

Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Edwards
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
Evans
Everett
Ewing
Fletcher
Foley
Fowler
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Ganske
Gekas
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Goode
Goodlatte
Goss
Graham
Granger
Green (WI)
Greenwood
Gutknecht
Hall (OH)
Hall (TX)
Hansen
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Herger
Hill (IN)
Hill (MT)
Hilleary
Hilliard
Hobson
Hoekstra
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Isakson
Istook
Jenkins
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Kasich
Kingston
Klecza
Knollenberg

Kolbe
Kuykendall
LaHood
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Leach
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lucas (KY)
Lucas (OK)
Manzullo
McCollum
McInnis
McIntosh
McIntyre
McKeon
Metcalf
Mica
Millender-
McDonald
Miller, Gary
Minge
Mollohan
Moran (KS)
Morella
Myrick
Nethercutt
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Obey
Ose
Oxley
Packard
Pastor
Paul
Pease
Petri
Phelps
Pickett
Pitts
Pombo
Porter
Portman
Pryce (OH)
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Regula
Reyes
Reynolds
Riley
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher

Ros-Lehtinen
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Sanchez
Sandlin
Sanford
Schaffer
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Shimkus
Simpson
Sisisky
Skeen
Skeltson
Smith (MI)
Smith (TX)
Soudier
Spence
Spratt
Stearns
Stenholm
Stump
Morella
Stupak
Sununu
Talent
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Thune
Tiahrt
Toomey
Traficant
Upton
Walden
Wamp
Watkins
Watts (OK)
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson
Wise
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

Meehan
Meek (FL)
Menendez
Miller (FL)
Miller, George
Mink
Moakley
Moore
Moran (VA)
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Oberstar
Oliver
Ortiz
Owens
Pallone
Pascarell
Payne
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Pickering

Price (NC)
Quinn
Rangel
Rivers
Rodriguez
Roemer
Rothman
Roukema
Roybal-Allard
Sabo
Salmon
Sanders
Sawyer
Saxton
Schakowsky
Scott
Sherman
Sherwood
Shows
Shuster
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Snyder

Stabenow
Stark
Strickland
Sweeney
Tauscher
Thompson (CA)
Thurman
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Velazquez
Vento
Visclosky
Vitter
Walsh
Waters
Watt (NC)
Weiner
Wexler
Weygand
Woolsey
Wynn

NOT VOTING—16

Bass
Berman
Chenoweth
Clay
Ford
Goodling

Hinojosa
Hooley
Jefferson
Levin
Meeks (NY)
Pomeroy

Rush
Scarborough
Waxman
Wu

□ 1122

Mrs. CLAYTON, and Messrs. COYNE, CAMP, SHOWS and COOKSEY changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Mr. MCINNIS and Mr. MINGE changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, regrettably I was unavoidably detained for rollcall votes 466 and 467. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall vote 466 and "no" on rollcall vote 467.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H. RES. 298

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the name of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. SAWYER) be removed as a cosponsor of H. Res. 298.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BE-REUTER). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1906, AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 317, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 1906), making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 317, the conference report is considered as having been read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of Thursday, September 30, 1999, at page H9141.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. SKEEN) and the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. SKEEN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the conference report to accompany H.R. 1906, and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I feel somewhat like Mrs. Custer, and how she would have felt about Indian relief, after we have gone through this exercise earlier. But I am pleased to bring before the House today the conference report on H.R. 1906, providing appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, the Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies.

This bill does a lot of good for important nutrition, research, and rural development programs and still meets our conference allocations on discretionary and mandatory spending.

Basic research on agriculture, food safety and nutrition has been increased by \$80 million. The Farm Service Agency budget is also increased by \$80 million, and this will be especially important to farms affected by the drought, the floods and the low prices.

Loan authorizations for the Rural Housing Service are increased by \$330 million. The program to provide loans and grants for rural schools and medical facilities, to allow them to access the resources of large urban institutions, is increased by two-thirds to \$20.7 million.

Our feeding and nutrition programs are all increased or maintained at the 1999 levels. This report has \$108 million for the WIC program over last year, and the direct appropriation for Food and Drug Administration is \$70 million over last year.

We were able to make these increases by cutting administrative and management costs and by benefiting from lower loan costs in our farm and rural development programs.

Finally, this bill carries an additional title this year that provides about \$8.7 billion in emergency assistance, including \$1.2 billion for farm losses caused by natural disaster.

OMB Director Lew has promised an assessment of Hurricane Floyd damage

NAYS—188

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Bachus
Baird
Baldacci
Baldwin
Barcia
Barrett (WI)
Bartlett
Becerra
Bentsen
Berkley
Blagojevich
Blumenauer
Boehlert
Bonior
Borski
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Camp
Cardin
Carson
Clayton
Clement
Condit
Conyers
Cooksey
Costello
Coyne
Crowley
Cummins
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio

DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Deutsch
Dicks
Dixon
Doggett
Doyle
Engel
English
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Forbes
Fossella
Frank (MA)
Franks (NJ)
Frost
Gejdenson
Gephardt
Gilman
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green (TX)
Gutierrez
Hastings (FL)
Hinchey
Hoeffel
Holden
Holt
Hoyer
Hutchinson
Inslee
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee
(TX)
John

Johnson (CT)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kelly
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind (WI)
King (NY)
Klink
Kucinich
LaFalce
Lampson
Lantos
Larson
Lazio
Lee
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Lofgren
Lowey
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McKinney
McNulty

but indicated it may be some time before the assessment is completed. I expect we will be dealing with additional disaster needs in a future bill.

Once again I would like to thank all the members of our subcommittee and their staffs for their hard work and cooperation on this bill, which began with the budget presentation back in February.

I want to offer special thanks to the ranking member of the Committee on Appropriations, the distinguished gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), for his support, and a special thanks also to my good friend, the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, the distinguished gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR). I know she has

strong concerns regarding the conference report, but I want to make clear to every Member that she is a strong supporter of rural America and that she deserves a share of the credit for the good that this bill will do.

Mr. Speaker, this is a bill that benefits every American every day, no matter where they live, whether it is FDA protecting the safety of our foods and medicines, or the nutrition programs for children and the elderly, or creating economic development in rural America. This bill is for urban and suburban Americans just as much as it is for the farmer and the rancher.

And, by the way, I think that everybody, every member of the United States, is a farmer by acquisition, because everybody I know knows more about farming than most farmers do.

I know some of our colleagues are concerned for what is not in the bill, particularly dairy policy and the relaxation of export sanctions to certain countries.

□ 1130

But if we all voted on the basis of what is not in a bill, I am not sure any legislation would ever get passed here. I would say to my colleagues that this is a good bipartisan bill, and it will benefit every one of their constituents.

This is the first day of the new fiscal year, and we need to put this bill to work immediately. Please support the good that is in this bill today and vote aye on the conference report.

Mr. Speaker, I include the following for the RECORD:

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES
APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2000 (H.R. 1906)
 (Amounts in thousands)

	FY 1999 Enacted	FY 2000 Request	House	Senate	Conference	Conference vs. enacted
TITLE I - AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS						
Production, Processing, and Marketing						
Office of the Secretary	2,836	2,942	2,836	2,836	15,436	+ 12,600
Executive Operations:						
Chief Economist	5,620	6,622	5,620	6,411	6,411	+ 791
National Appeals Division	11,718	12,699	11,718	11,718	11,718	.....
Office of Budget and Program Analysis	6,120	6,583	6,583	6,583	6,583	+ 463
Office of the Chief Information Officer	5,551	7,998	5,551	5,551	6,051	+ 500
Y2K conversion (emergency appropriations)	46,168	.....	.....	.....	.....	-46,168
Office of the Chief Financial Officer	4,283	6,288	4,283	5,283	4,783	+ 500
Total, Executive Operations	79,460	40,190	33,755	35,546	35,546	-43,914
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration	613	636	613	613	613	.....
Agriculture buildings and facilities and rental payments	137,184	166,364	140,364	145,364	140,364	+ 3,180
Payments to GSA	(108,057)	(115,542)	(115,542)	(115,542)	(115,542)	(+ 7,485)
Building operations and maintenance	(24,127)	(24,822)	(24,822)	(24,822)	(24,822)	(+ 695)
Repairs, renovations, and construction	(5,000)	(26,000)	.....	(5,000)	.....	(-5,000)
Hazardous waste management	15,700	22,700	15,700	15,700	15,700	.....
Departmental administration	32,168	36,117	36,117	34,738	34,738	+ 2,570
Outreach for socially disadvantaged farmers	3,000	10,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	.....
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations	3,668	3,805	3,668	3,668	3,568	-100
Office of Communications	8,138	9,300	8,138	8,138	8,138	.....
Office of the Inspector General	65,128	68,246	65,128	65,128	65,128	.....
Office of the General Counsel	29,194	32,675	29,194	30,094	29,194	.....
Office of the Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics	540	2,061	940	540	540	.....
Economic Research Service	65,757	55,628	70,266	62,919	65,419	-338
National Agricultural Statistics Service	103,964	100,559	100,559	99,355	99,405	-4,559
Census of Agriculture	(23,599)	(16,490)	(16,490)	(16,490)	(16,490)	(-7,109)
Agricultural Research Service	785,518	836,868	823,381	809,499	834,322	+ 48,804
Buildings and facilities	56,437	44,500	.....	53,000	52,500	-3,937
Total, Agricultural Research Service	841,955	881,368	823,381	862,499	886,822	+ 44,867
Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service:						
Research and education activities	481,216	468,965	467,327	473,377	485,698	+ 4,482
Native American Institutions Endowment Fund	(4,600)	(4,600)	(4,600)	(4,600)	(4,600)	.....
Extension activities	437,987	401,603	438,987	422,620	424,922	-13,065
Integrated activities .....	.....	72,844	.....	35,541	39,541	+ 39,541
Total, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service	919,203	943,412	906,314	931,538	950,161	+ 30,958
Office of the Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs	618	641	618	618	618	.....
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service:						
Salaries and expenses	425,803	435,445	444,000	439,445	441,263	+ 15,460
AQI user fees	(88,000)	(95,000)	(87,000)	(90,000)	(87,000)	(-1,000)
Buildings and facilities	7,700	7,200	7,200	5,200	5,200	-2,500
Total, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service	433,503	442,645	451,200	444,645	446,463	+ 12,960
Agricultural Marketing Service:						
Marketing Services	48,831	60,182	49,152	51,229	51,625	+ 2,794
Standardization user fees	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	.....
(Limitation on administrative expenses, from fees collected)	(60,730)	(60,730)	(60,730)	(60,730)	(60,730)	.....
Funds for strengthening markets, income, and supply (transfer from section 32)	10,998	12,443	12,443	12,443	12,443	+ 1,445
Payments to states and possessions	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	.....
Total, Agricultural Marketing Service	61,029	73,825	62,795	64,872	65,268	+ 4,239
Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration:						
Salaries and expenses	26,787	26,448	26,448	26,287	26,448	-339
Limitation on inspection and weighing services	(42,557)	(42,557)	(42,557)	(42,557)	(42,557)	.....
Office of the Under Secretary for Food Safety	446	469	446	446	446	.....
Food Safety and Inspection Service	616,986	652,955	652,955	638,404	649,411	+ 32,425
Lab accreditation fees 1/	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	.....
Total, Production, Processing, and Marketing	3,447,877	3,572,986	3,434,435	3,476,948	3,542,426	+ 94,549
Farm Assistance Programs						
Office of the Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services	572	595	572	572	572	.....

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES
APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2000 (H.R. 1906) — continued
(Amounts in thousands)

	FY 1999 Enacted	FY 2000 Request	House	Senate	Conference	Conference vs. enacted
Farm Service Agency:						
Salaries and expenses	714,499	794,839	794,839	794,839	794,839	+80,340
(Transfer from export loans)	(589)	(672)	(672)	(589)	(589)	
(Transfer from P.L. 480)	(815)	(845)	(845)	(815)	(815)	
(Transfer from ACIF)	(209,861)	(209,861)	(209,861)	(209,861)	(209,861)	
Subtotal, Transfers from program accounts.....	(211,265)	(211,378)	(211,378)	(211,265)	(211,265)	
Total, salaries and expenses	(925,764)	(1,006,217)	(1,006,217)	(1,006,104)	(1,006,104)	(+80,340)
State mediation grants	2,000	4,000	4,000	2,000	3,000	+1,000
Dairy indemnity program	450	450	450	450	450	
Subtotal, Farm Service Agency	716,949	799,289	799,289	797,289	798,289	+81,340
Agricultural Credit Insurance Fund Program Account:						
Loan authorizations:						
Farm ownership loans:						
Direct	(85,651)	(128,049)	(128,049)	(128,049)	(128,049)	(+42,398)
Guaranteed	(425,031)	(431,373)	(431,373)	(431,373)	(431,373)	(+6,342)
Subtotal	(510,682)	(559,422)	(559,422)	(559,422)	(559,422)	(+48,740)
Farm operating loans:						
Direct	(500,000)	(500,000)	(500,000)	(500,000)	(500,000)	
Guaranteed unsubsidized	(948,276)	(1,697,842)	(1,697,842)	(1,697,842)	(1,697,842)	(+749,566)
Guaranteed subsidized	(200,000)	(97,442)	(97,442)	(200,000)	(200,000)	
Subtotal	(1,648,276)	(2,295,284)	(2,295,284)	(2,397,842)	(2,397,842)	(+749,566)
Indian tribe land acquisition loans	(1,000)	(1,028)	(1,028)	(1,028)	(1,028)	(+28)
Emergency disaster loans	(25,000)	(53,000)	(53,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)	
Boll weevil eradication loans	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)	
Total, Loan authorizations	(2,284,958)	(3,008,734)	(3,008,734)	(3,083,292)	(3,083,292)	(+798,334)
Loan subsidies:						
Farm ownership loans:						
Direct	12,822	4,827	4,827	4,827	4,827	-7,995
Guaranteed	6,758	2,416	2,416	2,416	2,416	-4,342
Subtotal	19,580	7,243	7,243	7,243	7,243	-12,337
Farm operating loans:						
Direct	34,150	29,300	29,300	29,300	29,300	-4,850
Guaranteed unsubsidized	11,000	23,940	23,940	23,940	23,940	+12,940
Guaranteed subsidized	17,480	8,585	8,585	17,620	17,620	+140
Subtotal	62,630	61,825	61,825	70,860	70,860	+8,230
Indian tribe land acquisition	153	21	21	21	21	-132
Emergency disaster loans	5,900	8,231	8,231	3,882	3,882	-2,018
Boll weevil loans subsidy	1,440					-1,440
Total, Loan subsidies	89,703	77,320	77,320	82,006	82,006	-7,697
ACIF expenses:						
Salaries and expense (transfer to FSA)	209,861	209,861	209,861	209,861	209,861	
Administrative expenses	10,000	4,300	4,300	4,300	4,300	-5,700
Total, ACIF expenses	219,861	214,161	214,161	214,161	214,161	-5,700
Total, Agricultural Credit Insurance Fund	309,584	291,481	291,481	296,167	296,167	-13,397
(Loan authorization)	(2,284,958)	(3,008,734)	(3,008,734)	(3,083,292)	(3,083,292)	(+798,334)
Total, Farm Service Agency	1,026,513	1,090,770	1,090,770	1,093,456	1,094,456	+67,943
Risk Management Agency	64,000	70,716	70,716	64,000	64,000	
Support Services Bureau		74,050				
Total, Farm Assistance Programs	1,091,085	1,236,131	1,162,058	1,158,028	1,159,028	+67,943
Corporations						
Federal Crop Insurance Corporation:						
Federal crop insurance corporation fund	1,504,036	997,000	997,000	997,000	997,000	-507,036

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES
APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2000 (H.R. 1906) — continued
 (Amounts in thousands)

	FY 1999 Enacted	FY 2000 Request	House	Senate	Conference	Conference vs. enacted
Commodity Credit Corporation Fund:						
Reimbursement for net realized losses	8,439,000	14,368,000	14,368,000	14,368,000	14,368,000	+5,929,000
Operations and maintenance for hazardous waste management (limitation on administrative expenses)	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	.....
Total, Corporations	9,943,036	15,365,000	15,365,000	15,365,000	15,365,000	+5,421,964
Total, title I, Agricultural Programs	14,481,998	20,174,117	19,981,493	19,999,976	20,066,454	+5,584,456
(By transfer)	(211,265)	(211,378)	(211,378)	(211,265)	(211,265)	.....
(Loan authorization)	(2,284,958)	(3,008,734)	(3,008,734)	(3,083,292)	(3,083,292)	(+798,334)
(Limitation on administrative expenses)	(108,287)	(108,287)	(108,287)	(108,287)	(108,287)	.....
TITLE II - CONSERVATION PROGRAMS						
Office of the Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment	693	721	693	693	693	.....
Natural Resources Conservation Service:						
Conservation operations	641,243	680,679	654,243	656,243	661,243	+20,000
(By transfer) .....	.....	(44,423)	.....	.....	.....	.....
Watershed surveys and planning	10,368	11,732	10,368	10,368	10,368	.....
Watershed and flood prevention operations	99,443	83,423	99,443	99,443	99,443	.....
Resource conservation and development	35,000	35,265	35,265	35,000	35,265	+265
Forestry incentives program	6,325	.....	.....	6,325	6,325	.....
Debt for nature .....	.....	5,000	.....	.....	.....	.....
Farmland protection program .....	.....	50,000	.....	.....	.....	.....
Total, Natural Resources Conservation Service	792,379	866,099	799,319	807,379	812,644	+20,265
Total, title II, Conservation Programs	793,072	866,820	800,012	808,072	813,337	+20,265
TITLE III - RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS						
Office of the Under Secretary for Rural Development	588	612	588	588	588	.....
Rural community advancement program	722,686	670,103	669,103	718,006	718,837	-3,849
Rural Housing Service:						
Rural Housing Insurance Fund Program Account:						
Loan authorizations:						
Single family (sec. 502)	(965,313)	(1,100,000)	(1,337,632)	(1,100,000)	(1,100,000)	(+134,687)
Unsubsidized guaranteed	(3,000,000)	(3,200,000)	(3,200,000)	(3,200,000)	(3,200,000)	(+200,000)
Housing repair (sec. 504)	(25,001)	(32,396)	(32,400)	(32,396)	(32,396)	(+7,395)
Farm labor (sec. 514)	(20,000)	(25,001)	(25,000)	(25,001)	(25,001)	(+5,001)
Rental housing (sec. 515)	(114,321)	(100,000)	(120,000)	(114,321)	(114,321)	.....
Multifamily housing guarantees (sec. 538)	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)	.....
Site loans (sec. 524)	(5,152)	(5,152)	(5,152)	(5,152)	(5,152)	.....
Credit sales of acquired property	(16,930)	(7,503)	(7,503)	(12,824)	(7,503)	(-9,427)
Self-help housing land development fund	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	.....
Total, Loan authorizations	(4,251,717)	(4,575,052)	(4,832,687)	(4,594,694)	(4,589,373)	(+337,656)
Loan subsidies:						
Single family (sec. 502)	114,100	93,830	114,100	93,830	93,830	-20,270
Unsubsidized guaranteed	2,700	19,520	19,520	19,520	19,520	+16,820
Housing repair (sec. 504)	8,808	9,900	9,900	9,900	9,900	+1,092
Multifamily housing guarantees (sec. 538)	2,320	480	480	480	480	-1,840
Farm labor (sec. 514)	10,406	11,308	11,308	11,308	11,308	+902
Rental housing (sec. 515)	55,180	39,680	47,616	45,363	45,363	-9,797
Site loans (sec. 524)	17	4	4	4	4	-13
Credit sales of acquired property	3,492	874	874	1,499	874	-2,618
Self-help housing land development fund	282	281	281	281	281	-1
Total, Loan subsidies	197,285	175,877	204,083	182,185	181,560	-15,725
RHIF administrative expenses (transfer to RHS)	360,785	383,879	375,879	360,785	375,879	+15,094
Rental assistance program:						
(Sec. 521)	577,497	434,100	577,500	634,100	634,100	+56,603
(Sec. 502(c)(5)(D))	5,900	5,900	5,900	5,900	5,900	.....
Subtotal	583,397	440,000	583,400	640,000	640,000	+56,603
Advance appropriation, FY 2001 .....	.....	200,000	.....	.....	.....	.....
Total, Rental assistance program	583,397	640,000	583,400	640,000	640,000	+56,603
Total, Rural Housing Insurance Fund	1,141,467	1,199,756	1,163,362	1,182,870	1,197,436	+55,972
(Loan authorization)	(4,251,717)	(4,575,052)	(4,832,687)	(4,594,694)	(4,589,373)	(+337,656)
Mutual and self-help housing grants	26,000	30,000	28,000	26,000	28,000	+2,000
Rural housing assistance grants	41,000	54,000	50,000	41,000	45,000	+4,000
Subtotal, grants and payments	67,000	84,000	78,000	67,000	73,000	+6,000

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES
APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2000 (H.R. 1906) — continued
 (Amounts in thousands)

	FY 1999 Enacted	FY 2000 Request	House	Senate	Conference	Conference vs. enacted
RHS expenses:						
Salaries and expenses	60,978	61,979	61,979	60,978	61,979	+ 1,001
(Transfer from RHIF)	(360,785)	(383,879)	(375,879)	(360,785)	(375,879)	(+ 15,094)
Total, RHS expenses	(421,763)	(445,858)	(437,858)	(421,763)	(437,858)	(+ 16,095)
Total, Rural Housing Service	1,269,445	1,345,735	1,303,341	1,310,948	1,332,418	+ 62,973
(Loan authorization)	(4,251,717)	(4,575,052)	(4,832,687)	(4,594,694)	(4,589,373)	(+ 337,656)
Rural Business-Cooperative Service:						
Rural Development Loan Fund Program Account:						
(Loan authorization)	(33,000)	(52,495)	(52,495)	(38,256)	(38,256)	(+ 5,256)
Loan subsidy	16,615	22,799	22,799	16,615	16,615	.....
Administrative expenses (transfer to RBCS)	3,482	3,337	3,337	3,337	3,337	-145
Total, Rural Development Loan Fund	20,097	26,136	26,136	19,952	19,952	-145
Rural Economic Development Loans Program Account:						
(Loan authorization)	(15,000)	(15,000)	(15,000)	(15,000)	(15,000)	.....
Direct subsidy	3,783	3,453	3,453	3,453	3,453	-330
Rural cooperative development grants	3,300	9,000	6,000	5,500	6,000	+ 2,700
RBCS expenses:						
Salaries and expenses	25,680	24,612	24,612	25,680	24,612	-1,068
(Transfer from RDLFP)	(3,482)	(3,337)	(3,337)	(3,337)	(3,337)	(-145)
Total, RBCS expenses	(29,162)	(27,949)	(27,949)	(29,017)	(27,949)	(-1,213)
Total, Rural Business-Cooperative Service	52,860	63,201	60,201	54,585	54,017	+ 1,157
(By transfer)	(3,482)	(3,337)	(3,337)	(3,337)	(3,337)	(-145)
(Loan authorization)	(48,000)	(67,495)	(67,495)	(53,256)	(53,256)	(+ 5,256)
Alternative Agricultural Research and Commercialization Revolving Fund.....	3,500	10,000	.....	3,500	.....	-3,500
Rural Utilities Service:						
Rural Electrification and Telecommunications Loans Program Account:						
Loan authorizations:						
Direct loans:						
Electric 5%	(71,500)	(50,000)	(121,500)	(71,500)	(121,500)	(+ 50,000)
Telecommunications 5%	(75,000)	(50,000)	(75,000)	(75,000)	(75,000)	.....
Subtotal	(146,500)	(100,000)	(196,500)	(146,500)	(196,500)	(+ 50,000)
Treasury rates: Telecommunications	(300,000)	(300,000)	(300,000)	(300,000)	(300,000)	.....
Muni-rate: Electric	(295,000)	(250,000)	(295,000)	(295,000)	(295,000)	.....
FFB loans:						
Electric, regular	(700,000)	(300,000)	(1,500,000)	(700,000)	(1,700,000)	(+ 1,000,000)
Telecommunications	(120,000)	(120,000)	(120,000)	(120,000)	(120,000)	.....
Subtotal	(820,000)	(420,000)	(1,620,000)	(820,000)	(1,820,000)	(+ 1,000,000)
Total, Loan authorizations	(1,561,500)	(1,070,000)	(2,411,500)	(1,561,500)	(2,611,500)	(+ 1,050,000)
Loan subsidies:						
Direct loans:						
Electric 5%	9,325	450	1,095	643	1,095	-8,230
Telecommunications 5%	7,342	560	840	840	840	-6,502
Subtotal	16,667	1,010	1,935	1,483	1,935	-14,732
Treasury rates: Telecommunications	810	2,370	2,370	2,370	2,370	+ 1,560
Muni-rate: Electric	25,842	9,175	10,827	10,826	10,827	-15,015
Total, Loan subsidies	43,319	12,555	15,132	14,679	15,132	-28,187
RETLP administrative expenses (transfer to RUS)	29,982	31,046	31,046	29,982	31,046	+ 1,064
Total, Rural Electrification and Telecommunications Loans Program Account.....	73,301	43,601	46,178	44,661	46,178	-27,123
(Loan authorization)	(1,561,500)	(1,070,000)	(2,411,500)	(1,561,500)	(2,611,500)	(+ 1,050,000)
Rural Telephone Bank Program Account:						
(Loan authorization)	(157,509)	(175,000)	(175,000)	(157,509)	(175,000)	(+ 17,491)
Direct loan subsidy	4,174	3,290	3,290	2,961	3,290	-884
RTP administrative expenses (transfer to RUS)	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	.....
Total	7,174	6,290	6,290	5,961	6,290	-884

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES
APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2000 (H.R. 1906) — continued
 (Amounts in thousands)

	FY 1999 Enacted	FY 2000 Request	House	Senate	Conference	Conference vs. enacted
Distance learning and telemedicine program:						
(Loan authorization)	(150,000)	(200,000)	(200,000)	(200,000)	(200,000)	(+50,000)
Direct loan subsidy	180	700	700	700	700	+520
Grants	12,500	20,000	16,000	12,500	20,000	+7,500
Total	12,680	20,700	16,700	13,200	20,700	+8,020
RUS expenses:						
Salaries and expenses	33,000	34,107	34,107	33,000	34,107	+1,107
(Transfer from RETLP)	(29,982)	(31,046)	(31,046)	(29,982)	(31,046)	(+1,064)
(Transfer from RTP)	(3,000)	(3,000)	(3,000)	(3,000)	(3,000)	.....
Total, RUS expenses	(65,982)	(68,153)	(68,153)	(65,982)	(68,153)	(+2,171)
Total, Rural Utilities Service	126,155	104,698	103,275	96,822	107,275	-18,880
(By transfer)	(32,982)	(34,046)	(34,046)	(32,982)	(34,046)	(+1,064)
(Loan authorization)	(1,869,009)	(1,445,000)	(2,786,500)	(1,919,009)	(2,986,500)	(+1,117,491)
Total, title III, Rural Economic and Community Development Programs...	2,175,234	2,194,349	2,136,508	2,184,449	2,213,135	+37,901
(By transfer)	(367,249)	(421,262)	(413,262)	(367,104)	(413,262)	(+16,013)
(Loan authorization)	(6,168,726)	(6,087,547)	(7,686,682)	(6,566,959)	(7,629,129)	(+1,460,403)
TITLE IV - DOMESTIC FOOD PROGRAMS						
Office of the Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services.....	554	576	554	554	554	.....
Food and Nutrition Service:						
Child nutrition programs.....	4,128,747	4,620,768	4,611,829	4,611,829	4,611,829	+483,082
Transfer from section 32.....	5,048,150	4,929,268	4,935,199	4,935,199	4,935,199	-112,951
Discretionary spending.....	.....	15,000	.....	13,000	7,000	+7,000
Total, Child nutrition programs.....	9,176,897	9,565,036	9,547,028	9,560,028	9,554,028	+377,131
Special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children (WIC).....	3,924,000	4,105,495	4,005,000	4,038,107	4,032,000	+108,000
Food stamp program:						
Expenses	19,909,106	20,109,444	20,109,444	20,098,744	19,605,751	-303,355
Reserve	100,000	1,000,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	.....
Nutrition assistance for Puerto Rico	1,236,000	1,268,000	1,268,000	1,268,000	1,268,000	+32,000
Discretionary spending.....	.....	7,000	.....	.....	.....	.....
The emergency food assistance program	90,000	100,000	100,000	97,000	96,000	+8,000
Advance appropriation, FY 2001 .....	.....	4,800,000	.....	.....	.....	.....
Total, Food stamp program.....	21,335,106	27,284,444	21,577,444	21,563,744	21,071,751	-263,355
Commodity assistance program	131,000	155,215	151,000	131,000	133,300	+2,300
Food donations programs:						
Needy family program	1,081	1,081	1,081	1,081	1,081	.....
Elderly feeding program	140,000	150,000	140,000	140,000	140,000	.....
Total, Food donations programs.....	141,081	151,081	141,081	141,081	141,081	.....
Food program administration.....	108,561	119,841	108,561	111,561	111,561	+3,000
Total, Food and Nutrition Service.....	34,816,645	41,381,112	35,530,114	35,545,521	35,043,721	+227,076
Total, title IV, Domestic Food Programs.....	34,817,199	41,381,688	35,530,668	35,546,075	35,044,275	+227,076
TITLE V - FOREIGN ASSISTANCE AND RELATED PROGRAMS						
Foreign Agricultural Service and General Sales Manager:						
Direct appropriation.....	136,203	137,768	137,768	136,203	109,203	-27,000
(Transfer from export loans)	(3,231)	(3,413)	(3,413)	(3,231)	(3,231)	.....
(Transfer from P.L. 480)	(1,035)	(1,093)	(1,093)	(1,035)	(1,035)	.....
Total, Program level.....	(140,469)	(142,274)	(142,274)	(140,469)	(113,469)	(-27,000)
Public Law 480 Program and Grant Accounts:						
Title I - Credit sales:						
Program level	(219,724)	(150,324)	(214,582)	(159,089)	(176,000)	(-43,724)
Direct loans	(203,475)	(138,324)	(200,582)	(142,840)	(155,000)	(-48,475)
Ocean freight differential	16,249	12,000	11,000	16,249	21,000	+4,751
Title II - Commodities for disposition abroad:						
Program level	(837,000)	(787,000)	(837,000)	(787,000)	(800,000)	(-37,000)
Appropriation	837,000	787,000	837,000	787,000	800,000	-37,000
Title III - Commodity grants:						
Program level	(25,000)	.....	.....	.....	.....	(-25,000)
Appropriation	25,000	-25,000
Loan subsidies.....	176,596	114,062	165,400	117,786	127,813	-48,783

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	FY 1999 Enacted	FY 2000 Request	House	Senate	Conference	Conference vs. enacted
Salaries and expenses:						
General Sales Manager (transfer to FAS).....	1,035	1,093	1,093	1,035	1,035	
Farm Service Agency (transfer to FSA)	815	845	845	815	815	
Subtotal.....	1,850	1,938	1,938	1,850	1,850	
Total, Public Law 480:						
Program level.....	(1,081,724)	(937,324)	(1,051,582)	(946,089)	(978,000)	(-105,724)
Appropriation.....	1,056,895	915,000	1,015,338	922,885	950,863	-106,032
CCC Export Loans Program Account (administrative expenses):						
Salaries and expenses (Export Loans):						
General Sales Manager (transfer to FAS).....	3,231	3,413	3,413	3,231	3,231	
Farm Service Agency (transfer to FSA)	589	672	672	589	589	
Total, CCC Export Loans Program Account.....	3,820	4,085	4,085	3,820	3,820	
Total, title V, Foreign Assistance and Related Programs.....	1,196,718	1,056,853	1,157,191	1,062,908	1,083,686	-133,032
(By transfer).....	(4,266)	(4,506)	(4,506)	(4,266)	(4,266)	
TITLE VI - FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES						
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES						
Food and Drug Administration						
Salaries and expenses, direct appropriation.....	970,867	1,109,950	1,052,950	1,035,538	1,040,838	+69,771
Prescription drug user fee act	(132,273)	(145,434)	(145,434)	(145,434)	(145,434)	(+13,161)
Subtotal.....	(1,103,140)	(1,255,384)	(1,198,384)	(1,180,972)	(1,186,072)	(+82,932)
Limitation on payments to GSA.....	(82,868)	(100,180)	(100,180)	(100,180)	(100,180)	(+17,314)
Buildings and facilities.....	11,350	31,750	31,750	8,350	11,350	
Total, Food and Drug Administration.....	982,217	1,141,700	1,084,700	1,043,888	1,051,988	+69,771
DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY						
Financial Management Service: Payments to the Farm Credit System						
Financial Assistance Corporation.....	2,565					-2,565
INDEPENDENT AGENCIES						
Commodity Futures Trading Commission	61,000	67,655	65,000	61,000	63,000	+2,000
Y2K conversion (emergency appropriations).....	356					-356
Farm Credit Administration (limitation on administrative expenses)	(35,800)		(35,800)		(35,800)	
Total, title VI, Related Agencies and Food and Drug Administration	1,046,138	1,209,355	1,149,700	1,104,888	1,114,988	+68,850
TITLE VII - GENERAL PROVISIONS						
Hunger fellowships			1,000	3,000	2,000	+2,000
Sec. 388 Fair Act - NH				250	250	+250
Total, title VII, General provisions			1,000	3,250	2,250	+2,250
TITLE VIII - EMERGENCY APPROPRIATIONS						
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 105-277)	5,916,655					-5,916,655
Emergency appropriations (P.L. 106-31)	700,630					-700,630
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE						
Commodity Credit Corporation						
Crop loss (contingent emergency appropriations)					1,200,000	+1,200,000
Market loss (contingent emergency appropriations)					5,544,000	+5,544,000
Specialty Crops:						
Peanuts (contingent emergency appropriations)					42,000	+42,000
Suspend sugar assessments (contingent emergency appropriations)					42,000	+42,000
Tobacco (contingent emergency appropriations)					328,000	+328,000
Subtotal, Specialty crops.....					412,000	+412,000
Oilseeds (contingent emergency appropriations).....					470,000	+470,000
Livestock and dairy (contingent emergency appropriations).....					322,000	+322,000
Upland cotton competitiveness (contingent emergency appropriations)					201,000	+201,000
Extend milk price supports (contingent emergency appropriations)					-102,000	-102,000
Crop insurance (contingent emergency appropriations).....					400,000	+400,000
Crop insurance discount associated costs (contingent emergency appropriations)					250,000	+250,000

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES
APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2000 (H.R. 1906) — continued
 (Amounts in thousands)

	FY 1999 Enacted	FY 2000 Request	House	Senate	Conference	Conference vs. enacted
Water and waste loan forgiveness (contingent emergency appropriations) ....	.....	.....	.....	.....	2,000	+2,000
Total, title VIII, Emergency appropriations.....	8,617,285	.....	.....	.....	8,699,000	+2,081,715
SEC. 748 EMERGENCY APPROPRIATIONS						
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE						
Commodity Credit Corporation						
Market loss (contingent emergency appropriations) .....	.....	.....	.....	5,544,000	.....	.....
Specialty Crops:						
Fruits and vegetables (contingent emergency appropriations) .....	.....	.....	.....	50,000	.....	.....
Peanuts (contingent emergency appropriations) .....	.....	.....	.....	42,000	.....	.....
Suspend sugar assessments (contingent emergency appropriations) .....	.....	.....	.....	42,000	.....	.....
Tobacco (contingent emergency appropriations) .....	.....	.....	.....	328,000	.....	.....
Subtotal, Specialty crops.....	.....	.....	.....	462,000	.....	.....
Oilseeds (contingent emergency appropriations) .....	.....	.....	.....	470,000	.....	.....
Livestock and dairy (contingent emergency appropriations) .....	.....	.....	.....	322,000	.....	.....
Upland cotton competitiveness (contingent emergency appropriations) .....	.....	.....	.....	201,000	.....	.....
Crop insurance (contingent emergency appropriations) .....	.....	.....	.....	400,000	.....	.....
Crop insurance discount associated costs (contingent emergency appropriations) .....	.....	.....	.....	250,000	.....	.....
Total, Sec. 748 Emergency appropriations.....	.....	.....	.....	7,648,000	.....	.....
Grand total:						
New budget (obligational) authority	61,127,644	66,883,182	60,736,572	68,358,818	69,017,125	+7,889,481
Appropriations	(54,463,835)	(61,883,182)	(60,736,572)	(60,709,618)	(60,318,125)	(+5,854,290)
Emergency appropriations	(6,663,809)	.....	.....	.....	.....	(-6,663,809)
Contingent emergency appropriations .....	.....	.....	.....	(7,648,000)	(8,699,000)	(+8,699,000)
Advance appropriations.....	.....	(5,000,000)	.....	.....	.....	.....
(By transfer)	(612,780)	(681,569)	(629,146)	(612,635)	(628,793)	(+16,013)
(Loan authorization)	(8,453,684)	(9,096,281)	(10,695,416)	(9,650,251)	(10,712,421)	(+2,258,737)
(Limitation on administrative expenses).....	(144,087)	(108,287)	(144,087)	(108,287)	(144,087)	.....

1/ In addition to appropriation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, let me commend my colleague, the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. SKEEN), for his hard work on this bill, though I cannot support the bill. I think it is like a two-legged dog being brought to the floor of the Congress today.

Mr. Speaker, I will reserve my remarks until closing.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from the great State of Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON), who has fought harder than any other Member here to try to get the needs of not just his district but rural America recognized.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to oppose this conference report. And I do that reluctantly.

I want to commend the chairman. He has been very fair and works hard on this. But I represent a part of America that has had disasters. Some of these people have lost their crops 6 years out of the last 7. And this bill does not address their problems. Frankly, I do not know what we are going to do if we do not get some help for these people up in this area.

There is a disaster component in this bill. In my judgment, it is not enough money to cover all of the things that have gone wrong with this country. I also do not think that it is structured in a way that is going to get at what people really need.

Also, we have got a price problem in this country, as everybody knows, in agriculture. Some of us that oppose Freedom to Farm said that we thought this was going to happen eventually, and it is here right now. And we all want to address that. But I do not know how I can go home and tell the people in Roseau County or Kittson County that it is more important that we put out money to people that have not been damaged by disaster, that have had bumper crops year after year after year and have sold those bumper crops, received the AMPTA payments and then we are going to give them additional AMPTA payments, and we are not going to go out and help the people that have lost crops 5 or 6 or 7 years out of the last 7 years.

I do not know how I can go home and tell the people that this is a good bill, that this is something we should support. I do not know how my colleagues can do that. I wish they could come up and look in the eyes of these people and see what they are up against. We are not dealing with this the way we should. We are spending this money the wrong way. We are not spending enough money.

I would just implore my colleagues to defeat this bill, give us a chance to go back to the committee, and address these issues.

As I understand it, this was basically taken away from the subcommittee, and there was not even a chance for people to debate these multiple-year problems, to debate these other disaster problems. Defeat this conference report.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH).

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my chairman, the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. SKEEN), for yielding me the time and for the hard work that he has done on this very important bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to take the unusual step of opposing my chairman and also opposing this bill, a bill that I have spent a good deal of my time on this year trying to resolve some of the real issues in farm country.

I am very disappointed with the way this bill came out. I am disappointed with the process. We had assurances all the way along through subcommittee and full committee and then going into conference that we would be able to address the dairy issue, but that was denied us. In fact, the conference never actually concluded its work. We did not have the opportunity even to offer amendments or to debate these critical issues. That is very disappointing, and it is very unusual. I hope we do not see a lot of this in the future.

But more to the point than just the process are the issues. The absence of dairy legislation in this bill is going to hurt farmers all over the country. It may benefit two States, but it will definitely hurt over 40. Dairy farmers who work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, who never get a break, are going to lose money. It is estimated as much as \$8,000 a family in my State.

And believe me, I do not know a dairy farmer in my State on a regular size farm that is putting \$8,000 in their pocket after a year of dairy farming. It just is not a cash-flow business.

Disaster relief. My colleagues, I have no envy for what the Midwest has accomplished in this bill. I praise them. I admire them. I wish we could have done the same for farmers in the Northeast. But the fact is Midwestern farmers will receive \$7.5 billion in disaster payments because they did not get the price they wanted for the crops.

Our farmers in the Northeast had no crops. In fact, they have no topsoil because of drought and now flood. They will get pennies on the dollar, \$1.2 billion for all the Northeast for weather-related disaster; and the Midwest gets \$7.5 billion. That is not fair. It is not right.

Sanctions reform. My colleagues wanted to open up new markets to the farmers so that we could sell our crops and get the price that we need. Would they rather open up and sell food to Iran and Iraq, where people are starving, or would they rather spend all of our taxpayers' dollars to give the farmers the price that they want through an artificial means? Let us open up our markets. But we did not do it.

The dairy compact, which provides price stability, supported by consumers and farmers in the Northeast, we cannot have that anymore because this does not allow it to be extended.

Mr. Speaker, the pricing option that the Secretary has promulgated is a presidential policy, this is the Clinton policy on dairy, helps two States and it harms 40. I do not get it. I mean, I thought these people were good politically down at the White House. This makes no sense. It hurts 40 States to benefit two.

But we do not have to do that. There is another option, Option 1-A, that holds Minnesota and Wisconsin harmless and it helps the other States. But that is not available to us, either.

So, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I thank the chairman for yielding me the time to speak against our own bill. I respect him highly. I regret that I have to oppose this bill, but I can take no other action.

I urge my colleagues to voice their objection to the process and the policy by voting no on this bill.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY), a member of the subcommittee, who has worked so diligently on this bill and, as the rest of the members on our subcommittee, was actually robbed of his rights as a Member of this institution because our committee was recessed and never called back to complete work on this bill.

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to express my appreciation and respect for the chairman of the subcommittee and the hard work that he has done, the diligent and conscientious work that he has done to try to put an effective bill together. The gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. SKEEN) is an example for all of us in this House. I also thank the staff of the subcommittee for the work that they have done, as well.

For those reasons, I wish I could support the bill. But I cannot. I cannot support it for the same reasons which were enunciated just a moment ago by the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH), my friend and colleague from the other side of the aisle.

I would focus my remarks in the brief time that I have on the dairy issue alone. As the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) pointed out, the provisions that fail to appear in this bill would have benefited the dairy industry in 40 States across this country. They are suffering so that perhaps two States can benefit, and that is only perhaps. Because the real beneficiaries of this legislation and the failure to act in a responsible way with regard to the agriculture dairy industry in our country, the real beneficiaries are those who seek to consolidate the dairy industry, those who seek to rob consumers of the opportunity to buy fresh, wholesome dairy products from local producers in their own State and the surrounding region.

The real beneficiaries are a handful of people who are seeking increasingly

to consolidate the dairy industry in the hands of fewer and fewer people so that they can control where dairy is produced, where it is shipped, under what conditions and at what price.

Dairy farmers in New York and New England and New Jersey and Pennsylvania, the middle Atlantic States, and elsewhere in this country are suffering because of the failure to put effective dairy provisions in this legislation, and that failure is due entirely to the fact that the bill was wrested from the subcommittee by the leadership of this House which adheres to an ideological imperative which is outdated and always has been wrong, and that is let the free market system run agriculture in this country.

It will not work because the free market is run by a handful of people. They control it, and they will continue to do so. Therefore, we must defeat this bill.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NETHERCUTT).

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of our subcommittee (Mr. SKEEN) for yielding me the time. He is a fine gentleman and has been eminently fair with me and I thank every other member of the subcommittee. I thank him for his dedication to agriculture.

Mr. Chairman, I speak today in support of this bill. I am going to vote for it. I think it is a good bill. It could be a much better bill, for the reasons that the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) stated and I think the reasons that other Members may state here today, as well.

My concern has been not only with process but with policy relative to this particular measure as it relates to me as a member of the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies. I felt for a long time that, in order to have the Freedom to Farm approach to agriculture policy succeed, we have to have freedom to market. Our farmers need to market overseas.

My State of Washington, the east side of the State of Washington, grows some of the best wheat crops and peas and lentil crops and potatoes and other commodities, apples and others, to compete with anybody in the world. But we are restricted, Mr. Speaker, because of an antique kind of a sanctions policy, unilateral sanctions policy, that hurts our farmers.

The power to change this policy rests with Congress. And we tried to do that on this bill, but the process did not allow it. I felt frustrated, frankly, that we could not have a good vote on this issue and let the Senate speak, as they have, Senator ASHCROFT, Senator HAGEL and others, Senator BROWNBACK, Senator DURBIN, Senator DORGAN, who spoke in favor of this change in policy, as well as people on our side, like the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. EMERSON) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) and the gentleman

from Arkansas (Mr. DICKEY) and others who feel that that policy is outdated.

It is nonsense, in my judgment, that we should not sell food and medicine to countries that others can sell to around the world. It hurts our farmers. It hurts us as a country I believe. And we can open up dictatorships and open up terrorist regimes, for that matter, if we can engage them and engage the people.

The measure that was ready to pass the subcommittee and the conference was no funding for government-to-government assistance. Absolutely not one dollar would go to the governments of Iran, Iraq, Cuba, or anyplace else. But there would be a funding option allowed in order to allow our farmers to get some coverage for the sale of their product overseas.

I fought the President on this in some respects. This administration threw up a roadblock with respect to completing the sanction relief that we had imposed. We want to work with the administration and the Democrats and the Republicans and our leadership to try to have this sanctions policy relief become a reality.

So I would urge my colleagues to support this policy in the future.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), a distinguished member of the subcommittee who also was robbed of her rights to offer an amendment, as these proceedings were recessed.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the agriculture appropriations conference report.

The process was unprecedented and heavy-handed. But the substance and the policy and final version reflects the majority leadership's lack of concern for farmers of America.

The summer's droughts and hurricanes have devastated thousands of farming families. In my own State of Connecticut, farmers suffered \$41.6 million in losses. The pastures dried up. Fruit dropped. Trees and bushes and dairy production plummeted.

□ 1145

Farmers across the country are begging Congress to do something and we must do something. It is our responsibility. It is why we were elected. We come here to give voice to the people that we represent. Our constituents can only conclude from this conference report that we have been silent on their behalf.

This report includes only \$1.2 billion in much needed emergency aid. But this is a short-term fix to a long-term problem, the lack of markets promised when the Freedom to Farm bill eliminated the farmers' safety net.

Committee members on both sides of the aisle were ready to address this issue with sanction relief, but the opportunity was snatched away. It is wrong to deny our farmers over \$1 billion in new sales abroad, and it is wrong to punish innocent families,

children, in other countries who suffer under repressive regimes by denying them food and medicine.

Finally, this report fails to reauthorize the Northeast Dairy Compact. Without that compact, Connecticut's farmers will lose \$4.2 million a year as well as the security of stable prices to guarantee safe futures.

We are here to help farmers address short-term disasters and the long-term problems that threaten their survival. The health of our Nation is directly linked to agriculture's future. We must do more. I urge my colleagues to oppose the conference report.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. DICKEY).

Mr. DICKEY. Mr. Speaker, understanding the immediate need for assistance that our farmers have, I have signed the conference report, and I am supporting this bill. However, there were several issues that were left undecided, and I want to discuss one of them, that is, sanctions on our agricultural products with other countries.

Let us take Cuba, for example, and in this context, we have to understand that our Arkansas farmers are the finest and the largest producers of rice there is in this country. For 37 years, it has been proven that the embargo on food and medicine in Cuba does not work. Fidel Castro and the members of his Communist regime have never missed a meal, but the poor have gone hungry. Those are who the embargo is affecting.

But the effects of this embargo are not only felt 90 miles off of Florida's coast, it has had much more of a local effect. An enormous market for our agricultural products has been deemed off-limits. Our Arkansas farmers sit facing one of the largest financial crises that we have ever encountered. They are the best farmers in the world and produce an excellent crop, but they need more places to market it. The USDA estimates that Cuba will import 570,000 metric tons of long grain, rough rice from countries all across the world. Conversely, the United States has over 630,000 metric tons of this very type of rice from the 1998 harvest still in storage. The USDA anticipates this number to drastically increase and next year our farmers will have 1.5 million metric tons of carryover stock from the 1999 harvest, all of which will bring prices down. The Cuban rice market has an estimated value of \$125 million annually. Allowing our rice producers to trade with Cuba would not only enable them to collect the lion's share of the \$125 million but it would also reduce our yearly carryover stock which would increase the commodity's market price.

The Congressional Research Service estimates that current economic sanctions on agricultural goods for sanctioned countries in 1996 reduced farm income by \$150 million, overall U.S. economic activity by \$1.2 billion, and U.S. jobs by 7,600. This is an issue that

America cannot afford to ignore any longer. Even though I am going to vote for this bill, I want us to be aware of the fact that we must do something about these sanctions to help our farmers in America.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. BOSWELL) who represents such a major share of U.S. agriculture.

Mr. BOSWELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time. First off, let me say that I am supporting this bill. I think that I have to associate myself with those who made other comments about the inadequacies. I do not understand why we did not have an opportunity to have the full discussion. But there is where we are at.

We have got two economies in our country right now, a robust economy and an ag economy. The ag economy is in bad, bad shape. We have to address these things. The farmers are desperate out there. I am supporting this to get the movement going and get this money to those producers. They need it now. I would say to the Secretary and anybody else that is listening that this money needs to go to those producers that have had losses. They are the ones that need it. I would trust and hope that we are doing everything we can to get it to them.

I also appreciate the fact that my colleague and friend the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) is offering something that will be coming up I hope very soon, the Supplemental Income Protection Act that will help all of us put the money where it belongs and help the farmers move ahead. Support the bill.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LATHAM).

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman very much for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the agriculture appropriations conference agreement. This agreement will keep America's family farms afloat, fund critical research and protect the environment in some of our most fragile regions. Furthermore, this legislation includes language that dramatically improves competition for livestock producers.

Thanks to the cooperation of the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. SKEEN), the gentleman from Texas (Mr. COMBEST) and determined colleagues in the Senate, in the other body, we were able to include mandatory price reporting for livestock in this package. This legislation will contribute to our efforts to revive the current farm economy. As anyone in Iowa can tell you, the difficulties associated with low grain prices have been compounded by low livestock prices to a devastating level last December and January.

Today, America's farmers want to know if they are receiving fair compensation for their hard work. With this agreement, we have made the first

step in assuring that they can. It is important that accurate information be available to the livestock industry in order for competitive markets to function properly. Without this pricing information, we risk supporting a business environment that gives too much control to a few. We cannot allow our Nation's farmers to be left without the tools they can use to make sure they receive the best possible price for their livestock.

It is important to note that mandatory price reporting language included is the result of significant negotiations and represents a concerted effort to find consensus. Title 9 of the bill is identical to legislation that was ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry on July 29, 1999. The intent of these provisions and their attendant legislative history are explained in detail in that committee's report on the reported bill, S. 1672, and Senate Report 106-168.

Much of the language in this report was also the subject of painstaking negotiations and represents the consensus of a number of parties interested in mandatory price reporting legislation. I join all of these interested parties in directing the Department of Agriculture and the administration generally to this document for use in the correct interpretation and administration of this important law.

Mr. Speaker, this is an extremely important provision, and this bill does truly address as best we can under the budget constraints that we have the real problem we have in agriculture today, trying to get in a very timely manner dollars in the hands of farmers who so desperately need it. I just want to thank the chairman and the ranking member of the subcommittee, the chairman and ranking member of the full Committee on Appropriations, the staff on the subcommittee and my personal staff for doing an outstanding job. There are problems obviously, but a lot of the issues that were not addressed should never be on this bill to start with.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the able gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOLDEN) who has worked so hard with us to try to make sure that the producers of Pennsylvania and the drought affected areas of this country are treated fairly in this measure.

Mr. HOLDEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the conference report. There is not a Member from either side of the aisle from the mid-Atlantic or northeastern States that can go home and look their farmers in the eye and say that this is a fair piece of legislation. It simply is not. \$1.2 billion for all weather-related disasters simply does not add up to meet the needs of our farmers throughout the country. We have experienced a 100-year drought in the Northeast. In

Pennsylvania alone, \$700 million of damage; New York, \$370 million; Maine, \$31 million; Ohio, \$600 million. Combined in the mid-Atlantic and northeastern part of the country, \$2.5 billion of losses from drought. Then we look at the terrible situation in North Carolina, what they are facing in flooding and how we need to help our friends and colleagues from North Carolina; early on in the year, the flooding in the upper Midwest.

Mr. Speaker, we were not trying to be greedy in this bill, we were just trying to ask for what our friends in other parts of the country received before in other emergency appropriation bills. We wanted 42 percent of our losses that were uninsured to be paid for with cash assistance and livestock assistance. \$1.2 billion, Mr. Speaker, simply does not get there. I urge my colleagues to reject this conference report and give us the opportunity to do what is fair for the mid-Atlantic and northeastern States.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM), the ranking member of the Committee on Agriculture.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1906. Let me say I am grateful to the conferees for their recognition of the economic plight of American agriculture and I commend the chairman and the ranking member for their efforts. I cannot, however, feel good about the way in which we are helping our farmers and ranchers. For the second year in a row, we are using emergency spending to compensate producers for low prices. This fact is a stark admission that our basic farm program is not working. Our Nation deserves a long-term reliable farm policy. Taxpayers have a right to know what the Nation's agriculture programs will cost and agriculture producers should be able to know up-front what kind of assistance they can expect and what the rules will be for distributing it. I wonder how much longer we can go on like this, how much more our government will spend on ad hoc, supplemental AMTA payments before we realize that a more rational, predictable policy needs to be in force.

Mr. Speaker, last year we waited until the last hour to debate the omnibus appropriation bill and the emergency agricultural spending it contained. Many of us spoke at that time about the need to prepare for this year. Instead of preparing, however, we waited, and today we respond with off-budget spending to address a problem that was entirely foreseeable. I would like to once again thank the appropriators for delivering a bill that recognizes many of the needs. The deficiencies contained in the bill are a result of a lack of coherent agricultural policy which is impossible to address in one year's spending.

Let me say to my friend from Pennsylvania who spoke a moment ago, his request is reasonable. We should treat

the northeastern States no different than any other States were treated last year, and it is my belief that in a supplemental we will do so. Dairy policy, I agree, but we passed a bill here. It is now up to the Senate to deal with it in the regular legislative process. Sanctions, we ought to be doing more, but we cannot do it all on an appropriations bill. We need to do most of this in the regular legislative process. I am dedicated to working with my colleagues on that.

I am very grateful that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. COMBEST) has announced that we start full committee hearings early next year to address this problem so we do not find ourselves back in the same position next year at the same time.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. EMERSON).

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Mexico for his extraordinarily good work in very, very unordinary circumstances on this bill. As everyone has said, our farmers are facing the worst financial crisis in decades because of low prices, because of weather-related disasters, and unfortunately our current farm law does not provide a safety net for our producers. And so we will lose a lot of them this year, causing the very fabric, the very essence of our rural way of life to be at risk.

And so with reluctance I say yes, we must pass this bill today. But I also want to say, as my colleagues have, as an ag conferee, the last 2 weeks have been gut wrenching, they have been heart wrenching, as our rights to write this bill were stolen from us. That makes me angry. I am deeply disappointed that we were not allowed to vote on lifting food and medicine embargoes against six foreign countries. We should have learned the lesson from the Soviet grain embargo that food should not be used as a tool of foreign policy, that our farmers in America are the only losers in this battle. And we could not vote on fixing a problem for our dairy producers even though the vast majority of this body supports that fix.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am greatly disappointed, but the bill does have many good things in it for America's producers, for our ranchers and our farmers. They need our help today. They need financial assistance today. And so I urge a "yes" vote on the bill. I can only say in closing that we will continue the fight to lift embargoes and sanctions, we will continue the fight for our dairy farmers, because that fight, Mr. Speaker, has only just begun.

□ 1200

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE) who has been such an advocate for the needs of farmers in his State as well as around our Nation.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for

yielding me this time, and I commend her for her hard work to focus attention and action on disaster relief in the bill. I think everyone in this body is aware of the disaster that has befallen our farmers, our citizens in North Carolina and other States up and down the Eastern Seaboard with Hurricane Dennis and Hurricane Floyd. Our communities have been severely damaged, our infrastructure, our farms.

Mr. Speaker, it is already estimated that the overall damages in North Carolina for this hurricane will exceed the 6 billion in damages we experienced with Hurricane Fran, which was our historical high point up to this year. Too many North Carolinians are still in shelters, and many have returned home or will return home to find out they have lost everything. Estimates from the United States Department of Agriculture and the North Carolina Department of Agriculture now are approaching 2 billion in agricultural losses alone for North Carolina alone, \$2 billion.

Now, consider the amount of disaster relief in this bill. When we look at that, Mr. Speaker, we realize how pitifully inadequate it is. It is \$1.2 billion, and it is supposed to meet the needs of both drought and flood relief.

The State Departments of Agriculture in the Southeastern and Eastern States, drought States, have estimated that the need for drought assistance alone is \$2.5 billion. That is before anyone had ever heard of Hurricane Floyd. And unlike aid to homeowners and businesses, direct aid cannot go to farmers unless we appropriate it in this or a comparable bill.

Farmers need immediate assistance, and we ought to give it to them, yet there was never any real opportunity for the conference to consider disaster assistance. Before the conference had sufficient opportunity to take up this issue, the bill was taken by the majority leadership from the hands of the conferees. So, Mr. Speaker, we are forced to ask, what are we going to do? How are we going to get this assistance to the people who so desperately need it?

Yesterday I offered, and the Committee on Appropriations approved, an amendment to the Labor HHS appropriations bill to provide 508 million for direct assistance to farmers in all the states affected by Hurricane Floyd for crop and livestock losses. The Labor-HHS bill is not the normal vehicle for agriculture disaster assistance, but fortunately, Appropriations Committee leaders, Mr. YOUNG and Mr. PORTER, as well as Mr. OBEY, accommodated us, and we got this done.

That is not the way this process is supposed to work, but it was made necessary by the inadequacy of this agriculture appropriations bill. Farmers in North Carolina and the other states affected by natural disasters need our help now, and that need is greater than what is provided in this bill.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BARRETT).

Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding this time to me, and I certainly rise in support of the conference report. And I want to thank my colleagues on the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee for their very hard work. This bill, especially the emergency provisions, is very badly needed by our farmers and ranchers.

Mr. Speaker, we have got a unique problem in agriculture. It is a cash flow crisis, and this conference report will help ease that situation by providing farmers with the financial resources to close out this year's growing season and prepare for the next.

I specifically want to commend the conferees for maintaining the AMTA payment mechanism. This will allow producers to receive payments in possibly less than 2 weeks after it is enacted, and I charge the Department of Agriculture to meet this goal.

I strongly encourage the President to sign the bill. Our producers do not have the time for political games as they are making decisions today which will affect their families for many years to come. We have got the right bill, and now is the right time to sign it.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is critical that the House agree to this conference report, and I urge an aye vote.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) who has been such an active participant in these negotiations.

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for yielding this time to me, and I appreciate her hard work along with the hard work of all the other people that have worked on this bill, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, our farmers need the assistance in this bill, and they need a lot more. The funding in this bill is just simply not enough.

The other side of the aisle comes to the well over and over to criticize the lack of action on trade issues, yet when they have the opportunity, they fail to lift the sanctions on Cuba and other countries for food and medicine for only political reasons. Mr. Speaker, this is shameful.

This bill is inadequate. I will vote for it, but once again we are forcing America's farmers to pay for the political and foreign policy failures. The majority leadership should be ashamed of this bill because they did not accomplish what they should have for America's farmers.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. COMBEST).

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot this morning about, obviously, the wants and desires of Members in regards to the process, in regards to things that were in the bill,

that were not in the bill, and if we spent, made all of those decisions, based upon that and those Beltway issues, we would probably never pass anything. Let me just mention a few of the people that are out there that this bill has tried to intend to help that support it:

The Southwest Peanut Growers Association of Virginia, North Carolina Peanut Growers Association, the American sheep industry, the American Farm Bureau, the National Cotton Council, the American Soybean Association, the U.S. Rice Federation, the National Grain and Sorghum Association, the United States Sugar Beet Association, the American Sugar Beet Growers, the Hawaiian Sugar Growers, the Florida Sugar League, the Rio Grande Valley Sugar Growers, the National Corn Growers Association are the ones that have just come in since we started debating this bill.

Mr. Speaker, let me mention one other thing, if I might, as well. I agree with those people who have said that this is probably inadequate in terms of disaster money. We do not know how much that is. In fact, in some instances and in some cases the waters have not even receded enough to know what the damage is.

But I will tell my colleagues that as this bill started off at \$500 million, we had a hearing in the Committee on Agriculture, and we asked the administration and the Secretary how much would they need, and they said they had no idea. But they guessed, and they would estimate at this time between 800 million and 1.2 billion.

Mr. Speaker, this bill has 1.2 billion. It is at the top end of what the administration suggested that they would need. If that is not enough, then at some point in the process I think we should come back and revisit that issue. But I will tell my colleagues that the farmers of America see the opportunity in a very short order to begin to get some very needed assistance in their hands. This is the way to do it, and I would encourage Members on both sides to give strong support to this bill. I think the American farmers deserve it, and I think they anticipate it.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON) who has done such a tremendous job as a member of the authorizing committee.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Ohio for yielding the time, and I want to thank her for her leadership and her strong advocacy for rural America and for her due process, and I want to thank the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. SKEEN), the chair of the subcommittee, for his fairness and his advocacy for rural America and for agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, this bill does have things that many of our farmers are advocating. I, too, have received the notice from my peanut farmers, said they would like to have this bill

passed. But I also have received notice from people who need disaster relief saying: Is that all the disaster relief they have? I have my farm bureau, which I am very strongly supported by, call and say, yes, this is insufficient, but vote for it.

Here we have a bill. Not only did we have an opportunity to respond to the disaster, but we refused to. I heard the gentleman from Texas (Mr. COMBEST) say \$1.2 billion was the up side of what USDA suggests, but that was before we had Hurricane Floyd. Now we have had such disaster in large proportions. We have lost in North Carolina alone the agriculture has estimated to be over \$3 billion. Over 120,000 hogs have died, 2.5 million chickens have died; that is just agriculture, and all of the crop has gone.

One third of agriculture production is said to be lost in North Carolina, and we have \$1.2 billion both for the drought and for Hurricane Floyd from the Northeast and to the Midwest.

How can we even think that is indeed sufficient response? We had a unique opportunity to respond. That is almost an insult, Mr. Speaker, to suggest that that is sufficient.

Now do I find that there are things in this bill that my farmers want? I would be less than honest to say yes, they do. The process really is important. Process in a democracy is important. Even when we lose, we would like to think that people have had an opportunity to have a full discussion. I am amazed that we have refused to have the opportunity to talk about the disaster that we so desperately need.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS).

Mr. LUCAS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my strong support for H.R. 1906, the agriculture appropriations conference report. Let us pass this bill today and show our unwavering commitment to all agricultural producers across this country.

I am extremely proud of this legislation, of what it does, and what it provides for Oklahoma agricultural producers. The 100-percent bump-up on the 1999 AMTA payment is desperately needed by our producers who have faced some unbelievable challenges this past year including Mother Nature, low commodity prices, and the worldwide financial situation. I am proud that this Congress has decided to take the necessary steps to combat these obstacles.

I am also pleased to see funding for the Cotton Step 2 program and the inclusion of much needed livestock price reporting language. We have worked with producers over the past several months to ensure that these items were included in the conference report. This is just one more indication that this Congress is listening and responding to the needs of our producers.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, this Congress expects the USDA to allow producers to collect a payment equal to their LDP on their wheat crop.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) who has just been vigilant throughout this process to be fair to all segments of the United States.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding this time to me.

I strongly oppose this legislation, and I urge all of my Democratic and Republican Members and friends to oppose it.

This bill should be opposed from both a process point of view and a policy point of view.

In terms of process, there is no disagreement that this bill, as a Republican member, the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. EMERSON), just told my colleagues a few moments ago was quote, unquote, stolen away from the committee by the Republican leadership. That is what she said, and what the Republican leadership then did is went behind closed doors, where, heavily influenced by special interests, they wrote the bill. We received the bill this morning, hundreds of pages, and now we are supposed to support it.

This process is undemocratic, it is an outrage, and no Member should vote for this bill on that ground alone. But we should also oppose this bill because of its content.

Last week we had an all-day debate upon the crisis of dairy farming in this country. There were six or seven amendments, and we went on and on, and at the end of the day, by a 285 to 140 vote, the Members of this body, Republicans and Democrats, said we need to reform the milk market order system in order to protect family farmers all over this country; 285 Members voted for it. When that issue came to the conference committee, they did not spend 1 minute discussing that issue. We spent all day; we voted for it; they did not spend 1 minute.

□ 1215

How can you support legislation which ignores an attempt to address the crisis facing dairy farmers? Please vote "no."

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, again to the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. SKEEN), for whom I have the highest respect, the chairman of our committee, I know that no member of our committee could be proud of the bill that is on the floor today. Many have referenced that in their remarks.

I would urge the membership to recommit this bill back to our subcommittee where it belongs to fix its flaws.

In the years that I have been here in the Congress, I have never seen a conference report that comes to the floor where over one-third of our members do not even sign it. There was pressure put on a number of these people who

did sign. This is not the way that one of the bills out of appropriations ought to come to the floor.

I want to say a word about how this overall legislation is structured. Our concern does not necessarily go to the fundamental appropriations for the Department of Agriculture that are in the bill for the Year 2000. Our problem goes to the heart of the emergency package, the disaster assistance package, which is so fundamentally unfair.

I would beg my colleagues to listen. I am going to spend a few minutes here and lay out some numbers.

There are two parts to that portion of the legislation. There is \$7.5 billion that goes out in economic assistance. That basically means low prices—trying to help people, as one of the gentlemen here said, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BARRETT), meet cash flow problems in rural America. Of that \$7.5 billion, \$5.5 billion of it goes out under the AMTA formula. But, remember, AMTA is based on the planting of program crops in the years 1991 to 1995. It is not tied at all to what was planted this year, to what is planted now, prices received, or economic loss. In fact, there is no requirement to have planted a crop at all in order to get these dollars!

In fact, there is nothing in that section of the bill for fruits and vegetables. Many of our Members are coming up here and saying we want a fair bill. There are provisions that are in there for sugar, for cotton, for peanuts, for tobacco, for oil seeds, for honey, for mohair. But there are no provisions for vegetables, for fruits, for revegetation.

In fact, in that section of the bill, if we look at livestock, hog farmers, an industry that is on its knees, it only gets a chance to compete for up to \$200 million nationally. Other claimants in that fund are livestock producers, including those suffering from natural disasters. So their ability to be made "whole," or to even be helped to be made "half" or even "40 percent," is almost nothing when you look at the losses that are out there.

I will submit for the RECORD from the Governors of over a dozen States what they believe the losses to be in their areas. Or look at a State like Ohio, my own State, where over \$600 million of losses is documented, with a letter from our Governor. Dollars in the bill for livestock amount to almost nothing as we try to keep some family farmers whole as they try to transition in this difficult rural economy.

SEPTEMBER 10, 1999.

Hon. TRENT LOTT,
Majority Leader,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. THOMAS A. DASCHLE,
Minority Leader,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. RICHARD A. GEPHARDT,
Minority Leader,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS LOTT AND DASCHLE AND REPRESENTATIVES HASTERT AND GEPHARDT:

On behalf of farmers and agricultural communities in more than 12 states, we request your help in obtaining immediate federal emergency grant assistance to address the economic losses caused by this year's severe drought. Farmers and rural communities along the eastern seaboard—from Rhode Island to South Carolina and west to Ohio—are experiencing the worst drought in decades. The drought of 1999 is compounded by the farm crisis caused by low agriculture commodity prices. This combination is placing tremendous financial stress on farmers throughout the region.

Initial estimates indicate that these states will experience agricultural losses in excess of \$1.64 billion because of the severe and extended drought conditions. This will have a ripple effect on the economy. The USDA Disaster Declarations which have been issued for our states enable farmers to apply for emergency low interest loans; however, loan assistance programs do not adequately respond to this year's unexpected economic impact on the farm communities. Many farmers are simply not in the financial position to assume more debt when they have lost their income. We urge you to act quickly to include direct payment assistance to those producers impacted by the drought.

The recently passed Senate Agriculture Appropriations bill provides assistance for the commodity price disaster, but does not address the natural disaster impacting our farmers. We request that the final aid package be augmented to provide adequate funding for USDA disaster assistance programs such as the Crop Loss Disaster Assistance Program, the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program, the Livestock Assistance and the Emergency Conservation Programs. These programs can provide the rapid response we are looking for and the agricultural community deserves. We further request that this disaster funding be earmarked for drought-impacted states.

We appreciate your assistance in helping our farmers in this time of crisis.

Sincerely,

Bob Taft, Parris N. Glendening, Jim Hodges, Cecil H. Underwood, James S. Gilmore III, Lincoln C. Almond, George E. Pataki, Jim Hunt, John G. Rowland, Tom Carper, Tom Ridge, Christine T. Whitman.

MEMORANDUM

Re: Latest Estimates of Agriculture losses in 13 State Drought Region (revised 9/21/99 4:30 pm).

Date: September 21, 1999.

To: Agriculture Appropriations Conferees.

From: DC Offices of Drought-Affected States.

Following, you will find our most recent estimates of agriculture losses in our states due to the recent drought. You will note these estimates reflect increases from our August numbers due to the inclusion of specialty crops, livestock, aquaculture and dairy that had not been accounted for in our previous estimates. Some states were unable to provide specific estimates per commodity at this time. The recent Hurricane has caused constraints on staff resources. Our states believe these numbers are conservative estimates of what is expected to be the eventual effect of this devastating drought, but represent the best information we can provide at this date.

We also request the following programs be activated to deliver immediate and direct emergency assistance to our agriculture communities:

- (1) Crop Loss Disaster Assistance
- (2) Emergency Livestock Feed Program
- (3) Emergency Conservation Program

- (4) Dairy Loss Assistance Program
- (5) Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program
- (6) Tree Assistance Program

The Secretary should be directed to release funds to our farmers and producers in need within a reasonable, but expedited time-frame, based on estimated crop losses. We suggest 30-90 days.

In millions

State Losses:	
Connecticut	\$41
Delaware	30
Maryland	78
Maine	31
New Jersey	80
New York	370
North Carolina	53
Ohio	600
Pennsylvania	700
Rhode Island	10
South Carolina	150
Virginia	200
West Virginia	200
Total	2,543

STATE OF OHIO, WASHINGTON OFFICE,

Washington, DC, September 21, 1999.

Hon. MARCY KAPTUR,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE KAPTUR: On behalf of Ohio's farm families, I am writing to request your help in contacting House leadership to secure federal emergency assistance to overcome drought losses. This summer's drought not only has devastated crops, but has caused corresponding economic loss of livestock and dairy producers.

In the past month I have notified you of the State of Ohio's response to the drought emergency and expressed my hope that additional appropriations might be made available to provide the help that Ohio farmers badly need. Ohio's drought losses already are approaching a projected \$600 million and will continue to grow (see attached Ohio Drought Impact Fact Sheet and memo to the Agriculture Appropriations conferees for estimated crop loss breakout).

I understand that Agriculture Appropriations conferees will soon meet to discuss a final bill and will consider providing meaningful drought assistance to states such as Ohio where it is sorely needed. I hope that you can support this effort and work with your House colleagues and the leadership to ensure that this happens.

As you know, the USDA has made available low interest loans to disaster designated areas. However, loan assistance programs do not adequately respond to this year's unexpected economic impact on the farm communities of the Drought affected states. Rather, producers impacted by drought require dedicated direct payment assistance. A farm aid package should provide adequate funding for USDA disaster assistance programs, such as the Crop Loss Disaster Assistance Program, the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program, the Livestock Assistance Program and the Emergency Conservation Program. Further, this disaster funding should be earmarked for drought-impacted states.

In addition, I hope you will agree that in order for our farmers to receive the help they need, Congress should include emergency grant assistance for drought disaster in the FY 2000 Agriculture Appropriations Bill.

I appreciate your efforts with this important issue.

Sincerely,

BOB TAFT.

FACT SHEET: IMPACT OF 1999 DROUGHT ON OHIO CROP AND LIVESTOCK FARMS, SEPTEMBER 21, 1999

Drought Loss—Governors' recent estimate for 12 northeastern states: \$2.5 billion.

Natural Disaster Loss—National Assn. of State Departments of Agriculture (U.S.) estimate for all affected states: \$3.56 billion.

Drought loss—Projected estimate for Ohio: \$600 million (While harvest has just begun, there are projections that Ohio's losses could be in the range of \$600 million of agricultural products. This represents about 10 to 15 percent of the nearly \$4.7 billion of Ohio agricultural products sold in 1997. The FSA's July estimate was \$422 million.)

Estimated direct USDA assistance payments

Drought Assistance—Estimated direct USDA assistance payments for which Ohio producers would be eligible: \$164.8 million.

Breakdown of potential USDA funding to program assistance grants:

Crop Loss Disaster Assistance Program (CLDAP) and Noninsured Assistance Program (NAP), \$80.6 million;

Livestock Assistance Program (LAP), \$82.3 million;

Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), \$1.9 million.

According to the Palmer Drought Severity Index, the long-term forecasting tool used by the NOAA's Climate Prediction Center, all of Ohio is now in either severe or extreme drought. Rainfall needed to end the drought, according to the Index, ranges regionally from about 6 to 10 inches. Topsoil moisture in Ohio is now 78 percent short to very short, compared to the five-year average of 41 percent short to very short. (See Palmer Index map.)

Eighty-seven Ohio counties have been designated natural disaster areas by U.S. Agriculture Secretary Glickman, enabling qualified farmers in those counties to apply for federal disaster assistance loans. Of those, 66 counties were designated primary natural disaster areas.

Hay Shortage: There is a significant shortage of hay in southern Ohio (estimated need is 325,000 tons).

MEMORANDUM

Re: Latest Estimates of Agriculture losses in 12 State Drought Region.

Date: September 17, 1999.

To: Agriculture Appropriations Conferees.

From: DC Offices of Drought-Affected States.

Following, you will find our most recent estimates of agriculture losses in our states due to the recent drought. You will note these estimates reflect increases from our August numbers due to the inclusion of specialty crops, livestock, aquaculture and dairy that had not been accounted for in our previous estimates. Some states were unable to provide specific estimates per commodity at this time. The recent Hurricane has caused constraints on staff resources. Our states believe these numbers are conservative estimates of what is expected to be the eventual effect of this devastating drought, but represent the best information we can provide at this date.

We also request the following programs be activated to deliver immediate and direct emergency assistance to our agriculture communities:

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The Secretary should be directed to release funds to our farmers and producers in need within a reasonable, but expedited timeframe, based on estimated crop losses. We suggest 30-90 days.

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Maryland	78
New Jersey	80
New York	370
North Carolina	53
Ohio	600
Pennsylvania	700
Rhode Island	10
South Carolina	150
Virginia	200
West Virginia	200
Total	2,512

NET EXPENDITURES OF THE COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION (In billions of dollars)

	Total	Commodity programs (incl. AMTA)	Other
FY 1990	6.5	4.5	2.0
FY 1991	10.1	7.8	2.3
FY 1992	9.7	6.9	2.8
FY 1993	16.0	11.9	4.1
FY 1994	10.3	6.1	4.2
FY 1995	6.0	4.1	2.0
FY 1996	4.6	4.5	0.1
FY 1997	7.3	5.3	2.0
FY 1998	10.1	8.0	2.2
FY 1999 est.	18.4	13.2	5.2
FY 2000:			
Budget estimate	14.1	10.1	4.0
Emergency package	7.3		
Total	21.5		

FY 1999 and FY 2000 estimates are from the OMB mid-session review. Figures for FY 2000 emergency package is CBO estimate of outlays resulting from the package (which is \$8.7 billion in budget authority).

"Other" includes export programs (EEP, MAP, export credit, etc.), conservation programs (CRP, etc.), various disaster assistance programs, among other items.

Then if you look at the natural or weather-related disaster portion of the emergency bill, there is only \$1.2 billion in that, \$1.2 billion. And these estimates are pre-hurricane Floyd. As Members have verified these numbers were put in the draft bill before North Carolina happened. So the natural disaster section is woefully inadequate. These are weather-related losses, and the funds are seriously short of what would be needed to assist those faced with disasters this year.

Why should producers in the Northeast and the middle Atlantic States that have had droughts this year not get some attention in this bill, as have producers in Texas who had droughts last year? If you look at the way the formulas work, there is not fair treatment for these States. Had our conference not been suspended, we would have offered amendments that would have attempted to fix these formulas and constructs that give such unequal treatment.

We know what this will mean are more bankruptcies and more loss of equity, which is so unfair. This bill should be targeted at people who are suffering hardship, not just some formula that was cooked up 3 or 4 years ago that does not meet current needs.

I wanted to put this on the RECORD and beg my colleagues, it would not take us long to go back to subcommittee to try to fix this, to make sure that we meet fairly the current needs of our country, and also help to position ourselves for the long term because of the fundamental inadequacy of Freedom to Farm alone to deal with

the volatility that we have experienced with the downturn in the markets and what has happened with our lack of access to overseas markets.

There are longer-term solutions here that we are not being given the opportunity to address in this bill. Please do not do this. Please do not do this. Next year we are going to be back here again with more requests for supplemental credit, as we were this year.

This is not the way to deal with this problem. This is important enough and the gun is at our head, that if the Members of this Congress recommit this bill, we can do it right. Just do not bar us from the opportunity to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING).

(Mr. GOODLING asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I cannot get two pennies to help disadvantaged children in the area of education, but we can put \$7 million into this bill to make sure your children, my children, and every other child of a Member of Congress, can have a free breakfast. That really makes a lot of sense.

They will tell you well, it has been authorized. It has been on the books, yes, but it has never been funded. Why? Because we have done something a darn sight better. What we have done is said that any school district that feeds a lot of free and reduced-price children in lunch can also serve free breakfast, and we know that 85 percent of all children eating free and reduced-priced meals at noontime are now eating breakfast.

Others will tell you, oh, well, the rich and those almost rich do not have time to give their children breakfast. What a sorry state that is; the Government should do it.

Give the money to the farmers who are caught in drought problems. Give the money to those of us who are trying to educate those who are disadvantaged. But, for goodness' sake, don't give \$7 million to feed your children or my children free breakfast.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the Chair for doing a beautiful job of allowing equal time during this debate, which is something we were not allowed by the leadership of this institution in subcommittee. I would like to know how much time we have remaining on each side.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BE-REUTER). There are 6½ minutes remaining on either side at this moment.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HAYES).

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, this is a good bill. I am from North Carolina. We have a serious problem, a huge problem; but this bill helps our farmers now. We can do more for them later,

and we will. But, please, support this conference report. It helps North Carolina farmers and it helps them now.

I come to the floor today along with my fellow colleagues from North Carolina to educate Congress on the state of dire emergency in North Carolina. I support this conference report. As you know, Mr. Speaker, North Carolina has experienced the most destructive natural disaster ever to hit our State. It is already estimated that damages from Hurricane Floyd will exceed \$2 billion in agricultural losses alone, not to mention loss of homes, businesses, roads, schools and other services.

The extent of damage is currently still being assessed and will not be known for sure until the water recedes. It is for that reason that I implore this body, as Representatives of the United States, to work with us from North Carolina, as well as with those suffering in New Jersey, New York and other States from the destruction of Hurricane Floyd, when we came back to you in the upcoming weeks and ask for your assistance in passing a package which will accurately address the needs of these people who have literally lost everything.

In light of the fact we do not have a clear idea of how much money will be needed to aid these hurricane victims, I believe it is wise for us to press forward with the emergency farm assistance package we are voting on today. Farmers from North Carolina, as well as farmers from all the nation, will greatly benefit from this bill. We need to pass this bill and pass it quickly so that farmers can begin receiving assistance as soon as possible.

I urge you to vote in favor of this conference report.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHERWOOD).

Mr. SHERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I have the greatest respect for the chairman of this committee, a man with his roots deep in agriculture, and he has worked long and hard on this bill with his committee. But there are some fundamental problems if you are from the Northeast or mid-Atlantic. This does not address our drought relief. I wish the people that could have decided to shortchange us could have been to Bradford County, Pennsylvania, with me and looked at the corn this high and the barns empty of forage.

This bill is bad for us for three reasons: it does not address the drought; it does not address option 1-A, which means we are going to allow Secretary Glickman's mistake to put our farmers out of business, and it does not address the compacts.

Mr. Speaker, the only thing that this bill is good for in the Northeast is the auctioneers. I hate to go home and see the hammer fall on another Northeastern dairy farm.

I ask Members to oppose this bill.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. BECERRA), who has been such an outspoken advocate for fairness to all people.

(Mr. BECERRA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that we should be doing something and doing it quickly for our farmers in America, because they are in distress. At times of economic prosperity, we go to some of our agriculture regions in this country, and we find that farmers are having to close down their shop, and there are fewer and fewer farmers independently farming in this country, and that has to stop.

But this bill, unfortunately, is very troubling for someone like me who comes from California, where right now, with a State prospering so much, and you find unemployment rates have plummeted in a State that for the longest time was suffering higher unemployment rates than the rest of the Nation, right now, while we are doing well in California, if you walk into the agricultural regions of California, you will find unemployment rates above 10 percent, up to 15 to 20 percent in some of our rural areas where there are farm workers desperate to work. Yet in this particular conference report we have a particular provision that was added with regard to guest worker programs where we get to import workers to do work here in America.

This provision would allow us to go out and seek people from other countries to do the work that Americans can do today by simply saying that for 3 to 4, maybe up to 8 days, we searched for someone to do the job out there in the fields.

That is unfortunate, because those unemployment rates for farm workers still exist. They are very high. Yet right now this bill would say rather than give those American workers a chance to work in those fields, to earn a decent living, even if sometimes it may be a low wage, no, instead we are going to allow some of these mega-corporations to go out and say we tried for 3 days to find an American worker to work that crop, but we could not find anyone, so now let us go abroad and hire the cheap labor to come in here and do the work for us.

How can we do that right now, when not just farmers, but farm workers are hurting, to say we are going to cut the throats of agriculture? This is not the way to do it.

This is a good bill with many good features to it, but why we had to go about doing it this way I do not know. It makes it very difficult for someone who, by the way, has not a piece of farmland in his congressional district, to get up here and say this; but I think we may have to oppose this bill.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SWEENEY).

Mr. SWEENEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, in the brief time I have, I simply want to say this: I have spent the last several weeks working with the committee and working with the members of the committee to impress upon them the needs of the dairy farm-

ers of the northeastern part of our State.

To my colleagues who will come to this floor to vote on this bill, I want to make this very clear: because we have been threatened by a veto and because we have followed a misguided path set for us by the Secretary of Agriculture on option 1-A and because we have decided to ignore the fact that the Northeast Dairy Compact, which provides for minimum supports for farmers in the Northeast so that they can maintain their process, we have decided to put forward a bill today that promotes the worst kind of regional divisions in this body. We have decided to put forth a bill today that promotes and benefits singular Members, singular states, at the expense of others.

So, with that, I would urge all of my colleagues to strongly oppose this bill and let us make sure we come back and do the right thing for all of our farmers.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from New York for his remarks and again plead with my colleagues, as we move to a motion to recommit, to support the motion to recommit and go back to subcommittee where it belongs and fix this bill.

As you have listened to the speakers today, you have heard Members like the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON). We look at the farmers in the Red River Valley. We can do better for them. They have had no crops. Just because some areas of the country have been benefited by this current conference report before us, simply because of who was in the room writing it, does not mean that other parts of America that have been deeply hurt by drought and by crop loss do not also deserve the attention of this broader membership. We need to fix what was done improperly by those who took the bill away from our committee where it rightfully belonged.

How can you turn down someone like the gentleman from Maine (Mr. BALDACCIO), an area of the country in the Northeast that really has not had a lot of losses in years past.

□ 1230

Yet if we look at the specialty crop area, it is given almost no consideration in this legislation. Speaking for our region of the country, the heart of the midwest, for those people who are literally going bankrupt in the pork industry, why should they not be treated similarly to those who are in the row crop business?

These are good Americans, too. They deserve the attention of this Congress. It is not going to take a Ph.D. or 6 years of education for us to go back into committee and fix this. All we need is people who are sensitive to the differing needs across this country to do a good job.

I want to say to our chairman, the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr.

SKEEN), no chairman could have treated his committee members more fairly than he has. To the staff who has worked with us throughout, they have my highest admiration on both sides of the aisle.

However, what was done to us is unforgivable, and it is the reason that we have a two-legged dog bill before us today. Give us the opportunity next week to go back and do what is right for America, for those who are hurting today and to help position this market-place for the future.

No less is expected of us as leaders who know more about these subjects, frankly, than anyone else in the United States. So to produce a bill that is half baked just does not do credit to this institution. I beg my colleagues who are listening today, to those who are with us here on the floor, to support our motion to recommit. Let us go back and fix this thing and bring it back next week. America deserves better than we are able to produce today.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. SKEEN), the chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, is recognized to close. He has 4 minutes remaining.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remaining time.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to restate the points that I have made earlier. This is a bill that benefits every American every day, no matter where they live. Whether it is FDA protecting the safety and foods and medicines or the nutrition programs for children and the elderly or creating economic development in rural America, this bill is for urban and suburban America just as much as if it were for the farmer or the rancher.

I know that some colleagues are concerned for what is not in the bill, particularly dairy policy and the relaxation of export sanctions to certain countries, but if we all voted on the basis of what is not in a bill then I am not sure that any legislation could get passed here.

I would like to say to my colleagues that this is a good, bipartisan bill. It will benefit every one of our constituents. I have letters from a number of farm groups supporting this conference report: The American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Cotton Council, USA Rice Federation, National Grain Sorghum Producers, and the National Corn Growers Association.

Mr. Speaker, there has been talk of a motion to recommit. I think that recommitting this bill to conference would be a serious mistake. There is \$8.7 billion in assistance to rural America in this bill. Sending this bill back to conference for weeks or months of more haggling would deny any money at all to the people that we are trying to help.

A motion to recommit, in effect, says we want more money for farm assistance so we will send no money at all,

farmers and ranchers will just have to wait while we talk.

I would say to my colleagues, some folks cannot wait. They need assistance now. They do not need more talking from Congress. They need the help that is in this bill, and they need it now. Vote no on any motion to recommit.

This is the first day of the first fiscal year, and we need to put this bill to work immediately. Please support the good that is in the bill today and vote aye on the conference report, and hopefully, Mr. Speaker, this will finally come to an end.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the Agriculture Appropriations conference report. I am especially concerned about the Senate rider, not included in the House version of the bill, which would deny jobs to United States farmworkers by allowing agricultural employers to secure vulnerable foreign guest workers without any meaningful recruitment of U.S. farmworkers. This rider makes a mockery of the obligation of employers to show a labor shortage before gaining access to temporary foreign agricultural workers.

The General Accounting Office has reviewed the unemployment rates in America's counties where there are major populations of migrant farmworkers and found that in most, there were double-digit unemployment rates. From this, one would expect that agricultural employers would develop new methods of recruiting this readily available pool of unemployed and underemployed farmworkers.

But that is not what has happened.

Instead, they have sought this legislation to permit employers to escape the requirement that they recruit U.S. workers before gaining access to vulnerable foreign workers. This proposal, offered by Senator MCCONNELL of Kentucky, (where many tobacco growers use the H-2A guest worker program), would drastically shorten the time period for recruitment of U.S. workers before the Department of Labor must decide whether the growers actually faces a labor shortage.

Agricultural employers, under this provision, will apply for guest workers 45 days before the first day of work. The Department of Labor then will have 7 days to make sure that the wages and working conditions meet applicable standards. If they do meet applicable standards, then the employer begins recruitment inside the state and in other states where migrant workers reside. That leaves just 38 days before the season begins. But the Department of Labor must decide whether recruitment was successful no more than 30 days before the season begins. So in reality, employers have just 8 days to recruit U.S. farmworkers.

This would be bad enough, but there are even more problems: Often, the employer offers wages and working conditions that do not meet DOL standards. The Department must then give such an employer 5 additional days to correct the job terms. Recruitment does not begin until that approval is granted, at about 33 days before the season begins. But DOL is still bound to decide whether a labor shortage exists no more than 30 days before the season begins. This leaves only three days to recruit U.S. workers—a scenario utterly designed for failure.

In the meantime, many agricultural employers have elaborate recruitment networks that

have been seeking foreign guestworkers for months.

I recognize that the H-2A law contains job preference requirements for U.S. workers. But there exist great economic incentives for H-2A program employers to hire foreign guest workers rather than domestic farmworkers. Guestworkers are far more docile and compliant than U.S. workers who have legal protections. Also, employers save money because guestworkers' wages are not subject to unemployment taxes or Social Security contributions. Once DOL has given approval to hire foreign guestworkers, U.S. farmworkers know that they usually won't be welcome at those jobs.

The General Accounting Office report on the H-2A program made recommendations about the very issues the McConnell rider addresses, and the McConnell amendment is inconsistent with the GAO recommendations. The GAO recommended shortening the H-2A progress, which the Department of Labor recently did through regulation changes. But the GAO warned that recruitment of U.S. workers should not be reduced and that is precisely what the McConnell amendment does.

I am firmly opposed to the conference committee report because this appropriations bill contains the McConnell amendment that unjustifiably denies jobs to the poorest of the working poor, America's farmworkers.

Mr. MALONEY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 1906, the Agriculture Appropriations Conference Report. If everyone in Congress is serious about locking away Social Security, we simply can not afford to pass this bill. I urge all of my colleagues to exercise fiscal responsibility, and vote "no" on this conference report.

This agreement is a perfect example of the type of legislation that pushes us down the path towards raiding the Social Security trust fund. The Agriculture Conference agreement provides \$69 billion for the Department of Agriculture and related programs—including \$8.7 billion in "emergency" funds for disaster relief.

Emergency funding aside, the conference report is approximately \$100 million over its allocation. That increase will be paid for through the projected surplus.

Indeed, since the emergency relief funds do not count against the 1997 spending caps, those, to, will be paid for with the surplus. In fact, the emergency funds alone consume more than half of the expected non-Social Security surplus for fiscal year 2000.

If we continue to chip away at the surplus, beginning with H.R. 1906, Congress will begin to dip into Social Security. As someone who is committed to locking away Social Security and living within the budget caps, I urge all of you to vote No on this and every bill that leads us down a fiscally irresponsible path.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1906 the agriculture Appropriations Bill for FY2000.

Mr. Speaker, I understand the concerns of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who have concerns about this bill. Farmers truly are facing a crisis in his country. From the drought of the Northeast to the recent flooding in North Carolina, more federal funding is needed to insure the livelihood of the American family farmer.

But there is also an agriculture crisis in our cities. This bill funds important agriculture programs which help provide more greenery in

our cities, trees to fight pollution and make the air cleaner and Federal research monies against plant and tree pests.

I am supporting this bill because it addresses the needs in urban areas, and New York City in particular, which have been severely impacted by the Asian Long Horned Beetle. This predator, which is a non-native species came to New York and other areas through packaging materials in shipping crates. This infestation has led to the destruction of thousands of trees in Queens, New York and most recently was found in Central Park in Manhattan.

I thank Chairman SKEEN, Ranking Member KAPTUR, and the House and Senate Conferees for including \$2.1 million for the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) for eradication of the Asian Long Horned Beetle in New York City. This money is an important step to stop this pest which left unchecked will destroy the trees of New York City which provide my constituents with much needed shade and greenery.

Mr. BONILLA. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chairman I rise in support of this Conference Report for the Agriculture Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2000. We members of the subcommittee were charged with developing an appropriations bill, not a bill to address every agriculture authorization issue pending before Congress.

There are several very important agriculture issues that call for attention. They should be addressed, and considered on the House floor. But these are not issues that should hold up a badly needed appropriations bill. In fact, I do not recall over the last two weeks hearing any complaints regarding the regular appropriations bill.

There are some very good provisions in this appropriation. Each one of us would probably like to change some part of this bill, but we have to remember this bill provides for \$8.7 billion in emergency assistance for agriculture producers.

I have had calls streaming into my office from producers, and I am talking the producers, not the Washington lobbyists, asking me to support the bill. They know that the items in the disaster package are too important to lose.

In this bill there is \$5.5 billion in direct emergency financial assistance. There is help for cotton's step 2 program, help for livestock producers and \$1.2 billion for disaster funding.

No, this bill may not be perfect, and there are things that may not be in the bill that we would like to have seen in the bill, but I do not believe we can turn our backs on \$8.7 billion in financial assistance and our producers.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express great disappointment on behalf of our farmers throughout the State of New York and the entire northeast region.

In my home State of New York, agriculture is the largest industry. With abundant rainfall, productive soil, and proximity to the Nation's largest markets, the outlook for the future of New York's dairy farmers is of great potential. However, as a result of the recent drought, natural disasters, and fluctuating market prices, New York farmers are in dire need of assistance; which is not provided in this legislation.

Apple and onion producers in New York State have suffered severe weather conditions in three out of the last four years, including this year's drought. Nevertheless, the USDA

has been ineffective in providing needed, equitable crop loss disaster assistance for onion and apple producers.

Due to 1998 onion and apple losses in New York State, repeated and intense communications transpired between producers, Congress and the USDA. Over the past few months, communications with the Secretary of the USDA, Dan Glickman, have failed to address most of our producers concerns.

Our agricultural producers have received sympathy from the Department of Agriculture, but USDA has stated that they do not have a clear direction from Congress on how to proceed with the complicated, untraditional questions which are unique to these nonprogram crops.

In 1999, estimates of drought losses to onions and apples in New York are again substantial. In fact, the loss in yield at \$12CWT for onions on the 5,000 acres in Orange County, New York will translate into an approximate \$15 million loss.

The \$15 million loss in 1999, coupled with the \$15 million dollar loss in 1998 for onion producers in Orange County, will prove devastating not only for the Hudson Valley's family farms, but also for those businesses dependent upon the onion and vegetable \$100 million industry in New York.

Furthermore, New York's dairy farmers, which make up 60% of our agricultural base in my home State, have been cut out of this legislation. Producers and their organizations have been concerned about the viability of the dairy industry in the northeastern states for several years.

Declining herd and cattle numbers, combined with drought and fluctuating market prices, have led to loss of infrastructure and revenue for our New York dairy farmers. Our farmers are facing the implementation of option 1B milk pricing, a plan that reduces farm income in 45 states and will force New York producers to lose at least \$200 million annually. Our dairy farmers are relying on their inclusion in the Northeast Dairy Compact, to provide them with stability in pricing. However, that measure is not only missing from this legislation, it was not even permitted to be discussed. Time and time again, our Nation's dairy farmers have had to face the challenges of nature and an unstable market.

In response to these challenges, these distressed farmers looked to the Congress to provide them with a crucial milk price safety net, by extending the Northeast Dairy Compact, and offering the preferred milk pricing structure, option 1A.

Accordingly, along with my colleagues from New York and throughout the region, I anticipated the opportunity to respond to our farmers by negotiating for the inclusion of favorable dairy language in this legislation. However, in an effort to force this legislation through, this opportunity was not afforded to us.

Therefore, on behalf of farmers throughout our Nation, I cannot support this legislation and, in the name of the thousands of farmers forgotten today, I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, agriculture is Pennsylvania's number one industry and Pennsylvania has one of the largest rural populations in the nation. There are 45,000 farms in the state and Pennsylvania is second in the nation in the number of acres of farmland pre-

served for agricultural use. We all depend on the food that these hard working citizens produce for our tables.

As we all know, 1999 has been a bad year for farmers. Month after month brought no rain. September brought hurricane rains.

There is a small dairy farmer in my district who raises fresh market sweet corn to sell from a roadside stand. His normal production is about 28,000 ears. This year, his production was 500 ears. This farmer has already purchased hay from out of state for his dairy herd and will do so repeatedly through the winter. This is one small example of the effect of the devastating 100-year drought in Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania farmers have lost \$700 million. This bill provides an anemic \$58 million for our farmers. Our farmers need a combination of direct assistance, emergency livestock feed assistance and low interest disaster loans. Unfortunately, this bill does not adequately meet these needs.

This conference report provides only \$1.2 billion for crop losses due to all natural disasters in the 1999 crop year. This includes the damages due to Hurricanes Dennis and Floyd, natural disasters in Texas and the Northern Plains in addition to the 13 states affected by the drought.

This bill leaves our northeastern farmers without enough help, and I will therefore vote against this conference report.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BE-REUTER). Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the conference report.

There was no objection.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT OFFERED BY MS. KAPTUR

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the conference report?

Ms. KAPTUR. We are, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. KAPTUR moves to recommit the conference report on the bill H.R. 1906 to the committee of conference.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit offered by the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 187, nays 228, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 468]

YEAS—187

Abercrombie Goodling Murtha
Ackerman Gordon Nadler
Allen Green (TX) Napolitano
Andrews Gutierrez Neal
Baird Hastings (FL) Norwood
Baldacci Hill (IN) Oberstar
Barcia Hilliard Oliver
Bartlett Hinchey Ortiz
Becerra Hoeffel Owens
Bentsen Holden Pallone
Berkley Holt Pascrell
Bishop Hoyer Payne
Blagojevich Inslee Pelosi
Blumenauer Istook Peterson (MN)
Boehlert Jackson (IL) Phelps
Bonior Jackson-Lee Pomeroy
Borski (TX) Price (NC)
Boyd John Rangel
Brady (PA) Johnson, E. B. Rivers
Brown (FL) Jones (OH) Roemer
Brown (OH) Kanjorski Rothman
Capps Kaptur Roukema
Cardin Kennedy Roybal-Allard
Clayton Kildee Sabo
Clement Kilpatrick Sanchez
Clyburn King (NY) Sanders
Condit Klink Sawyer
Conyers Kucinich Saxton
Costello LaFalce Schakowsky
Coyne Lampson Serrano
Cramer Lantos Sherman
Crowley Larson Sherwood
Cummings Lee Shows
Danner Lewis (GA) Shuster
Davis (FL) Lipinski Skelton
Davis (IL) LoBiondo Slaughter
DeFazio Lofgren Smith (NJ)
DeGette Lowey Smith (WA)
Delahunt Luther Spratt
DeLauro Maloney (CT) Stark
Deutsch Maloney (NY) Strickland
Dicks Markey Sweeney
Dingell Martinez Tauscher
Dixon Mascara Taylor (MS)
Doggett Matsui Thompson (MS)
Doyle McCarthy (MO) Thurman
Ehrlich McCarthy (NY) Tierney
Engel McDermott Toomey
English McGovern Towns
Eshoo McHugh Turner
Etheridge McIntyre Udall (CO)
Evans McKinney Udall (NM)
Farr McNulty Velazquez
Fattah Meehan Vento
Filner Meek (FL) Visclosky
Foley Menendez Vitter
Forbes Millender Waters
Frank (MA) McDonald Watt (NC)
Franks (NJ) Miller, George Weiner
Gejdenson Minge Weygand
Gephardt Moakley Woolsey
Gilman Moore Wynn
Gonzalez Moran (VA)

NAYS—228

Aderholt Camp Emerson
Archer Campbell Everett
Armey Canady Ewing
Bachus Cannon Fletcher
Baker Capuano Fossella
Baldwin Castle Fowler
Ballenger Chabot Frelinghuysen
Barr Chambliss Frost
Barrett (NE) Coble Gallegly
Barrett (WI) Coburn Ganske
Barton Collins Gekas
Bass Combett Gibbons
Bateman Cook Gilchrist
Bereuter Cooksey Gillmor
Berry Cox Goode
Biggert Crane Goodlatte
Bilbray Cubin Goss
Bilirakis Cunningham Graham
Bliley Davis (VA) Granger
Blunt Deal Green (WI)
Boehner DeLay Greenwood
Bonilla DeMint Gutknecht
Bono Diaz-Balart Hall (OH)
Boswell Dickey Hall (TX)
Brady (TX) Dooley Hansen
Bryant Doolittle Hastings (WA)
Burr Dreier Hayes
Burton Duncan Hayworth
Buyer Dunn Hefley
Callahan Edwards Herger
Calvert Ehlers Hill (MT)

Hilleary Mollohan Sessions
Hobson Moran (KS) Shadegg
Hoekstra Morella Shaw
Horn Myrick Shays
Hostettler Nethercutt Shimkus
Houghton Ney Simpson
Hulshof Northup Sisisky
Hunter Nussle Skeen
Hutchinson Obey Smith (MI)
Hyde Ose Smith (TX)
Isakson Oxley Snyder
Jenkins Packard Souder
Johnson (CT) Paul Spence
Johnson, Sam Pease Stabenow
Jones (NC) Peterson (PA) Stearns
Kasich Petri Stenholm
Kelly Pickering Stump
Kind (WI) Pickett Sununu
Kingston Pitts Talent
Klecza Pombo Tancredo
Knollenberg Porter Tanner
Kolbe Portman Tauzin
Kuykendall Pryce (OH) Terry
LaHood Quinn Thomas
Largent Radanovich Thompson (CA)
Latham Rahall Thornberry
LaTourette Ramstad Thune
Lazio Regula Tiahrt
Leach Reyes Traficant
Lewis (CA) Reynolds Upton
Lewis (KY) Riley Walden
Linder Rodriguez Walsh
Lucas (KY) Rogan Wamp
Lucas (OK) Rogers Watkins
Manzullo Rohrabacher Watts (OK)
McCollum Ros-Lehtinen Weldon (PA)
McCrery Royce Weller
McInnis Ryan (WI) Wexler
McIntosh Ryun (KS) Whitfield
McKeon Salmon Wicker
Metcalf Sandlin Wilson
Mica Sanford Wise
Miller (FL) Schaffer Wolf
Miller, Gary Scott Young (AK)
Mink Sensenbrenner Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—18

Berman Hinojosa Scarborough
Boucher Hooley Stupak
Carson Jefferson Taylor (NC)
Chenoweth Levin Waxman
Clay Meeks (NY) Weldon (FL)
Ford Rush Wu

□ 1257

Messrs. MILLER of Florida, HAYES, BONILLA, BARRETT of Wisconsin, PITTS, EHLERS, and HOUGHTON changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Messrs. MURTHA, DOYLE, NADLER, LAMPSON, BENTSEN and GOODLING changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

Mr. WALSH changed his vote from “present” to “nay.”

Messrs. SWEENEY, SAXTON and KING changed their vote from “present” to “yea.”

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The question is on the conference report.

Pursuant to the provisions of clause 10 of rule XX, the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 240, nays 175, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 469]

YEAS—240

Abercrombie Baldwin Bentsen
Aderholt Barcia Bereuter
Archer Barrett (NE) Berkley
Armey Barrett (WI) Berry
Bachus Barton Biggert
Baker Bateman Bilbray

Bilirakis Hall (TX) Pickering
Bishop Hansen Pickett
Blagojevich Hastings (FL) Pombo
Bliley Hastings (WA) Pomeroy
Blunt Hayes Porter
Boehner Hayworth Portman
Bonilla Herger Price (NC)
Bono Hill (IN) Pryce (OH)
Boswell Hill (MT) Radanovich
Boyd Hilleary Rahall
Brady (TX) Hilliard Ramstad
Bryant Hobson Regula
Burton Horn Reyes
Buyer Hulshof Riley
Callahan Hunter Rodriguez
Calvert Hutchinson Roemer
Camp Hyde Rogan
Canady Isakson Rogers
Cannon Jackson (IL) Ros-Lehtinen
Capps Jenkins Ryan (WI)
Capuano John Ryun (KS)
Chambliss Johnson, E.B. Sabo
Clayton Johnson, Sam Sanchez
Clement Jones (NC) Sandlin
Clyburn Kasich Schaffer
Coble Kind (WI) Schakowsky
Coburn Kingston Scott
Combett Klecza Sessions
Condit Knollenberg Shadegg
Cook Kolbe Shimkus
Cooksey Kuykendall Shows
Costello LaHood Simpson
Cramer Lampson Sisisky
Crowley Largent Skeen
Cubin Latham Skelton
Cunningham LaTourette Smith (MI)
Danner Leach Smith (TX)
Davis (FL) Lewis (CA) Smith (WA)
Davis (VA) Lewis (KY) Snyder
DeLay Linder Souder
DeMint Lucas (KY) Spence
Diaz-Balart Lucas (OK) Spratt
Dickey Manzullo Stabenow
Dooley McCarthy (MO) Stenholm
Doolittle McCollum Strickland
Dreier McCrery Stump
Dunn McInnis Talent
Edwards McIntosh Tanner
Emerson McIntyre Tauzin
Etheridge McKeon Terry
Evans Menendez Thomas
Everett Metcalf Thompson (CA)
Ewing Mica Thompson (MS)
Farr Miller, Gary Thornberry
Fletcher Minge Thune
Foley Mink Tiahrt
Fowler Mollohan Towns
Frank (MA) Moore Traficant
Frost Moran (KS) Turner
Gallegly Morella Udall (NM)
Ganske Myrick Walden
Gibbons Nethercutt Wamp
Gillmor Ney Watkins
Gonzalez Northup Watt (NC)
Goode Nussle Watts (OK)
Goodlatte Obey Weller
Gordon Ortiz Wexler
Goss Ose Whitfield
Graham Oxley Wicker
Granger Packard Wilson
Green (WI) Pastor Wise
Greenwood Pease Wolf
Gutknecht Petri Young (AK)
Hall (OH) Phelps Young (FL)

NAYS—175

Ackerman Conyers Fattah
Allen Cox Filner
Andrews Coyne Forbes
Baird Crane Fossella
Baldacci Cummings Franks (NJ)
Ballenger Davis (IL) Frelinghuysen
Barr Deal Gejdenson
Bartlett DeFazio Gekas
Bass DeGette Gephardt
Becerra Delahunt Gilchrist
Blumenauer DeLauro Gilman
Boehlert Deutsch Goodling
Bonior Dicks Green (TX)
Borski Dingell Gutierrez
Brady (PA) Dixon Hefley
Brown (FL) Doggett Hinchey
Brown (OH) Doyle Hoeffel
Burr Duncan Hoekstra
Campbell Ehlers Holden
Cardin Ehrlich Holt
Castle Engel Hostettler
Chabot English Houghton
Collins Eshoo Hoyer

Insee	McKinney	Sanders
Istook	McNulty	Sanford
Jackson-Lee	Meehan	Sawyer
(TX)	Meek (FL)	Saxton
Johnson (CT)	Millender-	Sensenbrenner
Jones (OH)	McDonald	Serrano
Kanjorski	Miller (FL)	Shaw
Kaptur	Miller, George	Shays
Kelly	Moakley	Sherman
Kennedy	Moran (VA)	Sherwood
Kildee	Murtha	Shuster
Kilpatrick	Nadler	Slaughter
King (NY)	Napolitano	Smith (NJ)
Klink	Neal	Stark
Kucinich	Norwood	Stearns
LaFalce	Oberstar	Sununu
Lantos	Olver	Sweeney
Larson	Owens	Tancredo
Lazio	Pallone	Tauscher
Lee	Pascarell	Taylor (MS)
Lewis (GA)	Paul	Thurman
Lipinski	Payne	Tierney
LoBiondo	Pelosi	Toomey
Lofgren	Peterson (MN)	Udall (CO)
Lowey	Peterson (PA)	Upton
Luther	Pitts	Velazquez
Maloney (CT)	Quinn	Vento
Maloney (NY)	Rangel	Visclosky
Markey	Reynolds	Vitter
Martinez	Rivers	Walsh
Mascara	Rohrabacher	Waters
Matsui	Rothman	Weiner
McCarthy (NY)	Roukema	Weldon (PA)
McDermott	Roybal-Allard	Weygand
McGovern	Royce	Woolsey
McHugh	Salmon	Wynn

NOT VOTING—18

Berman	Hinojosa	Scarborough
Boucher	Hookey	Stupak
Carson	Jefferson	Taylor (NC)
Chenoweth	Levin	Waxman
Clay	Meeks (NY)	Weldon (FL)
Ford	Rush	Wu

□ 1315

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD and Mrs. MALONEY of New York changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY changed her vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the conference report was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to cast a vote on the Agriculture Appropriations Conference Report due to a family emergency. However, had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on several items today, the 1st of October.

Had I been present, I would have voted: "Yea" on rollcall No. 466; "no" on rollcall No. 467; "yea" on rollcall No. 468; "yea" on rollcall No. 469.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. BOYD. Mr. Speaker, yesterday during the vote on H.R. 2910, the National Transportation Safety Board Amendments Act of 1999, I was unavoidably detained. If I had been present and voting, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall vote 462.

TRIBUTE TO LILLIE DRAYTON ON HER RETIREMENT FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

(Mr. INSLEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I would ask Members in the Chamber to join me for just a moment in honoring a very important American who is in the gallery to my left today, Lillie Drayton, who for the last 39 years has served the American public and us running the elevators in our office buildings. I want to recognize her on her day of retirement. I do not know anyone who has epitomized public service as much as Lillie. When Americans have come to their Capitol, she has been the one to let them know that people care about them and they are doing a fine job of them.

I would like to recognize and respect her for all her fine work, Lillie Drayton.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Regrettably, Members are reminded not to introduce guests in the gallery.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, OCTOBER 4, 1999

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday next for morning hour debates.

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

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

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

There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE RIGHT TO SUE AN HMO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. NORWOOD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, in a few days this House is going to vote on an issue that will impact the health of every family in this country. The managed care lobby will do their best to confuse the Members of this body as to the real effect of the Bipartisan Consensus Managed Care Improvement Act that I introduced along with the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL).

I urge all Members to simply read the bill. The HMO lobby is telling Members that employers can be sued for simply offering a health plan, for their choice of a health plan, for the actions of that health plan. But yesterday Members heard in this Chamber the truth, the actual language of the bill, that dispels every one of these falsehoods.

The managed care lobby has also tried to tell Members that employers and insurers can be sued for not buying or providing a specific benefit, and that this bill would mandate all kinds of new coverage. Read the bill, page 61 beginning on line 24. Read the bill. Employers and insurance companies cannot be sued for, and I would like to quote:

"The decision to include or exclude from the plan any specific benefit.

How can we be any clearer than that?

The managed care lobby has told Members that this bill opens the door for unlimited punitive damages against health plans with jury awards soaring into the hundreds of millions of dollars.

To begin with, 30 of our States have already capped punitive damages. In my home State of Georgia, if the consensus bill becomes law, when it becomes law, there will be no punitive damages allowed regardless of the circumstances.

It is for precisely this reason that the consensus bill puts these court remedies back into the hands of the States, where tort reforms have been far more effective than here at the Federal level.

Read the bill. We have left a way for insurance companies to remain shielded from any punitive damages. Not a penny. If there is a dispute and the health plan agrees to settle it fairly with external appeals, they remain shielded from all punitive damages. Read the bill, on page 60 beginning line 3. I quote again:

The plan is not liable for any punitive, exemplary or similar damages if the plan or the issuer complied with the determination of the external appeal entity.

How can we be any simpler than that? As a matter of fact, read the whole section of this bill of who can sue for what. It is just three pages. But those simple three pages overturn 25 years of injustice, and they close the door on unscrupulous health plans using this loophole in the law to breach