

surges which rush into our water system, our streams, and rivers, and into the Chesapeake Bay. We have to do a better job of development in dealing with storm runoff.

It also recognized the responsibility of local governments. They are the primary entity responsible for how we treat our waste with the wastewater facility plants and how we can do a better job of preventing pollutants from entering our water system.

We also dealt with business growth and the pollution coming in through business activities.

One of the major focal points was how do we deal with agriculture. In one sense agriculture is very positive for our environment. Maintaining open space is important, and agricultural activities are generally open space. That can be good because it gives us a larger tract of land in order to filter rainwater, to filter the pollutants from perhaps never entering the bay but, if they do enter the water system, they enter in a way that has already been filtered. So in that sense agricultural preservation is important for the conservation of the bay, but because of farming activities that use nitrogen and phosphorus, it can cause significant challenges for the bay.

I think Maryland farmers have done a good job. They have done a good job for many years. But I wish to speak about one farmer particularly because I was very pleased—before this meeting, I had a chance to meet Hank Suchting. He is a farmer in Baltimore County, MD. That is pretty close to the urban centers. The Presiding Officer was referring to me as being the Senator from Baltimore. I am a proud resident of Baltimore, and Mr. Suchting's farm is only a few miles from my house. It is interesting. He has a beef-farming cattle activity. It is in the Oregon branch of the Gwynns Falls River, which has been dammed to provide for the Loch Raven Reservoir to deal with our water supply. In other words, that stream, which is part of his cattle production, is in the watershed that goes into the drinking water that the Presiding Officer and I drink in the Baltimore region. So we all have a significant interest in making sure that water supply is kept safe and that when we turn on our tap and when we drink our water, it is fresh water.

Mr. Suchting's farm activities produce about 30 beef calves a year. That is an important number because in order for that cattle population to be properly grazed, it needs to have a water supply, and it needs to have a place where the cattle can cool off, particularly on a hot day like we had yesterday. So the traditional farming activities for this cattle production were to allow the cattle—as I said, the stream goes right through his property—to use the stream for the purpose of cooling off and for the purpose of the drinking water for the cattle. However, that was not the best way to do it for the purposes of protecting the water

supply of Baltimore and to deal with the Chesapeake Bay and to deal with our environment because, as the Presiding Officer knows, free access for the cattle to the river meant that the cattle manure, the phosphorus would go into the waters, causing a challenge for the water system, and it caused significant erosion to the streambed itself.

So Mr. Suchting felt a commitment to help the environment, so he said: Look, why don't I look at fencing in the riverbed so my cattle do not get direct access to the stream and producing a supplemental water system through a water trough—as we see in the photograph. It works through gravity. It uses the aquifer, works through gravity, and produces direct water for the cattle to drink.

Here is the interesting part. His principal motivation was that he wanted to do something that would help the environment, but he still wanted to be able to produce his cattle. He felt an obligation to do this.

The State of Maryland had help for him. In partnerships with the Federal Government and conservation programs, there were funds available to help him fence in the property to have a sensible crossing—because he was on both sides of the creek—so that he could have a way for the cattle to cross safely and still protect the water bed itself. That program made it more financially advantageous for him to put in the fencing so the cattle did not have direct access to the stream and to put in the water trough so they could get fresh water.

But guess what. He put a pencil to it and found out it was better economically for him to do this. It actually made his farming practices more financially viable. How did that happen? Well, he was losing calves every season to storms when there were water surges and they would get caught in the stream and they would actually drown. He was losing calves because of extreme weather. Being in the stream caused hypothermia for the calves, and they would die. Every time he lost a calf, he also lost about \$1,000. This was a sound investment from the point of view of the financial viability of his cattle production.

Also, he found it was healthier for his cattle in two respects. First, the water supply did not include the pathogens that can be found in the streams, so he found it was healthier for his cattle to get water through the trough rather than through the stream itself. Secondly, he said the growth around the stream increased dramatically because the cattle were not in the stream, and it gave better shade on the property to allow the cattle to be able to cool off in the shade in a more efficient way than going into the stream itself.

My point is this: This is just one example. I could give hundreds of examples where conservation makes sense for agriculture and our environment.

My reason for being at this farm and my reason for bringing together the

leaders in agriculture in Maryland is to talk about this new program that is now available. It is the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, which is available under the farm bill, which makes hundreds of millions of dollars available competitively—it is not earmarked—for farmers to be able to do what Mr. Suchting did through similar types of programs to help themselves and help our environment so we can have a safer environment for our community.

Working together, we can have a cleaner environment and successful agriculture. There are now new tools available. We want people to know about them. We want farmers to know about them. We want conservation districts to get this information out to our farming community because, quite frankly, agriculture is critical to Maryland, it is critical to New Jersey, it is critical to this country. It is the largest single part of our local economy, and I expect it is the same in New Jersey and around the Nation. We want viable agriculture. We outcompete the world in production. We want to be able to continue to do that, but we also want to pass on a cleaner environment to our children. We can do both.

Thanks to the leadership of Senator STABENOW and thanks to the leadership of this body, we now have new tools available to help our farmers in conservation. I hope they will take advantage of them for the sake of our environment and for the sake of agriculture.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 4660, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to the consideration of H.R. 4660, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.