to impact millions of families, now is not the time for us to turn our backs on them. Now is the time to show them that we care. I urge opposition to

this bill, not only because it will negatively impact hundreds of thousands of people nationally, but also because it will end up costing billions more in the long run. The American people are wondering when their bailout will come years after we saved Wall Street from the brink of destruction. This bill sends them a message that that day is not a priority of the Federal Government.

We must continue to fight for pregnant mothers and low-income families and so I urge for full funding to be restored to the WIC program.

I yield back the balance of my time.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I insist on my point of order.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for that purpose.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, the amendment may not be considered en bloc under clause 2(f) of rule XXI because the amendment proposes to increase the level of funding and outlays in the bill, and outlays in budget authority have to be equal.

I ask for a ruling from the Chair.

The Acting CHAIR. Does any other Member wish to be heard on the gentleman's point of order?

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I would, Madam Chairman.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Texas is recognized.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Well, outlays have to do with the evenhandedness of spending at the same time, which section you take the monies out and which section you put them in.

Again, the point that I want to make to this body is that my focus is on keeping our children in this country from being malnourished and pregnant mothers from not having the access to good healthy food that they need to give birth to a healthy child.

And I've asked the question before, in the instance of speaking for our children and saving our children, a procedural waiver is in order. This is a procedural question. I have actually taken money from a legitimate account, and that is the Agriculture Research Service that my own friend and colleague had said is funded quite well. Now we've added another $2 million to the research program. $902 million.

And I'm simply asking for a measure of that amount to help provide care and nourishment for our children. I believe it is appropriate to eliminate a procedural, if you will, flaw that only speaks to the timing of spending to be able to provide for the children of America. That's what agriculture is all about: our farmers, our families who need to eat good food, our undernourished and impoverished communities which are aplenty.

As I spoke earlier today, those communities that are experiencing disasters and those mothers who are now pregnant and who need access to good food, we need to be able to not cut off in the State of Texas, in my district, 40,000 or so individuals that will not be able to be part of the WIC program because we're talking about a procedural flaw.

And so, Madam Chairperson, I am suggesting that this amendment is in order, and I'd ask my colleagues to consider a waiver. But I'm also asking the Chairwoman to rule in my favor so that the people of America most vulnerable will have access to quality food and a healthy life.

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair is prepared to rule on the gentleman from Georgia's point of order.

To be considered en bloc pursuant to clause 2(f) of rule XXI, an amendment must not propose to increase the levels of budget authority or outlays in the bill. Because the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas proposes a net increase in the level of outlays in the bill, as argued by the chairman of the Subcommittee on Appropriations, it may not avail itself of clause 2(f) to address portions of the bill not yet read.

The point of order is sustained.

The amendment is not in order.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

For payments to agricultural experiment stations, for cooperative forestry and other research, for facilities, and for other expenses, $600,800,000, as follows: to carry out the provisions of the Hatch Act of 1887 (7 U.S.C. 361a–i), $208,000,000; for grants for cooperative forestry research (16 U.S.C. 582a through a–7), $30,000,000; for payments to eligible institutions (7 U.S.C. 3222), $48,000,000, provided that each institution receives no less than $1,000,000; for special grants (7 U.S.C. 450i(c)), $1,250,000; for competitive grants for Integrated Pest Management and Biological Control (7 U.S.C. 450i(c)), $14,000,000; for competitive grants (7 U.S.C. 450i(b)), $229,500,000, to remain available until expended; for the support of animal health and disease programs (7 U.S.C. 3195), $4,000,000; for a program pursuant to section 1415A of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3151a), $4,200,000, to remain available until expended; for a higher education multicultural scholars program (7 U.S.C. 3152(b)(5)), $1,000,000, to remain available until expended (7 U.S.C. 2209b); for an education grants program for Hispanic–serving Institutions (7 U.S.C. 3241), $7,800,000; for competitive grants for the purpose of carrying out all provisions of 7 U.S.C. 3156 to individual eligible institutions or consortia of eligible institutions in Alaska and in Hawaii, with funds awarded equally to each of the States of Alaska and Hawaii, $2,700,000; for secondary education, 2-year post-secondary education, and agriculture in the K-12 classroom (7 U.S.C. 3152(j)), $900,000; for aquaculture grants (7 U.S.C. 3322), $3,300,000; for sustainable agriculture research and education (7 U.S.C. 5811), $12,300,000; for a program of capacity building grants (7 U.S.C. 3152(b)(4)) to institutions eligible to receive funds under 7 U.S.C. 3221 and 3222, $16,400,000, to remain available until expended (7 U.S.C. 2209b); for payments to the 1994 Institutions pursuant to section 534(a)(1) of Public Law 103–382, $2,800,000; for resident instruction grants for insular areas under section 1491 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3363), $900,000; for distance education grants for insular areas under section 1490 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3362), $750,000; for competitive grants for policy research (7 U.S.C. 3155), $3,000,000; and for necessary expenses of Research and Education Activities, $10,000,000, of which $2,500,000 for the Research, Education, and Economics Information System and $2,000,000 for the Electronic Grants Information System, are to remain available until expended.

NATIVE AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS ENDOWMENT FUND

For the Native American Institutions Endowment Fund authorized by Public Law 103–382 (7 U.S.C. 301 note), $11,880,000, to remain available until expended.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

For payments to States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, Micronesia, the Northern Marianas, and American Samoa, $411,200,000, as follows: payments for cooperative extension work under the Smith–Lever Act, to be distributed under sections 3(b) and 3(c) of said Act, and under section 208(c) of Public Law 93–471, for retirement and employees' compensation costs for extension agents, $259,200,000; payments for extension work at the 1994 Institutions under the Smith–Lever Act (7 U.S.C. 343(b)(3)), $3,600,000; payments for the nutrition and family education program for low-income areas under section 3(d) of the Act, $58,000,000; payments for the pest management program under section 3(d) of the Act, $8,400,000; payments for New Technologies for Agriculture Extension under section 3(d) of the Act, $1,400,000; payments to upgrade research, extension, and teaching facilities at institutions eligible to receive funds under 7 U.S.C. 3221 and 3222, $16,700,000, to remain available until expended; payments for youth-at-risk programs under section 3(d) of the Smith–Lever Act, $7,100,000; payments for carrying out the provisions of the Renewable Resources Extension Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 1671 et seq.), $3,400,000; payments for the federally-recognized Tribes Extension Program under section 3(d) of the Smith–Lever Act, $2,600,000; payments for sustainable agriculture programs under section 3(d) of the Act, $4,000,000; payments for rural health and safety education as authorized by section 502(i) of Public Law 92–419 (7 U.S.C. 2662(i)), $1,500,000; payments for cooperative extension work by eligible institutions (7 U.S.C. 3221), $36,000,000, provided that each institution receives no less than $1,000,000; for grants to youth organizations pursuant to 7 U.S.C. 7630, $1,500,000; for payments to carry out the food animal residue avoidance database program as authorized by 7 U.S.C. 7642, $1,000,000; and for necessary expenses of Extension Activities, $6,800,000.

INTEGRATED ACTIVITIES

For the integrated research, education, and extension grants program authorized under section 406 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7626), including necessary administrative expenses, $8,000,000, as follows: for a competitive organic transition program, $4,000,000; and for the regional pest management centers program $4,000,000.

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR MARKETING AND REGULATORY PROGRAMS

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs, $760,000.

ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, including

up to $30,000 for representation allowances and for expenses pursuant to the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4085), $790,000,000, of which $2,000,000, to be available until expended, shall be available for the control of outbreaks of insects, plant diseases, animal diseases and for control of pest animals and birds (''contingency fund'') to the extent necessary to meet emergency conditions; of which $16,000,000, to remain available until expended, shall be used for the cotton pests program for cost share purposes or for debt retirement for active eradication zones; of which $32,500,000, to remain available until expended, shall be for Animal Health Technical Services; of which $54,000,000, to remain available until expended, shall be used to support avian health; of which $4,200,000, to remain available until expended, shall be for information technology infrastructure; of which $147,000,000, to remain available until expended, shall be for specialty crop pests; of which, $9,000,000, to remain available until expended, shall be for field crop and rangeland ecosystem pests; of which $52,000,000, to remain available until expended, shall be for tree and wood pests; of which $2,300,000, to remain available until expended, shall be for the National Veterinary Stockpile; of which up to $1,500,000, to remain available until expended, shall be for the scrapie program for indemnities; of which $1,000,000, to remain available until expended, shall be for wildlife services methods development; of which $1,500,000, to remain available until expended, shall be for the wildlife damage management program for aviation safety; and up to 25 percent of the screwworm program shall remain available until expended: *Provided*, That no funds shall be used to formulate or administer a brucellosis eradication program for the current fiscal year that does not require minimum matching by the States of at least 40 percent: *Provided further*, That this appropriation shall be available for the operation and maintenance of aircraft and the purchase of not to exceed four, of which two shall be for replacement only: *Provided further*, That, in addition, in emergencies which threaten any segment of the agricultural production industry of this country, the Secretary may transfer from other appropriations or funds available to the agencies or corporations of the Department such sums as may be deemed necessary, to be available only in such emergencies for the arrest and eradication of contagious or infectious disease or pests of animals, poultry, or plants, and for expenses in accordance with sections 10411 and 10417 of the Animal Health Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 8310 and 8316) and sections 431 and 442 of the Plant Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 7751 and 7772), and any unexpended balances of funds transferred for such emergency purposes in the preceding fiscal year shall be merged with such transferred amounts: *Provided further*, That appropriations hereunder shall be available pursuant to law (7 U.S.C. 2250) for the repair and alteration of leased buildings and improvements, but unless otherwise provided the cost of altering any one building during the fiscal year shall not exceed 10 percent of the current replacement value of the building.

In fiscal year 2012, the agency is authorized to collect fees to cover the total costs of providing technical assistance, goods, or services requested by States, other political subdivisions, domestic and international organizations, foreign governments, or individuals, provided that such fees are structured such that any entity's liability for such fees is reasonably based on the technical assistance, goods, or services provided to the entity by the agency, and such fees shall be reimbursed to this account, to remain available until expended, without further appropriation, for providing such assistance, goods, or services.

BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

For plans, construction, repair, preventive maintenance, environmental support, improvement, extension, alteration, and purchase of fixed equipment or facilities, as authorized by 7 U.S.C. 2250, and acquisition of land as authorized by 7 U.S.C. 428a, $3,200,000, to remain available until expended.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. CLARKE OF MICHIGAN

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 17, line 20, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(reduced by $1,000,000)''.

Page 17, line 25, insert after the dollar amount the following: ''(increased by $1,000,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Michigan is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Madam Chair, this amendment would restore $1 million to the Microbiological Data Program. Now, this is a USDA program that collects and tests fruits and vegetables, domestic and imported fruits and vegetables for bacteria that could cause illness and even death. Recent tests have discovered salmonella and strains of E. coli similar to that found in the German food supply that resulted in the deaths of 24 people and which infected over 2,400. So this amendment is important in order to protect the public from food-borne pathogens that could make the public sick or that could put innocent lives at risk.

I do urge your support.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. I move to strike the last word and oppose the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I'm continuing to study this. And you know, fortunately, one of the great things about the open rule that we've had is we've had a lot of good debate tonight, had a lot of speakers. I think we broke the record tonight on the speech contest about WIC. I'm not sure who Mr. FARR will be awarding, giving that award to, but we had a lot of good contenders.

Mr. CLARKE, unfortunately, I just, within the last minute, have seen this, and I'm not sure that it will do what you're saying or what your intention is, and so I'm going to oppose the amendment.

I will promise to work with you. It's a million dollar transfer, and don't know that it accomplishes what you want. I don't know that it doesn't accomplish what you want. And I don't necessarily think it causes a big disruption in the bill either. But for right now, I'm going to have to oppose it. And let me continue to research it, and maybe as the process goes through we can see what we can do to work with you and Mr. FARR on it.

□ 2310

We are very concerned about food safety and the pathogens and the situation in Europe, and we want to make sure that we're studying this stuff very closely ourselves. So I reluctantly oppose it for the time being.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Wyoming is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Madam Chairman, I rise to oppose the amendment not because it is unworthy, but because I believe that there are funds elsewhere in the bill that could be used to cover the services and research that the gentleman requests. I refer the gentleman to page 10, the National Institute of Food and Agricultural Research and Education Activities. Those activities include: for ag experiment stations, $600,800,000; for grants payable to eligible institutions, $48 million, provided that each institution receives no less than $1 million; for special grants, $1.2 million; for competitive grants for integrated pest management and biological control, $14 million; for competitive grants, $229.5 million to remain available until expended.

This is sloshing with research dollars, sloshing. I think there's plenty in this bill to cover the worthy research that the gentleman has requested, so I urge my colleagues to defeat the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Madam Chair, the funding source that I'm using to offset the cost of this amendment I believe won't undercut the vital mission of this agency, unlike the other sources that have been mentioned. However, I am willing to work with the majority on negotiating a proper funding source. All I care, the bottom line, is that the public is safe and that we are diligent and do the best that we can to identify these bacteria sources that could make the public sick.

Mr. KINGSTON. Will the gentleman from California yield?

Mr. FARR. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. I want to say that the concern that I have—again, not having the advantage of being able to research things thoroughly, but we're taking $1 million out of a $3 million account and putting it into a $77 million account, and it just seems disproportional at this point.

I'm wondering if during the process there might be an opportunity to emphasize that we want the Ag Marketing

Service to really be sure that they're following the E. coli situation. That would be helpful. I certainly would be interested in doing that and working with him, but I want to continue to oppose the amendment at this point.

Mr. FARR. I share your concerns, but I'd certainly like to see what we can do to accommodate my colleague.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CLARKE).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

MARKETING SERVICES

For necessary expenses of the Agricultural Marketing Service, $77,500,000: *Provided*, That this appropriation shall be available pursuant to law (7 U.S.C. 2250) for the alteration and repair of buildings and improvements, but the cost of altering any one building during the fiscal year shall not exceed 10 percent of the current replacement value of the building. Fees may be collected for the cost of standardization activities, as established by regulation pursuant to law (31 U.S.C. 9701).

AMENDMENT NO. 9 OFFERED BY MR. BROUN OF GEORGIA

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 17, line 25, after the first dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $7,750,000)''.

Page 80, line 2, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $7,750,000)''.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Madam Chair, I rise to offer my amendment, which is simply a 10 percent cut in the Agricultural Marketing Service at the USDA.

This year, the Agricultural Marketing Service will be allocated $77.5 million for, as they state in their own Web site, ''administering programs that facilitate the efficient, fair marketing of U.S. agricultural products, including food, fiber, and specialty crops.''

Madam Chair, since I've been a Member of Congress, I have stated that the marketplace, unencumbered, is the best way to control quality, quantity, and cost of all goods and services. So we need to get the encumbrances of the Federal Government off the marketplace, and this will just take 10 percent. Our Nation's crops are no exception to this rule.

Madam Chair, I think the USDA is not giving American farmers enough credit. Our farmers are intelligent, resourceful men and women who know the best ways to market their products here and abroad. Madam Chair, when I was farming, I could market my products very well. I used to farm—I wish I could get back to it, actually. Allow these farmers to market their products without the government interference and use these funds to reduce spending.

It's absolutely critical, Madam Chair, that we reduce the outrageous spending that Congresses, both Republican and Democrat, have put in place. As Admiral Mullen, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, recently said, the greatest threat to our security is this huge debt. We absolutely have to cut spending, and this simple amendment would cut 10 percent out of this program and put it in the deficit reduction package that is part of this bill.

So I encourage my colleagues to support this simple amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Madam Chair, this amendment would really undercut the whole purpose that I was offering an additional $1 million: to help protect the American people from food-borne bacteria.

Over 2,400 people were infected in Germany by a strain of E. coli; 24 of them died. We don't want this to happen here in this country.

The gracious chairman, the gentleman from Georgia, and I agreed to work something out to better protect the public. I'm just asking if maybe you could withdraw this amendment to give us a chance to work out something here.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FARR. Madam Chair, I oppose this amendment.

This is a big cut out of a very important program, just indicated by Congressman CLARKE from Michigan. For all the reasons he was trying to increase the program, this amendment goes just the opposite way. It knocks 10 percent of the money that's in the program out. There will be no way that he can increase it with this and work out a deal. And for all the reasons he indicated on food safety and issues like that that are very, very important, we ought not risk the ability to respond to those needs.

□ 2320

So I think this amendment does harm, and it does more harm than the good that it intends to do. That is the reason I oppose it, and would ask for a ''no'' vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. I oppose the amendment.

I want to go back to the earlier theme I brought up when we were discussing both WIC and the Chaffetz amendment earlier tonight. With regard to what Dr. BROUN is doing, I think there is 10 percent with which you can make that argument there.

What we've been trying to do is to stack a card house on the Ryan budget. That is the only budget that has passed one House. I will point out again that the budget of the President of the United States failed in the Senate 97–0. Similarly, three other budgets failed in the Senate, and four other budgets failed in the House. There was a budget that was offered that was further cut by the Republican Study Committee, and then there were others that were less cut, the Progressive Caucus', for example.

So one of the balancing acts that this committee is trying to accomplish with this bill tonight is to reduce spending but also to get 218 votes to pass the bill so that we can continue this with the U.S. Senate, which right now has not been able to pass one single appropriations bill. They have been very remiss in their duty, so I find myself having to balance some things that, if I were a free agent, I would probably be voting for and some things I would be voting against as I just told Mr. CLARKE from Detroit in rejecting a $1 million transfer of account because I didn't know exactly what it did. I want to keep that balance there.

So, with this, I am going to oppose the 10 percent reduction offered by my friend and Georgia colleague, Dr. BROUN.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Madam Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Wyoming is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LUMMIS. It appears from the text of this program, the Ag Marketing Service, that the $77.5 million appropriated may be derived from fees that are collected for the cost of standardization activities as established by regulation, because, if you look on page 18, line 9, it reads: not to exceed $61 million from fees collected shall be obligated during the current fiscal year for administrative expenses.

My question then is: Is this a fee-for-service program rather than a generally funded, taxpayer-funded program?

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. LUMMIS. Madam Chair, I ask unanimous consent to reclaim my time.

The Acting CHAIR. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Wyoming?

There was no objection.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. The Ag Marketing Service actually gets that $77.5 million in appropriation, and in addition, has the ability to collect up to $61 million in fees. If you think about it, that's not unusual in this account. The FDA actually does the same thing. I think they get over $1 billion in fees. So some of these accounts do get an appropriation, and then they on their own can go out and get some fees, not just to supplement them, but in some cases to almost match them as the AMS has done.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BROUN).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

Not to exceed $61,000,000 (from fees collected) shall be obligated during the current fiscal year for administrative expenses: *Provided*, That if crop size is understated and/or other uncontrollable events occur, the agency may exceed this limitation by up to 10 percent with notification to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress.

FUNDS FOR STRENGTHENING MARKETS, INCOME, AND SUPPLY (SECTION 32)

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

Funds available under section 32 of the Act of August 24, 1935 (7 U.S.C. 612c), shall be used only for commodity program expenses as authorized therein, and other related operating expenses, except for: (1) transfers to the Department of Commerce as authorized by the Fish and Wildlife Act of August 8, 1956; (2) transfers otherwise provided in this Act; and (3) not more than $20,056,000 for formulation and administration of marketing agreements and orders pursuant to the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937 and the Agricultural Act of 1961.

PAYMENTS TO STATES AND POSSESSIONS

For payments to State departments of agriculture, bureaus and departments of markets, and similar agencies for marketing activities under section 204(b) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1623(b)), $1,331,000.

GRAIN INSPECTION, PACKERS AND STOCKYARDS ADMINISTRATION

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses of the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration, $37,000,000: *Provided*, That this appropriation shall be available pursuant to law (7 U.S.C. 2250) for the alteration and repair of buildings and improvements, but the cost of altering any one building during the fiscal year shall not exceed 10 percent of the current replacement value of the building.

LIMITATION ON INSPECTION AND WEIGHING SERVICES EXPENSES

Not to exceed $47,500,000 (from fees collected) shall be obligated during the current fiscal year for inspection and weighing services: *Provided*, That if grain export activities require additional supervision and oversight, or other uncontrollable factors occur, this limitation may be exceeded by up to 10 percent with notification to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress.

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOOD SAFETY

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Under Secretary for Food Safety, $689,000.

FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE

For necessary expenses to carry out services authorized by the Federal Meat Inspection Act, the Poultry Products Inspection Act, and the Egg Products Inspection Act, including not to exceed $50,000 for representation allowances and for expenses pursuant to section 8 of the Act approved August 3, 1956 (7 U.S.C. 1766), $972,028,000; and in addition, $1,000,000 may be credited to this account from fees collected for the cost of laboratory accreditation as authorized by section 1327 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 138f): *Provided*, That funds provided for the Public Health Data Communication Infrastructure system shall remain available until expended: *Provided further*, That this appropriation shall be available pursuant to law (7 U.S.C. 2250) for the alteration and repair of buildings and improvements, but the cost of altering any one building during the fiscal year shall not exceed 10 percent of the current replacement value of the building.

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FARM AND FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICES

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services, $760,000.

FARM SERVICE AGENCY

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses of the Farm Service Agency, $1,176,500,000: *Provided*, That the Secretary is authorized to use the services, facilities, and authorities (but not the funds) of the Commodity Credit Corporation to make program payments for all programs administered by the Agency: *Provided further*, That other funds made available to the Agency for authorized activities may be advanced to and merged with this account: *Provided further*, That funds made available to county committees shall remain available until expended.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. RICHARDSON

Ms. RICHARDSON. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 21, line 12, after the dollar amount, insert ''(reduced by $10,000,000'').

Page 46, line 22, after the dollar amount, insert ''(increased by $10,000,000'').

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Madam Chairwoman, the Richardson amendment adds $10 million to the Commodity Assistance Program by reducing by the same amount from the Salaries and Expenses section of the Farm Service Agency, which will provide additional funding for the Commodities Supplemental Food Program, which provides assistance to seniors who have incomes at or below $14,157. Ninety-seven percent of all Commodities Supplemental Food Program recipients are seniors who often receive these as the only fresh food packages that might come to their homes. Many of these seniors have no means of transportation to obtain these products. These seniors also have very limited resources with which to purchase the food that they need.

Madam Chairwoman, I don't understand why those in the majority would believe that our seniors have caused our budget problems or, worse yet, are able to fix our budget problems.

The Ryan budget proposes to make seniors pay an additional $6,000 out-of-pocket for their health care needs. Second, they increase the prescription drug costs for our seniors by proposing to reopen the Medicare prescription drug doughnut hole, which Democrats closed in the last Congress. These are heartless legislative proposals that could force 136,000 seniors in the Los Angeles area to pay an additional $1.3 billion for their prescription drugs over the next decade.

Now Food for Low-Income Seniors is under attack as well. Our seniors deserve our support. They've earned it. Many of our seniors have served our country overseas during World War II, Korea and Vietnam. Their bravery and their sacrifices have made America the great country that it is. Our seniors have worked hard all of their lives to provide for their families. It is now our responsibility to help assist them.

Madam Chairwoman, the Commodities Supplemental Food Program was cut by $37 million over fiscal year 2011 levels. This cut means nearly 81,000 low-income seniors will lose their monthly food assistance. There are 6 million seniors who face the threat of hunger in this country, and with 12,000 baby boomers turning 60 every day by 2025, that number is expected to reach nearly the 10 million mark. There are 52,000 senior citizens in my district, the 37th Congressional District in California, and between 10 and 20 percent of them depend on these very programs.

The Richardson amendment restores $10 million in funding to the Commodity Assistance Program, which will help to ensure that more of our seniors will continue to receive food. We are talking about something as basic as that—food—that our seniors would be able to eat.

□ 2330

I urge my colleagues to support the Richardson amendment and support our seniors.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chair, I oppose the amendment and move to strike the last word.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. I want to point out that FSA, the Farm Service Agency, is already $181 million below the President's request and $32 million below 2011. It has been trimmed a great deal. But also I wanted to point out that we just accepted an amendment that increases the Commodity Supplemental

Food Program by $5 million. The gentlewoman may not be aware of that—I don't know if you were on the floor at the time. I know that doesn't mean that you wouldn't offer your amendment anyway, but I just wanted to point out that we did just increase it.

More importantly though, I have been in a mode of rejecting a lot of amendments in the last couple of hours because this budget, this bill, our 302(b) allocation is a reflection of the Ryan budget, which is the only budget that has passed either body in its entirety. There were budgets offered in the House that would have cut more, at least one. There were other budgets that would have cut less or cut in different directions. Yet the Ryan budget in the House or the Senate is the only budget that has passed, and it is a card house. I know, as you know, if we add to it we lose votes, and if we take from it we lose votes. For that reason, I do oppose your amendment. But I understand your concern here.

I want to point out, and I am sure the gentlewoman knows this, but a senior who is 65 years or older is actually eligible for six different Federal food programs, and it would certainly not be our intention to have anybody fall through the cracks. I think there is a lot to be said and some savings in combining the Commodity Supplemental Food Program and the SNAP program, and maybe cut out some of the administrative costs in order to increase the amount available.

Ms. RICHARDSON. If the gentleman would yield, might I point out that, first of all, we would not be able to legislate on the floor having to deal with this appropriation bill before us.

Mr. KINGSTON. Reclaiming my time, don't we know full well on this committee, because we have been champing at the bit to do a little bit of authorizing, but the authorizing committees keep a pretty strong eye on us. I certainly agree with that point.

Ms. RICHARDSON. I just want you to know I am watching and paying attention carefully, sir. The other point I wanted to point out, as I stated in my comments, $37 million has been cut over the fiscal year 2011, and given the $5 million that you did earlier accept, and I am suggesting $10 million, we would still be suggesting only restoring less than 50 percent from that level.

I would just urge you, sir, in these tough times, I understand in future times, but in these tough times, not all other mechanisms could help our seniors, again who are only making at or below $14,000, and this would be a dire need, and I would strongly urge, please, your reconsideration.

Mr. KINGSTON. Reclaiming my time, I do want to point out, and I am sure the gentlewoman knows, that this bill actually does increase SNAP $5.6 billion. Therefore, I think sometimes we do need to, even though that is an authorizing issue, I think as a practical issue that is something we need to explore and thrash about and make sure that we are not under-serving somebody because of two programs that could be so close that I don't know why we don't combine them. Again, I realize that would be farm bill authority to do that. But SNAP did go up $5.6 billion because of the mandatory spending side of it.

I need to continue to oppose your amendment, but I would not slam the door on looking at it as the process continues in the months ahead. Hopefully, the Senate might start doing their job and passing appropriations bills, and then we can get to conference without it being part of an omnibus, because I think in a conference we are going to do a lot better if it is just limited to agriculture and these accounts.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. RICHARDSON).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. RICHARDSON. I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California will be postponed.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

STATE MEDIATION GRANTS

For grants pursuant to section 502(b) of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1987, as amended (7 U.S.C. 5101–5106), $3,550,000.

GRASSROOTS SOURCE WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM

For necessary expenses to carry out wellhead or groundwater protection activities under section 1240O of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839bb–2), $3,605,000, to remain available until expended.

DAIRY INDEMNITY PROGRAM

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses involved in making indemnity payments to dairy farmers and manufacturers of dairy products under a dairy indemnity program, such sums as may be necessary, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That such program is carried out by the Secretary in the same manner as the dairy indemnity program described in the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001 (Public Law 106–387, 114 Stat. 1549A–12).

AGRICULTURAL CREDIT INSURANCE FUND PROGRAM ACCOUNT

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For gross obligations for the principal amount of direct and guaranteed farm ownership (7 U.S.C. 1922 et seq.) and operating (7 U.S.C. 1941 et seq.) loans, Indian tribe land acquisition loans (25 U.S.C. 488), boll weevil loans (7 U.S.C. 1989), guaranteed conservation loans (7 U.S.C. 1924 et seq.), and Indian highly fractionated land loans (25 U.S.C. 488) to be available from funds in the Agricultural Credit Insurance Fund, as follows: $1,500,000,000 for unsubsidized guaranteed farm ownership loans and $475,000,000 for farm ownership direct loans; $1,500,000,000 for unsubsidized guaranteed operating loans and $1,050,090,000 for direct operating loans; Indian tribe land acquisition loans, $2,000,000; guaranteed conservation loans, $150,000,000; Indian highly fractionated land loans, $10,000,000; and for boll weevil eradication program loans, $100,000,000: *Provided*, That the Secretary shall deem the pink bollworm to be a boll weevil for the purpose of boll weevil eradication program loans.

For the cost of direct and guaranteed loans and grants, including the cost of modifying loans as defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, as follows: farm ownership, $22,800,000 for direct loans; farm operating loans, $26,100,000 for unsubsidized guaranteed operating loans, $59,120,000 for direct operating loans; and Indian highly fractionated land loans, $193,000.

In addition, for administrative expenses necessary to carry out the direct and guaranteed loan programs, $268,634,000, of which $260,730,000 shall be paid to the appropriation for ''Farm Service Agency, Salaries and Expenses''.

Funds appropriated by this Act to the Agricultural Credit Insurance Program Account for farm ownership, operating and conservation direct loans and guaranteed loans may be transferred among these programs: *Provided*, That the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress are notified at least 15 days in advance of any transfer.

RISK MANAGEMENT AGENCY

For necessary expenses of the Risk Management Agency, $68,016,000: *Provided*, That the funds made available under section 522(e) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1522(e)) may be used for the Common Information Management System: *Provided further*, That not to exceed $1,000 shall be available for official reception and representation expenses, as authorized by 7 U.S.C. 1506(i).

CORPORATIONS

The following corporations and agencies are hereby authorized to make expenditures, within the limits of funds and borrowing authority available to each such corporation or agency and in accord with law, and to make contracts and commitments without regard to fiscal year limitations as provided by section 104 of the Government Corporation Control Act as may be necessary in carrying out the programs set forth in the budget for the current fiscal year for such corporation or agency, except as hereinafter provided.

FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE CORPORATION FUND

For payments as authorized by section 516 of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1516), such sums as may be necessary, to remain available until expended.

COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION FUND

REIMBURSEMENT FOR NET REALIZED LOSSES

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For the current fiscal year, such sums as may be necessary to reimburse the Commodity Credit Corporation for net realized losses sustained, but not previously reimbursed, pursuant to section 2 of the Act of August 17, 1961 (15 U.S.C. 713a–11): *Provided*, That of the funds available to the Commodity Credit Corporation under section 11 of the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (15 U.S.C. 714i) for the conduct of its business with the Foreign Agricultural Service, up to $5,000,000 may be transferred to and used by the Foreign Agricultural Service for information resource management activities of the Foreign Agricultural Service that are not related to Commodity Credit Corporation business.

HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT

(LIMITATION ON EXPENSES)

For the current fiscal year, the Commodity Credit Corporation shall not expend more than $5,000,000 for site investigation and cleanup expenses, and operations and maintenance expenses to comply with the requirement of section 107(g) of the Comprehensive

Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (42 U.S.C. 9607(g)), and section 6001 of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (42 U.S.C. 6961).

TITLE II

CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, $760,000.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BROUN of Georgia) having assumed the chair, Ms. FOXX, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2112) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE BRAD SHERMAN, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable BRAD SHERMAN, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, June 10, 2011.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives that I have been served with a subpoena, issued by the Superior Court of California, for testimony and documents.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined under Rule VIII that the subpoena is not ''a proper exercise of jurisdiction by the court.'' The Superior Court itself has quashed the subpoena (see attached docket summary).

Sincerely,

BRAD SHERMAN,
Member of Congress.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. ESHOO (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for the week of June 13 on account of recovery from surgery.

Mr. STIVERS (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for June 13 through June 24 on account of military service in the Ohio Army National Guard.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 39 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, June 15, 2011, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

1903. A letter from the Chief, Planning and Regulatory Affairs, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Geographic Preference Option for the Procurement of Unprocessed Agricultural Products in Child Nutrition Programs (RIN: 0584-AE03) received May 24, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1904. A letter from the Regulatory Contact, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Export Inspection and Weighing Waiver for High Quality Speciality Grains Transported in Containers [Docket #: GIPSA-2010-FGIS-0002] (RIN: 0580-AB18) received May 5, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1905. A letter from the Deputy Director, Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia, transmitting a report of a violation of the Antideficiency Act, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1517(b); to the Committee on Appropriations.

1906. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Evaluation of the TRICARE Program Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 Report to Congress, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1073 note Public Law 104-106; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1907. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's report on the amount of purchases from foreign entities in Fiscal Year 2010. The report separately identifies the dollar value of items for which the Buy American Act was waived, pursuant to Public Law 104-201, section 827 (110 Stat. 2611); to the Committee on Armed Services.

1908. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting modernization priority assessments for the National Guard and Reserve equipment for Fiscal Year 2011; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1909. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulations Supplement; Fire-Resistant Fiber for Production of Military Uniforms (DFARS Case 2011-D021) (RIN: 0750-AH22) received May 24, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

1910. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the annual report on operations of the National Defense Stockpile (NDS) in accordance with section 11(a) of the Strategic and Critical Materials Stock Piling Act as amended (50 U.S.C. 98 et seq.) detailing NDS operations during FY 2010; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1911. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Admiral Eric T. Olson, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of admiral on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

1912. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the Board's final rule — Conformance Period for Entities Engaged in Prohibited Proprietary Trading or Private Equity Fund or Hedge Fund Activities [Regulation Y; Docket No. R-1397] (RIN: 7100-AD58) received May 23, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

1913. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to Mexico pursuant to Section 2(b)(3) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945, as amended; to the Committee on Financial Services.

1914. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to Singapore pursuant to Section 2(b)(3) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945, as amended; to the Committee on Financial Services.

1915. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting proposed legislation to authorize the Export-Import Bank for the period of October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2015; to the Committee on Financial Services.

1916. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Reserve System, transmitting the System's 97th Annual Report covering operations for calendar year 2010; to the Committee on Financial Services.

1917. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Joint Board for the Enrollment of Actuaries, transmitting the Board's final rule — Regulations Governing the Performance of Actuarial Services Under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 [TD 9517] (RIN: 1545-BC82) received May 11, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

1918. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting written notification of the determination that a public health emergency exists and has existed in the state of Missouri since May 22, 2011, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 247d(a) Public Law 107-188, section 144(a); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1919. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's final rule — Procedures for Submitting to the Department of Energy Trade Secrets and Commercial or Financial Information That Is Privileged or Confidential (RIN: 1990-AA36) received May 10, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1920. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Listing of Color Additives Exempt From Certification; Reactive Blue 69 [Docket No.: FDA-2009-C-0543] received May 24, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1921. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants From the Portland Cement Manufacturing Industry and Standards of Performance for Portland Cement Plants [EPA-HQ-OAR-2002-0051; EPA-HQ-OAR-2007-0887; FRL-9306-7] (RIN: 2060-AQ93) received May 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1922. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — An Approach for Plant-Specific, Risk-Informed Decisionmaking: Technical Specifications, Regulatory Guide 1.177, Revision 1 received May 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1923. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — An Approach for Using Probabilistic Risk Assessment In Risk-Informed