

for his service here and for the civility he brought to this institution. We will truly miss him.

**MOURNING THE PASSING OF HUMANITARIAN, ENTERTAINER
JOHN DENVER**

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 21, 1997

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I mourn a friend and associate. The passing of singer-songwriter John Denver, over the Columbus Day recess, leaves a void in the world of humanitarianism and compassion.

I first met John Denver when we were working to create a Presidential Commission on World Hunger and the both of us were subsequently appointed to that commission by President Jimmy Carter in the 1970's. As a result of that commission's final report, I introduced legislation establishing a Select Committee on Hunger in the Congress. John Denver, along with our mutual friend the late singer-songwriter Harry Chapin, was instrumental in lobbying for the successful adoption of that legislation. Subsequently, the three of us often conferred regarding the problems of hunger and starvation throughout the world, but also the environment and the problems of nuclear proliferation.

All of us who had the honor and privilege of working with John Denver recognized his involvement with ecological concerns and his heartfelt love of humanity. His work on behalf of hunger in the late 1970's and early 1980's was significant, along with that of Harry Chapin, in shining the spotlight of public opinion on the problems of malnutrition.

In the mid-1980's, many performers in show business received publicity for their fundraising efforts on behalf of world hunger. We must not forget that these successful efforts would not have been attempted, yet alone achieved, were it not for the courageous, trail-blazing activities of both John Denver and Harry Chapin.

The December 20, 1976 issue of Newsweek magazine noted that "People write him letters from hospitals telling how listening to 'Take Me Home, Country Roads' or 'Poems, Prayers and Promises' has stopped convulsions or cleared up depressions. A long-distance swimmer navigated the shark-infested Cook Strait of New Zealand by singing Denver songs as she counted her strokes. In Lockport, NY, a woman regained her spirits after a mastectomy by listening to Denver songs all day—especially 'Sweet Surrender'."

Those who are familiar with John Denver's work are not surprised to learn of the amazing impact it has had on so many lives. His gift of expressing empathy and sincere concern were perhaps his greatest contributions.

John Denver has left us with a legacy of goodwill and also of quality entertainment. From his platinum recordings, to his appearances on the silver screen and television, he delighted and inspired audiences worldwide. Throughout his career he selflessly shared the spotlight when working with such stars as George Burns, Placido Domingo, Itzhak Perlman, and Kermit the Frog. Like his humanitarian efforts, his singing, writing, and acting talents will be missed by many.

He started his career with three guitars, an old Chevrolet and less than \$200 to his name. From such humble beginnings, John Denver rose to be counted among the brightest of America's stars. We will all be poorer from his loss.

I ask my colleagues to join with me in continuing to support the causes championed by John Denver and in extending condolences to John's three children, Jessie Belle, Anna Kate and Zachary, to the rest of his family, and to the millions of people whose lives were touched and influenced by this remarkable humanitarian.

**STATEMENT OF RECOGNITION FOR
NEW YORK ARTISTS EQUITY ASSOCIATION**

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 21, 1997

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of New York Artists Equity Association (NYAEA), now celebrating its 50th anniversary.

Since 1947, Artists Equity Association has been a strong advocate for legislation on behalf of visual artists, and has provided services to support the development of the visual arts in our communities. NYAEA not only fights for the future of the visual arts, but places the New York artistic community in the context of history, as a necessary component of society, one that enriches our lives.

New York Artists Equity Association's mission of education, awareness, and support for the visual arts has provided the basis for its constant efforts. By promoting emerging artists in its wonderful Broome Street Gallery, it has successfully integrated those artists into the larger community. By preserving endangered visual art work, it assures the record of our rich artistic past. Through educational outreach, it has developed a new audience which is constantly expanding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend NYAEA, under the leadership of its Executive Director, Regina Stewart, for supporting visual artists at a time when the resources they receive from the government are simply not enough. NYAEA has provided support for many visual artists who otherwise would not have received help. Through referrals, legal services, and health care programs, the Association helps ensure economic stability for visual artists who might otherwise be forced to abandon their talents due to economic difficulties. By providing communication within the community, it helps establish a strong support base for issues relevant to artists' needs.

I stand here today to thank New York Artists Equity Association for all it has done to advocate for visual artists, consistent with the needs of their community. I am proud that NYAEA is in my Congressional District, and that its work reaches far beyond my District to help visual artists in the larger community. I also want to thank one of the Association's Past Vice Presidents, Doris Wyman, who serves on my Arts Advisory Committee, consistently championing the needs of visual artists. Because of my ongoing work with this fine organization and their leadership, I know of their constant efforts to change regressive

policies on the arts and I commend them. For fifty years, NYAEA has supported visual artists and been a passionate advocate for their causes. In the current climate, NYAEA's non-partisan commitment is especially valuable. I salute New York Artists Equity Association for helping to assure a stable artistic community—one that is, and always must be, an integral part of our heritage and culture.

**CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2160,
AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT,
FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1998**

SPEECH OF

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 6, 1997

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the FY98 Agriculture Appropriations Conference Report. I am pleased that the report protects the peanut program and that it does not eliminate the subsidy for crop insurance for tobacco. It is difficult for many Americans, and many of my colleagues, to understand the profound impact that farming has on our nation. They live in cities where their food appears in supermarkets, not fully understanding the difficult and laborious efforts that brought the food to them. Spend one day on a peanut farm in my district, and you will know the effort that went into that jar of peanut butter. Family farmers are the backbone of America's agricultural community and the peanut program is one of the vital and necessary safety-nets that help protect that community.

The peanut program helps 20,000 American farmers and small businesses compete in the world market, while providing nearly 50,000 American jobs on farms, in processing plants and in related industries. Peanuts are the 12th most valuable crop in the United States and the 4th most valuable oil crop worldwide. In addition, the program provides consumers with an ample supply of one of the safest, most nutritious foods on the market. Because of the program, the United States will be the No. 1 exporter of edible peanuts this year.

The peanut program is no-net-cost program and in fact contains a budget deficit reduction assessment of \$83 million which would have been lost if the program was eliminated.

The program does not reduce consumer prices. Consumer prices have not changed from a year ago, despite the fact farm support prices were cut by 10 percent last year. Consumer prices for peanut butter remain the lowest in the world, at 11 cents a serving, the same price as 1988. Peanut butter prices are lower today than 10 years ago.

The environment is benefited by the program because peanut plants are nitrogen-fixing plants which help restore vital nutrients to the soil in rotation with other crops.

I have had serious questions about the GAO report that seems to be the main source of criticism to the Peanut Program. I do not believe that this report is entirely accurate or an objective presentation of data. It is really designed to give a skewed appearance. The USDA has commented on the "lack of objectivity," the "erroneous assumptions," and "lack of thoroughness" in the report. The GAO has

admitted their use of the term "consumer" means the "first buyer" not the "final consumer of the product." The GAO also interviewed both small and large manufacturers of peanut products and were told that they "may not pass the costs [savings] directly on to the final consumer" of peanut products. This report was the basis of the attempt to phase-out the peanut program and quite simply the factual basis for that argument was truly flawed.

Those statistics give you the economic impact of the peanut program, but I want to put a human face on this debate. Peanut is concentrated in the rural regions of nine southern states, with these regions being poverty-dense and agriculture-dependent. Peanuts is the largest cash crop and industry in many of these regions. For example, every one of the 31 counties in the 2nd District of Georgia, which I represent, is a peanut producing county. The peanut farms are on average 100 acres, not exactly giant agribusiness. Twenty-nine of those counties have poverty exceeding the national average of 13 percent. It's not just my district. Alabama and Florida have a significant number of peanut producing counties that also have poverty exceeding the national average. The elimination of the Peanut Program would have cost more than 5,000 jobs. We are not only talking about hard working family-farmers whose average income dropped sharply in 1995 & 1996. We are also talking about the families of the farmers, the small businesses that work in the peanut industry and the rural communities that are sustained by peanut farming.

Last year we forged an agreement between the Government and our farmers. Investment decisions have been based on a 7-year farm bill. This body should never make a 7-year commitment and attempt to break it after one. If we had broken this agreement we would have had zero credibility with the agricultural community. In addition, the banking community would no longer trust us, because they would have made loans based on the 7-year farm bill.

The crop insurance program was designed to protect crop producers from unavoidable risks associated with adverse weather, plant diseases and insect infestations. The crop insurance program was made available to producers of MAJOR crops, including tobacco, for which private insurance is generally not available. The Government underwriting enhances the ability of farmers to obtain credit from commercial lenders who view a crop insurance policy as a form of security on a farm loan. Private insurance availability would not be universal and without federal crop insurance, farmers premiums will more than double. Small farmers couldn't afford that. With the denial of private crop insurance would come the denial of production loans. Farmers would be forced to stop growing tobacco, and many small banks in small towns would be weakened. Simply put, efforts to eliminate multiperil crop insurance for tobacco farmers unfairly harms and discriminates against small tobacco farmers and tobacco communities. In fact, nearly 30 percent of all disaster indemnities go to small, black-operated farms. Larger operations will probably do fine if this amendment is adopted.

The average tobacco farm is less than 10 acres. If we use the sponsors of the amendment's figures and say the gross receipts for tobacco average \$4,000 per acre, we are only talking about \$4,000 a year, gross. Subtract the loan, interest, farmhand salary and inputs needed to grow the tobacco, there is not a lot left. Without any insurance, a single storm could bankrupt a small hard working American farmer, and another generation of people will be out of farming.

If you have listened to these arguments and said "so what, let them grow something else" do this math: To replace the gross income from 10 acres of tobacco, a farmer would have to plant 74 acres of cotton, 149 acres of corn, 232 acres of soybeans or 288 acres of wheat. On what land is the farmer supposed to plant these crops? Are you going to give him the land or loan him the money to buy the land? Unlikely. Once again, if you want to stop people from growing tobacco, just say so.

The USDA and the Administration opposed eliminating this program. According to the Secretary of Agriculture, Dan Glickman, abolishing the subsidy will effectively end our ability to provide crop insurance and non-insured assistance payments for tobacco grows. Additionally, he argues that eliminating the subsidy would have a particularly detrimental effect on thousands of small farmers in tobacco producing states, not to mention the toll it would take on the economic stability of many rural communities.

Tobacco growers in three States received \$77.8 million in indemnities for losses due to back-to-back hurricanes that hit the East Coast last year. These funds helped communities recover from disaster and were paid for in part by the producers themselves. If no crop insurance or disaster assistance were available, these farmers would have been ruined, their farms foreclosed on, not knowing if they would be able to support their families.

We all agree that smoking is something we don't want children to do. I myself have introduced H.R. 2034, the Tobacco Use by Minors Deterrence Act. Through various civil penalties and community involvement, it would help address underage tobacco use. What it doesn't do is prevent anyone from making a living or telling them their livelihood is somehow inappropriate.

Adults should be able to make the decision to smoke. Tobacco farmers should be able to grow a legal product that sustains many communities in my state and across America.

If you think this program is corporate welfare, I invite you to come to my district and meet some of the "wealthy" tobacco farmers. I'll show you hard working men and women who earn an honest living.

I am very pleased that the Conference Committee has also seen fit to maintain research projects through the University of Georgia which are very critical to the future of the well-being of the constituents I represent, and their livelihood: The Peanut Competitiveness Institute; the Urban Insect Pest Management; the Alliance for Food Protection; and Landscaping for Water Quality.

I also am glad that this conference report has included \$3,000,000 for the Outreach for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Program instead of \$2,000,000 as pro-

posed by the House. This is still not the full authorization amount of \$10 million, but we are getting closer because in addition to the funding received through appropriations bills, the program has also received \$4,500,000 from the Fund for Rural America.

The conference agreement provides \$652,197,000 for the Rural Community Advancement Program (RCAP) instead of \$644,259,000 as proposed by the Senate. The crucial areas which are important for my district are the activities under the Rural Housing Assistance Program, the Rural Business-Cooperative Assistance Program and the Rural Utilities Assistance Program.

I think this is a good agreement, and I rise to support its swift passage.

SALUTE TO BROWARD COUNTY'S AFRICAN-AMERICAN LIBRARY

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 21, 1997

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute today to the Broward County African-American Library, which opens in my congressional district this Saturday, October 25. One of the great milestones in learning opportunities, this sanctuary of history, learning, and cultural promises to become one of south Florida's greatest libraries. Its purpose is to showcase the immeasurable contributions of African-Americans in this country as well as in our native Africa. Beyond that, however, it will stand as a beacon for the educational uplift of an entire community.

The great historian, educator, and author David Walker, once commented about the importance of libraries for African-Americans:

"I would crawl on my hands and knees through mud and mire, to the feet of a learned man, where I would sit and humbly supplicate him to instill into me that which neither devils nor tyrants could remove, only with my life—for colored people to acquire learning in this country makes tyrants quake and tremble on their sandy foundations."

This is the kind of idealism that propels the outstanding individuals who have devoted their lives to making the Broward County African-American Library a reality. I am pleased to salute their achievement, and to praise their enormous efforts in this significant undertaking.

The significance of this project to the growth and development of Broward County is immeasurable. I am pleased to commend the individuals who have committed their lives and their livelihood to making this library a dream come true, a dream founded upon the notion that to study each other—our accomplishments, our traditions, our culture—is to know each other.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Broward County African-American Library, as it steers our community toward greater progress and understanding