

FARM, NUTRITION, AND
BIOENERGY ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 27, 2007

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2419) to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes:

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Chairman, I want to lend my support to the committee-passed Farm Bill, and specifically the provisions related to research. In my District we have one of the Nation's best research teams at Tarleton State University, and through the expansion of the research title we have the opportunity to use this resource and further address water quality and dairy industry issues.

In the bill there is an expansion of the Nutrient Management Research Provision to allow us to address "unique regional concerns" and "dairy cattle waste"—both of which are ideally suited for the work being done at Tarleton State University. Accompanying this expansion is report language that calls attention to the challenges and opportunities facing the Southwest dairy industry, and environmental security issues addressed through the Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Research (TIAER) and the Southwest Regional Dairy Center.

This language will allow the Department of Agriculture to use a program such as TIAER for further development of cost efficient tools and policies for agriculture, with the goal of cleaner water through better science and research. This expanded language will also provide expanded dairy research initiatives in line with research already in place at Tarleton. The State of Texas has invested \$11.1 million dollars to construct the Southwest Regional Dairy Center at Tarleton to address the needs of the robust dairy industry in the Southwest Region of the United States. The Southwest Region is predicted to host the greatest concentration of dairies in the nation within 15 years. This rapid expansion will create unique economic and environmental challenges and opportunities. It's fitting that we, the Federal Government, also do our part in supporting this initiative by giving it authorization to further develop this regional opportunity.

The bill also provides for expanded research in the Chesapeake Bay, and TIAER is uniquely qualified to assist with the further development of this research activity. By using their expertise in water quality policy, monitoring, and modeling we can take advantage of existing research capabilities to expedite the goals of the Chesapeake Bay initiative. I hope these two programs are authorized and funded, as it would be foolish and wasteful to ignore and duplicate the experience and talent we have developed over the years.

It is clear that the research language is intended for the use in developing sound scientific, economic and environmentally effective research and watershed programs. Through programs like TIAER and the Southwest Regional Dairy Center we will see coordinated research with other research institutions and universities on watershed programs, modeling

tools, monitoring, applied research, and dairy cattle waste management to include bioenergy recovery. With federal assistance, the Southwest Regional Dairy Center will research, develop, and implement programs to recover energy and other useful products from dairy waste and identify best management practices in support of the dairy industry.

The research provisions expanded in this bill would place TIAER as the leader in watershed modeling and allow them to establish the International Modeling Application Clearinghouse. With this action we can save millions of dollars through coordinated research activities. If authorized, TIAER will also facilitate the use of the Center for Environment and Private Lands (CEPL) and Industry Led Solutions (ILS) under the direction of the Institute. With past Congressional funding, ILS provides for a group of commodity diverse producers from geographically different parts of the U.S. to examine environmental policy options for private landowners. This group has been proactive in examining environmental initiatives that affect agriculture.

I appreciate the Committee recognizing the need for the additional research in water quality, modeling, program development, monitoring, animal waste management and bio-energy recovery for the southwest dairy industry. While I continue to encourage expansion of this language to outline not only the work to be done through groups like Tarleton and the Institute, I realize this is the first step in making sure that quality research is not only scientifically sound, but cost efficient.

I echo the committee in encouraging the Secretary of Agriculture to establish these programs promptly so that we can soundly address environmental and water quality issues and how they relate to agriculture.

INTRODUCTION OF PULMONARY
HYPERTENSION RESEARCH AND
EDUCATION ACT OF 2007**HON. TOM LANTOS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, today I join my friend KEVIN BRADY of Texas in introducing the Pulmonary Hypertension Research and Education Act of 2007. This legislation will expand research and training efforts for treatment and an eventual cure for pulmonary hypertension, while establishing a nationwide clinical research network.

Pulmonary hypertension, more commonly referred to as PH, is a silent killer that increases the blood pressure in the lungs to dangerous levels. As the walls of the arteries that take blood from the right to the left side of the heart thicken and constrict, the heart must pump harder and harder, ultimately failing over time.

Over the past 5 years the number of patients of this deadly disorder has increased from 3,000 in 2001 to as many as 30,000 diagnoses in 2006. Among them is my 22-year-old granddaughter, Charity, who was diagnosed with PH in 2004. In following her treatment, I know all too well the need for increased education of medical professionals. With the growing number of patients, new and more effective treatments are becoming avail-

able for PH sufferers, but effective management of this condition remains complicated. It requires the close supervision of a highly-trained medical professional, and someone who is dedicated to remaining on the cutting-edge of treating this disease.

I believe our bill would give the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute the tools they need to improve collaboration among the top PH research centers and to reduce the incidents of misdiagnosis. I am hopeful that this legislation would create avenues for disseminating new and life-saving knowledge among experts.

Madam Speaker, the causes of pulmonary hypertension are still not fully understood. And it pains me to no end to note that there is no known cure. We can not waste anymore time. We must act swiftly to save 30,000 vibrant lives, including that of my own beautiful granddaughter, from this slow and steady killer. I hope my colleagues will join me and Mr. BRADY in putting the full force of Congress behind this important research.

CREATING OFFICE OF CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

SPEECH OF

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2007

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2107 fulfills my commitment to my constituents to continue the effort to create a Chief Financial Officer for the Territory. This is the third time that this legislation has been on the floor of the House. However, the other body failed to act on it in the previous two Congresses.

When I first introduced the idea of a CFO for the Virgin Islands in 2005, I did so in response to the concerns, complaints and distrust of government voiced by my constituents and as a measure to prevent the territory, which was experiencing a serious financial crisis, from falling into the abyss of fiscal insolvency. I believed then, as I do now, that having such an office in our government, free of political pressures and with the statutory responsibility and authority to certify revenue projections and prevent deficit spending, could assist our government to establish sound financial practices which would put the Islands on the path to improved financial management going forward. Because of our long history of poor financial management and practices, an office such as this would also help to immediately restore the confidence of the Federal Government and others in our ability to be fiscally transparent and accountable.

As I have said on this floor and in many other settings, in drafting H.R. 2017 I looked at the example and record of what having such a position has meant to the financial management and fiscal health of the District of Columbia.

After having decades of fiscal mismanagement and protracted deficits, the District today enjoys annual balanced budgets and surpluses under the stewardship of a Chief Financial Officer; an office that was voluntarily retained by the city after the mandated office went away with the end of their Financial Control Board. Both the general public and elected

leadership of the District recognize the benefits of having an impartial arbiter, free from the pressures of politics, managing their finances—something I strongly believe my community can benefit from as well.

When I first introduced this bill the territory's long-term debt totaled \$1 billion. Fiscal crises have been narrowly averted through repeated borrowing. Such borrowing and debt creation has led to the \$3 billion debt reported by Governor De Jongh in April of this year—a practice he has already stated he will not continue.

There are those, Mr. Speaker, who will ask why I am doing this at this time, particularly because the islands just 7 months ago, inaugurated a new governor whose background is in financial management and who has been a good friend and political ally. I want to be perfectly clear that I have every confidence in Governor John de Jongh and his administration and believe that they will do a first rate job of managing the territory's finances. He has already begun to do so.

I am re-introducing this bill because my constituents continue to see it as a necessary measure, and because, like the CFO in Washington, DC, it can assist our governor in his stated goal of paying our obligations and bringing the territory's finances into balance. It would also be a way to provide apolitical and indisputable information on the financial state of our government, as well as bridge any divisions between the administration and the legislature in the interests of expediting a positive and sustainable agenda for the people of the Virgin Islands.

As also happens up here, there is often disagreement between the Governor (and his financial team) and the Legislature as to the precise fiscal condition of the territory and the true revenue projections for the coming fiscal year. A CFO, in my view, would take the uncertainty out of this equation and allow our legislature and governor to work better together because they would both get their numbers from the same independent source. Additionally, the departments of government, semi-autonomous agencies and labor unions would be better able to plan, and the people of the Virgin Islands in general would have information on how the millions of federal dollars coming to the Virgin Islands are being spent.

The bill as being passed today contains certain changes. I have revised it with respect to providing a financial management system because such a system is already in the process of being implemented.

In recognition of and in deference to the upcoming constitution to be drafted by the people of the Virgin Islands, the bill before us calls for the term of the Chief Financial Officer to expire at the implementation of a ratified Virgin Islands Constitution or in 5 years, whichever comes first.

All four previous Constitutional documents have contained a provision similar to what is proposed in this legislation, and it is my hope that our Fifth Constitutional Convention will present a document for the ratification of the people of the Virgin Islands that will make this legislation unnecessary.

In conclusion Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend and colleague, the Chairman of the Resources Committee, the gentleman from West Virginia, Nick RAHALL, without whose support this bill would not be on the floor today. I also want to thank my friend Ranking Member DON YOUNG for his support as well.

Mr. Speaker, it has been said that "heavy is the burden that one who is called to lead bears". Pursuing enactment of this bill has not been an easy burden to bear but is an important one, which I am proud to bear. I urge my colleagues to support passage of H.R. 2107.

INTRODUCTION OF THE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS ACT

HON. PHIL HARE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. HARE. Madam Speaker, educators and the general public cite disciplinary problems as the greatest challenge facing schools. Often schools respond to problem behavior with suspensions and expulsions, or by removing persistent troublemakers from the school. But research shows that punitive approaches to discipline do not work, and further, that they disproportionately harm students of color and students with disabilities.

One effective approach now being adopted by education agencies around the country is schoolwide Positive Behavior Supports (PBS). Research shows that schools implementing PBS can experience anywhere from a 20 to 60 percent reduction in disciplinary problems, an improved social climate, and increases in reading and math scores on standardized tests.

This Congress I toured Monmouth-Roseville Junior High, a PBS school in my Illinois Congressional district. I was amazed by how effectively the school decreased the number of expulsions and suspensions, and increased student attendance, classroom instructional time, and academic engagement. Even more impressive, there was an overall sense of shared responsibility for the success of the school.

Madam Speaker, today I am proud to introduce the Positive Behavior for Effective Schools Act.

This bill amends the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to provide the flexibility and technical assistance schools need to expand the use of positive behavior supports and other early intervening services to create a school climate that is highly conducive to learning, reduces discipline referrals, and improves academic outcomes. Specifically, this bill:

Allows State and Local Education Agencies to use Title I funding to implement schoolwide PBS.

Supports Safe and Drug Free Schools' programs that improve the whole school climate, prevent disciplinary problems, violence, illegal use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs, and that involve parents and communities in school programs and activities.

Trains teachers in the behavioral learning of kids and in methods that improve school climate.

Establishes an office of specialized instructional support services in the Department of Education to administer and coordinate support services in schools.

I urge my colleagues to look at the proven results of PBS and the positive impact it has on the entire school. Not only are we finding safer school climates in schools where PBS is

implemented, but we are also seeing a decrease in dropout rates, a more accurate classification of special education students, improved test scores, home and family life, and more productive students who are better prepared to enter the professional world after graduation.

Additionally, PBS assists education agencies with the challenges they face in meeting the requirements of No Child Left Behind, ultimately leading to a better educational experience for our kids. Educators, parents, mental health experts and academics all agree that positive behavior supports are good for schools, good for teachers and good for students.

This legislation is endorsed by the Advocacy Institute; American Counseling Association; American Music Therapy Association; American Occupational Therapy Association; American Psychological Association; American School Counselor Association; The Arc of the United States; Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law; Center for Behavioral Education & Research in the UConn Neag School of Education; Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder; Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders; Learning Disabilities Association of America; Illinois PBIS Network; Mental Health America; National Alliance on Mental Illness; National Association for Children's Behavioral Health; National Association of State Directors of Special Education; National Down Syndrome Congress; School Social Work Association of America (SSWAA); and United Cerebral Palsy.

Madam Speaker, I ask for unanimous consent to enter into the RECORD a letter of support from these organizations.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting positive behavior in schools by cosponsoring the Positive Behavior for Effective Schools Act, and work with me to advance this important piece of legislation.

AUGUST 3, 2007.

Hon. PHIL HARE,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE HARE: The undersigned national organizations are pleased to offer our strong support for the Positive Behavior for Effective Schools Act of 2007. We share your goals of enhancing student outcomes and improving school climate through the promotion of school wide positive behavior supports (PBS). The legislation provides a welcomed opportunity to strengthen the education system by helping address student's social and emotional barriers to learning.

As you well know, school wide positive behavior support initiatives help reshape school climates into more conducive learning environments appreciated by students, staff and school personnel. School wide positive behavior supports help reduce discipline problems as well as improve academic outcomes, including test scores. Your home state of Illinois is a pioneer in creating a statewide comprehensive PBS initiative, with implementation in about 600 public schools and research demonstrating its support for school success.

The Positive Behavior for Effective Schools Act will go a long way towards fostering effective learning environments. It gives schools the tools and opportunity to change how schools respond to students, reinforce desired behaviors and eliminate inadvertent reinforcements for problem behavior to help realize the goals of academic and social success for all students. Specifically, the