

ally, Israel, to be wiped off the map. Unfortunately, these vile words are not new, nor were they his own. He was quoting Iran's self-proclaimed enemy of the United States and Israel, Ayatollah Khomeini. But perhaps even more disturbing is a place you can find those words written, on their Shahab-3 ballistic missile. These missiles have a range of 1,250 miles and could easily strike Israel.

Our Nation is blessed with a vibrant Jewish constituency, and I value my interaction with Jews in my district and during the many trips I have made to Israel. We can learn from the Jewish people that when your enemy says he is going to kill you, you better pay attention.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge this body to issue a sharp rebuke of the Iranian President's words. Further, we should immediately consider proposals to strengthen sanctions under the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act of 1996 and authorize the President to provide financial and political assistance to pro-democracy groups within Iran.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a concurrent resolution of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. Con. Res. 61. Concurrent resolution authorizing the remains of Rosa Parks to lie in honor in the rotunda of the Capitol.

□ 0915

WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2744, AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2006

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 520 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 520

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2744) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TERRY). The gentleman from Florida (Mr. PUTNAM) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

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

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 520 is a rule providing for consideration of the conference report on H.R. 2744, making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006.

According to the rule, all points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read.

Mr. Speaker, today I am proud to present for consideration the rule for the conference report for agriculture appropriations for fiscal year 2006. I would like to commend Chairman BONILLA, Chairman LEWIS, and the entire Appropriations Committee for their hard work this year. The congressional budget is an important tool of Congress, allowing us to establish our priorities for the coming fiscal year.

The agriculture appropriations subcommittee has reported out a bill that provides important resources to ensure that our Nation's farmers and ranchers remain competitive in the 21st century. The legislation enhances our ability to safeguard our food supply and addresses the nutritional needs of children and the most disadvantaged in our country. The bill also works to maintain and build fiscal discipline.

In total, the bill provides \$17.1 billion in discretionary resources. This level represents an increase of \$258 million, only 1½ percent over the fiscal year 2005-enacted level.

The bill continues our commitment to protecting human health and safety. In an effort to combat harmful pests and disease that threaten American agriculture, the Food Safety and Inspection Service is increased by \$20 million over last year for a total of \$838 million, an increase of \$127 million above the President's request. And APHIS, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, activities are funded at \$7 million above last year for a total of \$820 million.

I am pleased that the conference report fulfills our commitments to important food and nutrition programs. Child nutrition programs are funded at \$12.7 billion, \$879 million above last year and \$245 million above the President's request. To provide quality nutrition for Women, Infants, and Children, the WIC program is funded at \$5.3 billion, \$22 million more than last year.

In addition, the conference report supports American farmers, ranchers, and rural areas. The Farm Service Agency salaries and expenses are funded at the President's request of \$1 billion, allowing the continued delivery of farm and disaster programs. To unlock much-needed advances in agricultural research and allow American farmers to have the tools necessary to continue to produce a safe and wholesome, affordable food supply, the Agricultural

Research Service is funded at \$1.266 billion.

USDA's Conservation Observations are increased by \$72 million over the President's request, bringing 2006 funding to \$840 million, an increase over last year. This will allow farmers and ranchers to achieve important conservation and environment goals, recognizing that farmers and ranchers are the original environmentalists.

This appropriations bill is an example of how Congress can attain fiscal discipline and still fund our necessary programs. The conference report on H.R. 2744 funds programs over the President's budget request, increasing funding in strategic areas, while maintaining fiscal discipline. I am impressed with the work of the conferees, and I am certain the appropriations process this year will serve as a model of how we can achieve responsible and responsive funding simultaneously.

Mr. Speaker, I represent a congressional district in Florida that is among the top in the Nation in production of certain agricultural goods. And I want to personally thank Chairman BONILLA and Chairman LEWIS and the agriculture appropriations subcommittee staff for their ongoing commitment to the needs of Florida's agriculture, which has been ravaged now by a number of hurricanes over the past 2 years and a number of invasive plants, pests, and diseases.

I particularly thank Chairman BONILLA for his understanding and diligence in fighting the spread of citrus canker in the groves of my State. I know that the people of Florida deeply appreciate the subcommittee's tireless efforts to assist our State's agriculture economy.

I urge Members to support the rule and the underlying conference report.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. PUTNAM) for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, let me begin by commending committee Chairman LEWIS and subcommittee Chairman Bonilla as well as committee Ranking Member OBEY and subcommittee Ranking Member DELAURO for bringing a freestanding fiscal year 2006 agriculture appropriations conference report to the floor today.

For the first time in several years, the agriculture appropriations conference report has not been folded into an omnibus bill and is allowed to be voted on up or down on its own merits. Until this year, that has been a rare accomplishment, and I believe our distinguished colleagues deserve to be commended for their efforts.

Mr. Speaker, while I will support the conference report, I do have some concerns with the final conference report

and with the process by which it has been completed; and I am going to let some of the others who are on the Appropriations Committee talk about that in more detail. But, apparently, there were serious policy disagreements between the House and the Senate that were magically resolved without any vote by the conferees. There are examples of identical provisions, passed in both bodies, being changed in the conference committee even though House rules preclude such provisions from being rewritten. I think we can do much better than that, Mr. Speaker.

I also have some policy concerns with this conference report. One provision that was dropped in the conference had to do with privatization of the administering of the food stamp program. Senator HARKIN and others in the Senate had some serious concerns with a proposal in Texas to allow Accenture to administer the State's food stamp program. Their concerns led to the inclusion of a provision preventing such privatization. Senator HARKIN attempted to modify that provision for inclusion in the final conference report, but his effort was rejected. Ultimately, the provision was dropped altogether from the conference report.

I am very concerned about a wholesale change like this in the food stamp program. The conference report actually allows every State to privatize their food stamp programs. We may find out that this is a good thing, but I do not believe we should rush into such a big change without testing it first in a few pilot programs. The food stamp program is one of the best run Federal and State programs and should not be subjected to such a wholesale change.

Another provision that I am concerned about is the country of origin labeling provision. The 2002 farm bill set a date certain for country of origin labeling for various meat, poultry, and produce products. I was disappointed by past efforts that have delayed portions of this provision. This conference report delays enactment of country of origin labeling until 2008, and it is time to let the country of origin labeling provisions take effect like the Congress intended when it passed the 2002 farm bill.

I am also concerned about other provisions dealing with organic produce, the way the Food and Drug Advisory Panel is regulated, and horse slaughter. The horse slaughter provisions are extremely troubling, primarily because majorities in both the House and Senate voted for amendments banning the slaughter of horses for human consumption. This provision should not have been rewritten in conference, and I am disappointed with the conference committee's actions on all three of these issues.

However, Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not highlight, in my opinion, one of the most positive aspects of this conference report. As many of my colleagues know, I am a strong sup-

porter of the George McGovern-Robert Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program. I am pleased that President Bush requested \$100 million in his fiscal year 2006 budget, and I am pleased this conference report funds the McGovern-Dole program at \$100 million. It is still far less than I believe we should be funding it; but, nevertheless, it is an increase over last year's level.

Modeled after the U.S. school breakfast and lunch programs, the McGovern-Dole program is successful, it is well run, and it is a popular program that provides food for children in school settings around the world. Named after former Senators George McGovern and Bob Dole, this program is operating around the world and has fed millions of children in countries like Afghanistan and Colombia and other developing countries.

Mr. Speaker, it is not just I who supports this program. The Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Johanns, sent me a letter earlier this year expressing the administration's support for the program. Specifically, the Secretary mentions "the positive results of increased enrollment, decline in absenteeism, improved concentration, energy, and attitudes toward learning; and infrastructure improvements . . ." But beyond these, he mentions how important it is that countries are already graduating out of this program. In other words, some countries are getting ready to end their involvement in the McGovern-Dole program because they are now able to provide the school feeding programs themselves. They have become self-sustaining.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, Secretary Johanns notes how important the program is and how important proper funding is despite the challenges facing the Federal budget. I will insert this letter from Secretary Johanns into the RECORD at this point.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,
WASHINGTON, DC.

Hon. JAMES P. MCGOVERN,
*U.S. House of Representatives, Cannon House
Office Building, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CONGRESSMAN MCGOVERN: Thank you for the letter of December 2, 2004, from you and your colleagues to President George W. Bush, expressing your support for the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program (FFE). The White House forwarded your letter to the Department of Agriculture (USDA) for reply. We apologize for the delay in responding.

This Administration greatly appreciates your support for this very successful program. USDA now has 5 years of experience with FFE and its predecessor, the Global Food for Education Initiative. These programs have reached over 7 million beneficiaries and provided close to 1.3 million tons of agricultural commodities as well as other types of assistance to schools and communities. The positive results include increased school enrollment, especially among girls; declines in absenteeism; improved concentration, energy, and attitudes toward learning; and infrastructure improvements, including classrooms, kitchens, storage fa-

cilities, water systems, latrines, and playgrounds.

We are especially gratified that FFE has resulted in greater local commitment to school feeding activities. In many cases, FFE activities have been so successful that local support for school feeding is expanding to the point that FFE assistance can shortly be ended. Examples of these "graduating" countries are Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Moldova and Vietnam. We will continue to allocate some FFE resources to these countries this year as we expand the benefits of FFE by implementing programs in additional countries. Additionally, the success of FFE has resulted in other donors becoming involved in school feeding programs. These other donors include the European Union, the German Agency for Technical Cooperation, the Japanese Development Agency, Canada, and the World Health Organization.

We agree that funding for FFE should be expanded in fiscal year (FY) 2006. While the Administration is making a concerted effort to cut the budget deficit, we have requested \$100 million in appropriated funding for FFE in FY 2006, which is double the funding for the program in FY 2004 and an increase of 15 percent compared to FY 2005.

Thank you again for writing to support this important program. We look forward to continuing to work with you to improve USDA's overseas food aid programs. A similar letter has been sent to each of your colleagues.

Sincerely,

MIKE JOHANNS,
Secretary.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I believe the world community, and that includes the United States, can do better in combating hunger in the world. There are 850 million hungry people in the world; 300 million are children. Of those 300 million, half of them do not go to school; and of those who do not go to school, they are mostly girls. We need to change that reality, and the McGovern-Dole program helps mightily toward changing that reality. The fact is we cannot effectively combat disease and overpopulation and illiteracy or deal effectively with sustainability in developing countries if we do not commit ourselves to universal education; and the way we get to universal education, in large part, is through school feeding programs.

I would also argue that the McGovern-Dole program does some other important things. It gives people around the world who otherwise would not have any hope, it gives them hope. It gives them a chance to believe that their children will get an education and actually succeed in the world. It gives countries the ability to look forward to truly develop in a way where they can have economies that can support their people. I also think it goes a long way in improving the image of the United States around the world at a time when I think we desperately need to improve our image, because I believe that this is the kind of program that a majority of people, Republicans and Democrats, people from red States and blue States, all think is what America stands for. We are about helping people. We are about giving people a chance.

Let me finally say, Mr. Speaker, that I hope at some point the Republican

leadership and the Democratic leadership in this House can come together and focus more acutely and more effectively on the issue of hunger here at home in the United States and around the world. There are some problems that we cannot solve in my lifetime, but hunger is not one of them. We can do so much better. We have the resources. We have the infrastructure. What we need is the political will, and that is my hope.

I want to thank Chairman LEWIS, Chairman BONILLA, Ranking Member OBEY, and Ranking Member DELAURO, along with subcommittee members EMERSON and KAPTUR, who are strong supporters of the McGovern-Dole program, for their hard work and for increasing funding in this program to \$100 million for fiscal year 2006. I truly appreciate their efforts. Again, despite some of my concerns with the process and a few policy matters, I think overall this is a good conference report. I will support it.

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

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Massachusetts comments and certainly share his concern about the need to deal with world hunger problems.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE), a gentleman who represents a group of people who are doing their own part to fight that. He represents the breadbasket of the world.

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding me this time.

Today, the House is set to consider the fiscal year 2006 agriculture appropriations conference report, a bill of some \$17 billion in scope. But according to the Congressional Budget Office, Mr. Speaker, the bill violates the budget resolution by \$199 million over the budget.

□ 0930

The rule we are debating at this very moment is asking us to waive a budget point of order to enforce the budget.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot do that. These are difficult times in which we live. The American people are looking to this Congress to make the hard choices, to put our fiscal house in order. Today, as we consider this conference report, for my part I will neither be able to vote yes for this rule, but neither am I willing to vote no. The only reason why I will vote "present" and urge other conservative colleagues, Republicans and Democrats, to do likewise is simply out of a sense of confidence in the chairman of the House Appropriations Committee.

I have met in recent days and recent hours with Chairman JERRY LEWIS of the House Appropriations Committee. The only reason I am not prepared to vote no on this rule is because I believe

that almost solely by virtue of the integrity and commitment of Chairman JERRY LEWIS, I believe that before we adjourn this year, we will eventually be back to the \$843 billion number that this Congress labored to adopt as our budget for discretionary spending, back when the budget of the House was adopted last March. So I believe that at the end of the day, Chairman JERRY LEWIS will bring these numbers in line.

But as was the case with the legislative branch conference report that was \$85 million over the House budget, the Interior conference report which was \$52 million over the budget, this Agriculture appropriations conference report is over the budget by \$199 million. And I believe it is imperative that while we recognize this chairman's effort at the end of the day, at the end of this year to square this budget up, that largely due to our colleagues in the Senate, this bill exceeds the House budget.

It also, as I said in a letter to Chairman DREIER last night, it violates the House rules in one other regard. Under rule XXI, paragraph 6, legislation is not to be considered in order where there is a designation or redesignation of a public work in honor of an individual, and this legislation does that, naming a public structure after a sitting Member of the Senate in direct violation of the House rules.

This bill violates the House budget that we adopted in March, this bill violates the House rules, and for that reason I will vote "present" on this rule and urge my colleagues to do likewise.

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

Mr. Speaker, let me just say to the gentleman who just spoke from Indiana, I appreciate the fact that he is sensitive to when House rules are violated. I just wish he would join with us when the House rules are violated routinely on a number of rules that deal with a number of important pieces of legislation.

I would also say, too, this legislation, I think, is good for a whole bunch of reasons, but one of the reasons is because it provides money for food stamps, WIC and feeding programs. Feeding people is, I think, an important issue, and especially in the aftermath of the hurricanes that have hit the gulf coast. There are a lot more people that are going to need to take advantage of some of the programs that are encompassed in this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK).

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by telling you how impressed I am with the firm statement of principle apparently by the Republican Study Committee. Confronted with an appropriations bill that they believe wrecks the budget, violates the House rules, they are calling for a firm and principled "present" on the rule. That is an inspirational example of how to combat wrongdoing. It

does give new meaning to the faith-based initiative. Apparently the gentleman from Indiana thinks this is a terrible rule and a bad bill, but because he has faith that by some process, apparently others will be excluded, that the chairman of the committee will fix it, he will refrain from voting against it.

I want to express my appreciation to the gentleman from Connecticut, who fights very hard for the most important parts of this bill, in my judgment, those which my colleague from Massachusetts alluded to, those which try to alleviate hunger, food stamps and international feeding programs, and I am pleased that they have survived the onslaught as well as they have. I hope that when we get to the reconciliation process, her efforts and the efforts of others who care about these things will succeed.

There is one aspect of the feeding program, however, where I find myself in sharp disagreement with the conference report, and at this point I would include for the record a speech given to the Kansas City Export Food Aid Conference in May by USAID Administrator Natsios.

[From the Kansas City Export Food Aid Conference, May 3, 2005]

THE LOCAL PURCHASE INITIATIVE

(Remarks by Andrew S. Natsios, Administrator, U.S. Agency for International Development)

I am very pleased to be here today to discuss U.S. food aid—what we have done right in the past and what we can do to improve how we conduct our food aid programs in light of new challenges since September 11, 2001.

Last year when I was here, I talked about the success of U.S. food aid over the past 50 years and how we have assisted more than 3 billion people through P.L. 480 programs. Over the past twelve months, many of you have continued to work with people in Sri Lanka and Indonesia whose lives were devastated as a result of the Tsunami as well as people in Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea who have been hit hard by the equally overwhelming consequences of conflict and drought. In addition, many of your organizations contribute to long term development programs in places like Honduras and Bangladesh that strengthen communities so that when they face sudden or slow onset disasters, they are prepared and better able to cope with the setbacks. You have continued to work tirelessly to save and improve people's lives. I appreciate the partnerships we have created together to address food insecurity.

I want to take a few minutes now to talk about changes in the world over the past few years and how the change has affected our ability to meet food aid needs. Our Agency, and particularly our food programs now operate in an environment characterized by increased frequency and severity of natural and manmade disasters, terrorism, instability, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, corruption, poor governance and conflict which has led to increased population displacement.

The United States Government is facing increasing demands on its diplomatic, military and humanitarian resources. And the resources are limited. But not responding is not an option, so we prioritize and stretch the dollars to meet as many needs as possible as efficiently as possible.

At the same time, the World Trade Organization continues its debate on food aid issues in the context of the current agricultural trade negotiations. Some of the other members would like to do away with in-kind food aid such as the P.L. 480 Title II program. The U.S. has made two presentations at the WTO in Geneva on U.S. food aid policies and programs. At these presentations and in the negotiations we keep reminding member states, and relevant international organizations that we must come to an agreement that will ensure (1) that we maintain adequate food aid levels to meet global needs; (2) that food aid continues to be an internationally accepted form of assistance when it targets food insecure populations; and (3) that we minimize any trade distortions. I won't belabor this any further as I know that there will be a more in-depth discussion on trade issues over the next few days. Let me just say that we will continue to try to ensure that the WTO Doha Development Round does not restrict in-kind food aid. If food aid is unduly restricted, inhibit development, increase food insecurity and create instability in developing countries.

In President Bush's 2002 National Security Strategy, he acknowledged the importance of fighting poverty abroad when he defined the three pillars of our foreign policy as Defense, Diplomacy and Development. Recognizing that we cannot address all of today's problems using our military or diplomatic resources, he emphasized that what we do as development practitioners can also serve to protect vital American national interests.

In January of this year, USAID released a paper focusing attention on failing, failed and recovering states known as the Fragile States Strategy. The strategy provides a focal point for the USAID Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian assistance in defining its priorities and in carrying out its humanitarian assistance role. The strategy promotes four basic objectives for carrying out work in fragile, failed and failing states which are to: (1) improve monitoring and analysis; (2) ensure that priorities respond to realities on the ground; (3) focus programs on the source of the fragility or weakness; and (4) create or use streamlined operational procedures to support rapid and effective response.

Failed states are both the incubator and sanctuary for terrorists. Where there is no effective national government to control terrorist organizations, these groups will flourish. It was no accident that Sudan, Somalia, and Afghanistan served as the base of Al Qaeda training and planning. As the National Security Strategy document so succinctly puts it: "America is now threatened less by conquering states than by failing ones." We now know by painful experience that we are not immune from the consequences that arise from state failure on other continents.

Our underlying priorities, in working in fragile states, are to increase stability, promote security, encourage reform and build institutional capacity. This will address the causes of fragility as opposed to simply targeting symptoms. The President's 2006 budget proposes reforms which will give USAID the programmatic tools to deal with fragile states.

In crisis situations, strategic programming of food aid can stabilize a fragile economy by supporting local farmers and maintaining demand for the locally produced goods, despite the low purchasing power of those requiring assistance. Famines can be demand driven or supply driven. A supply driven famine is caused by reduced food production and rising prices. In this case, importing U.S. food to increase the food supply would be an appropriate response. A demand driven fam-

ine is caused by the collapse of family livelihoods and the inability of families to access food, even where there is adequate supply and low prices. In cases where the food supply is adequate and prices stable, but where families cannot afford to purchase the food, an appropriate response would be to purchase what is available locally to assist the food insecure rather than adding U.S. food to the local supply which could depress local prices and further aggravate the economy.

As with all of our work in fragile countries, we need to take a close look at all of our options when responding to needs. The work is getting more rather than less arduous and it is evident that we must expand the ways in which we conduct our business. The old way of doing business is insufficient to meet the mounting food needs in this new environment given our limited dollars.

Despite all that we are doing, and all that the rest of the world is doing to win the war on hunger, the number of chronically malnourished people in the world continues to rise, now totaling more than 850 million people. And though the prevalence of undernourishment has fallen in 30 developing countries since the early 1990s, poverty and conflict have contributed to its growth elsewhere.

In the past decade, and especially in the past several years, conflict-related emergencies and natural disasters have created global food needs beyond the capacity of the U.S. and other donors to respond using the options currently available to us. In specific situations, when food pipelines break or when conflicts pause and we need to move food in quickly to save lives, we need to be able to access food more quickly.

In his book on famine, Fred Cuny stated that "the chances of saving lives at the outset of a [relief] operation are greatly reduced when food is imported. By the time it arrives in the country and gets to people, many will have died." He goes on to say that "evidence suggests the massive food shipments sent to Ethiopia in 1985 had little impact on the outcome of the famine . . . and that by the time it arrived in sufficient, steady quantities in the rural areas, the death rate had peaked and was already declining."

Some of the starkest evidence we have of deaths directly related to a slow food aid response took place in Gode, Ethiopia, the epicenter of the 2000 famine there, which threatened over 10 million people with starvation. While the famine was eventually averted—the Centers for Disease Control has estimated that in Gode, 20,000 deaths resulted from the crisis in that region alone with an estimated 78,000 deaths in four other regions. Seventy-seven percent of the deaths in Gode occurred before the major relief interventions began in the summer of 2000 and more than half of the deaths were of children under the age of five.

One way to respond to the needs more quickly is to purchase food locally, but this requires us to have access to cash. When food emergencies are a function of localized drought, conflict or crop failure from disease or locusts with food available close-by, local purchase can be critical.

USAID is searching for innovative ways to stretch its dollars and meet the needs of the most vulnerable populations with emergency and developmental food assistance. One way of doing this is to provide cash which could be used to purchase food in the country or region where an emergency is taking place.

For FY 2006, President Bush has taken the initiative to provide this tool to USAID humanitarian officers and has put a request into the FY 2006 budget asking that \$300 million be shifted out of P.L. 480 Title II and into the International Disaster and Famine Assistance (IDFA) account to be used as cash

for meeting emergency food needs. Specifically, the President stated in his budget that "This funding will permit USAID to provide food assistance in the most timely and efficient manner to the most critical emergency food crises. This assistance will be used in those instances where the rapid use of cash assistance is critical to saving lives."

One of the factors behind this request is the length of time that it takes to ship food commodities from the United States to an emergency. Shipping in-kind assistance from the U.S. normally requires three or four months to arrive at an emergency distribution point once it is ordered. Having the option to purchase the food in the same country or region where an emergency is happening would enable us to get food to hungry people faster. It would save lives and would fill a critical gap until U.S. commodities arrive at the site. In addition to providing a faster option, local purchases of food will, in many cases, save the dollars that would otherwise have been spent on transportation costs, allowing us to purchase additional food aid to feed more people.

The primary purpose of the Title II program is to save lives and having more flexibility in our programs to use cash to buy food locally will save lives. The fact that U.S. farmers and shippers are able to benefit from the Food for Peace program is an important, but secondary benefit. It is not the primary objective of the program. The primary objective is to save lives.

In responding to pending crises, USAID has limited options:

We can order a shipment of U.S. commodities which can be expected to arrive at the distribution site within 3 to 4 months of purchase.

We can access food from pre-positioned U.S. commodity stocks or swap commodities from other food pipelines. However, the limited pre-positioned stocks are not always adequate or suitable for every situation and increasingly thin pipelines have lately rendered swaps infeasible.

Within the past year, we have established a pre-position warehouse in Dubai, UAE to store commodities until they are needed in an emergency. While this is extremely useful, we cannot always preposition the amount or appropriate mix of commodities that would be needed in every emergency. Also, pre-positioning will not solve every problem. For example, currently Ethiopia is facing an unexpectedly severe food crisis and while the current supplemental budget has a sizable increase in food aid, it cannot be used to order food until the President signs it. When this happens, we will need to order the commodities in the U.S., ship them, and then wait for them to arrive in Ethiopia several months from now. Needless deaths will occur while we wait. If we had the flexibility to purchase food locally, we could purchase the commodities in or near Ethiopia once the legislation is signed, getting the food to the people who need it months sooner. This is not a hypothetical situation—it is taking place as we speak.

Another option that we have to meet emergencies is to divert U.S. commodities headed to other programs on the high seas. And while this has been done, it is an extremely costly intervention. It means that another program will suffer, and ultimately means less money for commodities.

The ability to purchase food supplies in local or regional markets would give us one more option for meeting critical needs. While this will not always be viable, this flexibility will make a difference in the reduction of human suffering.

I want to be very clear that this requested change is not an attack on the U.S. farmers or the U.S. maritime industry. The contributions that many of you have made in feeding

hungry people overseas is notable and will continue to be a critical, basic component of how the U.S. conducts its management of food aid. The Administration has no intention of changing how the United States runs its food aid programs in general. This is not the beginning of a push to make our food aid program an all-cash program. I personally would oppose any kind of proposal to make more than one quarter of our food aid budget available for local purchase. The greater portion of U.S. food aid must continue to be purchased in American markets where the supply is assured for emergencies where large volume is needed.

One thing that I have been asked repeatedly is: How will we sustain support on Capitol Hill for these humanitarian food aid programs, if the benefits to the U.S. agricultural and shipping industries are perceived to be decreased? The budget for OFDA, the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, and the Refugee Program budget have been as stable in funding as the Food for Peace budget, and these two budgets contain no guaranteed purchase of U.S. commodities. Americans, including those who have been intimately involved in our food aid programs in the past, will strongly support USAID's effort to improve the U.S. food response to humanitarian emergencies by making that response as flexible and effective as possible to save more lives and reduce suffering. I believe that compassion for those who are suffering is part of the moral fabric of this society. This was evident to me in the massive outpouring of private cash contributions to help the victims of the Tsunami and I believe that it holds true here.

Stretching our emergency resources further will also help to protect our development programs from being tapped to meet emergency needs.

I know that many of you have questions about how we will run this program and I will try to answer as many of them as possible.

The Administration has requested that the money be placed in the International Disaster and Famine Account. This is the emergency account managed by our Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance. However, the \$300 million designated to this account for the purchase of food aid will be managed by the Office of Food for Peace, which currently manages the Title II food aid program. As Food for Peace currently has the responsibility for and the expertise in managing food aid, they are the appropriate group to administer this money. The money, like current Title II money, will be programmed primarily through NGOs and the World Food Program.

One of the questions that I have been asked is: Is there enough food available in local markets to meet our emergency needs? Though local purchase will not support all of our food aid initiatives, there is food available for purchase in developing countries. In 2004 more than \$680 million worth of food aid was purchased from developing countries by WFP in order to meet local food aid needs. Developing countries able to supply food aid commodities have included (but are not limited to) Indonesia, Pakistan, South Africa and Sudan. This method not only provides food more quickly and more cheaply, it also supports the local economy and helps improve the livelihoods of poor farmers.

We follow the principle of "Do no Harm" in local markets. The \$300 million will not all be used to purchase and program food in a single country, but in a variety of countries, reducing the impact on local markets. We also intend to apply Title II legislated requirements such as Bellmon and Usual Marketing Requirement, where local purchases are conducted to ensure that there will be no

displacement of commercial sales, or negative impact on local markets.

I have also been asked several times why we can't just use our notwithstanding authority under Title II to make local purchases. I have been told in no uncertain terms by our USAID lawyers that we cannot use our notwithstanding authority for local purchases. Title II authorizes the donation of American agricultural commodities. Notwithstanding authority was not intended for, nor can it be used to create additional authority that would allow the purchase of foreign commodities. The notwithstanding clause can waive existing federal laws which slow down emergency response, but it cannot be used to invent new authority not now available under Title II. As it is currently written, Title II can not be used to purchase commodities locally.

We do not intend for this money to be used in purchasing commodities from other developed nations. If food aid is not available for local purchase under appropriate market conditions in developing countries with some proximity to the emergency need, the food aid will be purchased in the United States.

I want to close with another example of where this type of program could be used effectively.

In the past in southern Sudan, small farmers in the fertile western farming areas have often produced small grain surpluses, while hundreds of thousands of Sudanese in other parts of the country have urgently needed food aid. If we were able to strategically and carefully buy the surpluses to meet food aid needs elsewhere in the same country, we would end up sustaining and improving the lives of both groups. Should signatories comply with the July Peace Accords, there is a real possibility that agricultural output could return to its former level and the region would once again act as an important regional cereal supplier. However, if using donated food commodities from the U.S. remains our only option, we risk lowering demand for the local production and destroying price incentives for the local farmers to improve their production to meet future food aid needs.

I would be happy to take your questions.

Mr. Speaker, the issue was this. We give food aid, and that is generous. Under the rules that will be maintained by this bill, the aid can only be given in kind; that is, we ship the actual physical food. That has obvious advantages in that it helps the American farmer while it helps those in need. Particularly for nonemergency food aid, that is an entirely legitimate way to go. In some emergency situations, maybe in many, it is the right way to go.

The problem is under current law, the American foreign aid administrators are not allowed to use any of this food aid by buying the food near where the emergency happens. That is one reason why a large part of the food aid is taken up in transportation costs. I understand there are maritime interests like that, but that is not an appropriate way, it seems to me, to go about trying to help them.

Inevitably, not inevitably, correctly, much of the food aid will be that bulk aid. But to maintain a position that we will never use any of the food aid to buy the food on site, nearby, in ways that it can be done in ways that do not disturb local markets is a grave error.

What bothers me about this appropriation is not simply that it bans that

from happening, and I give credit to the administration and to the President, Administrator Natsios, my former legislative colleague from Massachusetts, who asked for the authority to do this. When that was rejected outright, there were various compromises proposed. The senior Senator from Ohio Mr. DEWINE, I think senior, whatever, proposed a compromise in which a percentage of the emergency aid would be available.

We are not talking, those of us who support this, about making all of even the emergency aid cash-based, but there ought to be a capacity in the Administrator to put some of the money that is appropriated into buying food locally. Now, I know, by the way, there are people on the Committee on Agriculture that say, no, that would be bad for the local markets. Mr. Speaker, I have a rule in politics: Try not to say anything that no one will believe is really your motive.

When you look at this agricultural bill and American agricultural policy and the devastation our subsidy policy wreaks on local food markets, the notion that the people who make American agriculture policy in this Congress are really concerned about the poor local farmers is risible. We obviously have ways of dealing with the local impact, and I believe that Administrator Natsios is absolutely right.

There is another argument here to which I give more credibility, and that is some of the organizations that are engaged in international development of food aid are the intermediaries here, and they get the food and they sell it, and they then use the money in various good ways. And these are good organizations.

I will note that two of the major organizations here, OXFAM and CARE, have decided, no, they do not need to have 100 percent of the aid being given in bulk, and that a percentage of the emergency aid, that is all we are talking about, a percentage of the emergency aid being available, not mandated, but being available when appropriate, to be bought on site or nearby, not right on site, but nearby, that is better. There are other organizations that have concerns.

I notice one of them is the Catholic Relief Services, which does great work. I do want to express great concern, Mr. Speaker. I hope in consequence to the what the President sent this House on Wednesday, I hope that Catholic Relief Services, because they want to help people overseas, will not be told the that Catholic Church cannot do voter registration to get out the vote, which is what some people would say if they helped people locally. So I hope that the restrictions on the Catholic Church and other good organizations that the majority wants to apply if they are doing things domestically to help the poor will not also apply to their international efforts. I hope we will work out a compromise.

Let me close by saying I was particularly disturbed by this language, and it

is the Republican majority, the great believers in openness, the great principled reformers, here is what their report says, the majority report, on this bill. "The conferees further admonish the executive branch to refrain from proposals which place at risk a carefully balanced coalition of interests which have served the interests of international food assistance programs well for more than 50 years."

In other words, we got a deal going here. Take your principles and get out of here before you upset the apple cart. Do not come to us talking about a more efficient way to provide emergency food aid to people, because you might break up our political deal.

Some reform.

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, as always, the gentleman from Massachusetts' rapier wit is as sharp as ever, but in this case misdirected as his faults are with the underlying bill itself and not with the rule.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my colleague from Massachusetts for raising some very interesting points. I had spoken earlier about the McGovern-Dole program, which I feel very strongly about. One of the good things about the way this program has been set up is it provides flexibility so that if, in fact, you need to respond to a particular need in a country, to provide food, and there is no food that you can buy in that country, you can use American agricultural produce to be able to feed people.

If, in fact, you can buy locally, if there is enough food to buy locally, you can monetize our agricultural riches, and you can then buy the products locally. You can also monetize it to help pay for transportation of some of this food. So it seems to me that it is not all one way or another way, it is somewhere in between, and we need to continue to work this out. But you need to have flexibility in these programs.

Again, I think the McGovern-Dole program is a good example of what works.

I should also say that Chairman HYDE and Ranking Member LANTOS are on the floor from the International Relations Committee. Both have been very, very helpful in promoting the McGovern-Dole program, and I am grateful for their efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), the ranking member on the committee.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, if I can briefly address the just prior conversation, I will commend my colleague from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) in terms of trying to make some clarification on the issue of food assistance.

I also will commend my colleague from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) in this regard: I know where his heart is

on food assistance; it is where we all need to be. I will tell you that we can discuss the nature of the problem in terms of the distribution, but I think what was particularly important in this committee was when we first had the money presented for food assistance, it was less, less, in the President's budget than we had in the prior year, and it was split between our committee and sending money to AID, thereby lowering the dollar amount by about \$265 million.

We were adamant about trying to maintain a higher level of assistance, and, I tell you, without having the benefit of getting back that \$265 million from AID, we were able to bring the dollar amount on food assistance up to \$1.1 billion, which we are proud of, and that is part of the admonition in the conference report.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. DELAURO. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding and for what she says. I know she is very much on the side of doing this in the right way, and confronted with particular facts, you have to deal with things. So I do believe that a rational food aid policy will include some flexibility on buying the food in an emergency, time and everything else, but I certainly agree it should not come at the expense of the overall program.

Ms. DELAURO. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say thank you again to my colleague for yielding to me. I want to say thank you to Chairman BONILLA for working to deliver this bill to the floor and for working across the aisle. I have enjoyed working with him, even when we differ on issues and priorities. I know that he takes the responsibilities as Chair very, very seriously, and I have a deep respect for him for that.

In addition, I want to say thank you to his staff and the gentleman from Wisconsin's staff and my staff, all of whom have worked so diligently this year and for long hours. These are good public servants, all of them.

I am particularly pleased that after several years we had the opportunity to participate in a conference meeting to resolve several outstanding issues in a public capacity. Indeed, we had an open conversation and a discussion about matters including conflict of interest waivers on FDA advisory boards, the integrity of the food stamp program and our national animal identification system, to name but a few.

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I only wish that the same spirit of openness and transparency with which we discussed those issues had guided the conference efforts to resolve them, because I believe what we are doing is important here.

The programs funded through this bill directly impact the everyday lives

of Americans, from public health to the FDA, to rural development, infrastructure maintenance, environmental conservation and preservation, nutrition assistance at home and abroad. Failure to adequately invest in these programs will have a serious long-term consequence for our Nation.

Unfortunately, in some of these areas, the bill falls short. I believe the President's budget failed to meet the needs of rural America, decimating rural development programs. This bill makes some headway in reversing cuts made by the President, providing \$80 million more than the President's request for rural water and waste grants, for example. However, I am concerned that this number remains below the level in last year's House bill and well below the 2004 level.

Rural America faces serious economic development challenges, from affordable housing and clean drinking water, to sewage systems and access to remote educational and medical resources; and I am afraid that this funding shortfall will lead to long-term deficiencies in rural infrastructure.

In addition, this bill covers the funding of the most important agency in the entire government: the Food and Drug Administration. FDA oversees the safety of products that Americans use every day, the vast majority of our processed and fresh foods, our prescription drugs, our medical devices, and our blood supply. And this agency has had many problems over the last year, from abrupt resignations of key staff, to the recalls of Bextra and Vioxx, to hearings that have exposed the fissures that have developed between drug safety scientists and the senior management at FDA.

Along those lines, I want to say thank you again to Chairman BONILLA for working with me to include funding to double the annual funding for review of direct-to-consumer ads by FDA, as well as another \$5 million for drug safety at the FDA.

In 2001, the drug industry spent \$2.7 billion on direct-to-consumer advertising; but the FDA office, charged with ensuring that those ads are accurate, was funded at less than \$1 million. Doubling that amount is a small start toward remedying the problem. The \$5 million will be devoted to the most critical aspects of drug safety.

There are other issues, of course, that I look forward to discussing later on today, but I believe there are areas in which we have made real progress and others which I hope that we can revisit in the next budget cycle.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR).

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, it is the best of times and the worst of times, today particularly. On this bill and on this rule, I want to first thank Chairman BONILLA

of the Appropriations Committee and the staff, particularly Martin, Maureen, Leslie, Tom, and Jamie, for doing an admirable job; and they did it with the allocation figure they were given.

I also want to congratulate ranking member ROSA DELAURO for completing her first cycle as ranking. I thank her for her hard work on the food safety and FDA issues. I also want to thank Martha Foley on our side. She is always ready with an answer anytime one asks.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the efforts of Chairman BONILLA in crafting this bill, which is an improvement over the President's budget request. I particularly want to thank the chairman for working with me to find \$7 million for the Specialty Crop Block Grant program in full committee and maintaining that funding in the conference report that we have before us today.

Investing in our specialty crop agriculture is imperative, and this certainly will be a happy day for the industry and all those who produce our Nation's fruits, vegetables, and nuts. I look forward to working together to provide innovative and effective assistance to make the specialty crop industry more competitive in the future; and, I might add, this is the industry that does not receive subsidies or help from the government.

Because of the work of this committee, my growers will now have help with pests such as vine mealy bug and diseases such as verticillium wilt, and we will continue a voluntary water quality study for the entire Monterey Bay watershed.

But as with any legislation this lengthy, it cannot all be good. I am very disappointed with, and strongly oppose, section 797 which was added as a "legislative fix" to an Organic Foods Production Act in response to a ruling by the courts in *Harvey v. Johanns* after the conference committee had adjourned, subject to call of the Chair. There was no public disclosure. This was all done behind closed doors.

These changes will not return us to the status quo prior to the lawsuit. Rather, this legislative fix will weaken both law and existing regulatory standards and restrict the authority of the National Organic Standards Board.

For example, numerous synthetic food additives and processing aids, including over 500 food contact substances, can be used in organic foods without public review. Young dairy cows can continue to be treated with antibiotics and fed genetically engineered feed prior to being converted to organic production. Loopholes under which nonorganic ingredients could be substituted for organic ingredients can occur without any notification to the public based on emergency decrees.

If the history of OFPA has taught us anything, it is that changes should be done following an inclusive and transparent process that unites, rather than divides, the organic community. At the

very least, the process should have given all stakeholders a fair chance to vet the proposed changes and their likely consequences.

Consumers are willing to pay more for organic food because organic offers the most authentic of natural food. Consumers expect that food carrying the organic label will be natural and should not contain synthetic ingredients.

In a March 2005 nationwide survey, 85 percent of the respondents did not expect food labeled "organic" to contain any artificial ingredients, a finding that is directly in opposition to the actions of the conference committee. The real losers under this policy change are American consumers. Consumers who care about having natural food will have to look for additional claims to organic, such as "no synthetic ingredients included" on processed foods and "100 percent grass fed" on meat and dairy products in order to know that their expectations have been met.

This amendment undermines consumer confidence in the integrity of the national organic program. Backroom deals without proper debate undermine the integrity of the entire organic industry, and we are certain to visit this fix again and again.

Mr. Speaker, we have come a long way with this process. Despite section 797, our farmers will be better off because of this legislation, and I want to thank all of my committee members for putting together such a good appropriations bill. I support the action of the committee when we followed regular order, and when we did that, we crafted a good bill. I only wish we would have finished the bill together so the process was as good as the final product.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I again want to commend Chairman BONILLA and Ranking Member DELAURO for their great work and the members of the committee, and I urge support of the conference report.

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

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments of the speakers on both sides of the aisle. I agree with them that Chairman Bonilla has led a very balanced process as we move agricultural policy in this country into the 21st century. It is a large appropriations bill. It covers a wide array of needs in this Nation, from WIC and child nutrition programs, to the conservation side and all that that entails in terms of making sure that we are not eroding our valuable topsoil, making sure that we have wildlife habitat, and making sure that environmentalists understand that farmers are the true stewards of that land. And frankly, at the root of the bill, the most important service, is to allow American farmers and ranchers to continue to grow the safest, most affordable, most abundant food supply and be able to feed not only our country but the rest of the world as well.

It is a real tribute that there is bipartisan support for this legislation to make sure that we are competitive in the 21st century, that we are compliant with our global trade agreements, that we are continuing to push ahead in fighting the war against hunger, making sure that we continue to fight the war against obesity, and allowing our farmers and ranchers to be competitive.

So it is a testament to the bill, and it is a testament to the authors of that bill on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONDEMNING IRANIAN PRESIDENT MAHMOUD AHMADINEJAD'S THREATS AGAINST ISRAEL

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that it shall be in order at any time without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House H. Res. 523; the resolution shall be considered as read; the previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution and preamble to its adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except: (1) 40 minutes of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on International Relations; and (2) one motion to recommit.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the previous order of the House, I call up the resolution (H. Res. 523) condemning Iranian President Mahmoud Admadinejad's threats against Israel, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 523

Whereas on October 26, 2005, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, declared that "Israel must be wiped off the map", described Israel as "a disgraceful blot [on] the face of the Islamic world", and declared that "[a]nybody who recognizes Israel will burn in the fire of the Islamic nation's fury";

Whereas Iran funds, trains, and openly supports terrorist groups that are determined to destroy Israel;

Whereas on December 14, 2001, the President of Iran's highly influential Expediency Council, Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, threatened Israel with nuclear attack, saying, "[i]f one day, the Islamic world is also equipped with weapons like those that Israel possesses now, then the imperialists' strategy will reach a standstill because the use of even one nuclear bomb inside Israel will destroy everything [in Israel], while it will merely harm the Islamic world";

Whereas Iran has aggressively pursued a clandestine effort to arm itself with nuclear weapons; and