

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

### CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2419, FOOD, CONSERVATION, AND EN- ERGY ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 14, 2008*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I reluctantly rise in opposition to H.R. 2419, the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008. This version of the Farm Bill bears significant improvements over its predecessors. I fully support the inclusion of an unprecedented 10.4 billion dollars over 10 years for the Nutrition Title that has been included in the Conference Report.

Funding for the Nutrition Title will have a strong impact on efforts to prevent domestic hunger by increasing the Food Stamp Program's minimum monthly benefit and the Emergency Food Assistance Program's mandatory funding level. Participation in the Food Stamp Program has increased over the last several years, with an additional 1.3 million people participating in the program in the last year alone. Portions of my district, including Lakewood, Fairview Park and Parma, have experienced a 74 percent increase in participation in the Food Stamp Program between 2002 and 2007. The bill also provides assistance to food banks by \$1.25 billion. I have been a consistent supporter of efforts in the House of Representatives to strengthen Food Stamp Programs, nutritional assistance programs, and other programs to increase the quantity and quality of food available to those most in need. I will continue to do so.

These programs help to address a severe short term problem. The purpose of the Farm Bill is to set long term priorities. However, this bill maintains the very policies that are driving several underlying problems.

For example, the single biggest share of subsidies under this bill goes to corn. Yet this bill continues massive subsidies for ethanol production from corn at only a slightly lower level than was previously the case. Corn-based ethanol is a well-known driver of recent increases in food costs. Some are predicting that 25 percent of the corn crop in the U.S. will go toward ethanol by the end of the 2008 crop year. That is great news for corporate agribusiness that produces most of the corn in the U.S. But it's bad news for food prices and those families for whom food costs are a large portion of their budget.

The vast majority of corn goes to cattle feed, which has health implications. It increases stomach acidity in the cattle, which makes them more susceptible to infection by E. Coli H:0157, the source of many food recalls. A corn-based diet also increases the level of saturated fat in the meat.

The ubiquity of corn in our diet is further implicated in various health problems like the obesity epidemic and diabetes. Abundant corn means that high fructose corn syrup, HFCS, a

food sweetener, is cheap and abundant. Most Americans would be hard-pressed to get through a meal without consuming it. It is high in calories, with little to no nutritional value. Between 1970 and 1990, HFCS consumption increased by 1000 percent, which is roughly the same period in which the obesity epidemic accelerated. This bill continues to subsidize HFCS, while taking only baby steps toward promoting healthy, locally grown fruits, vegetables and meats. According to writer Michael Pollan, "the real price of fruits and vegetables between 1985 and 2000 increased by nearly 40 percent while the real price of soft drinks (aka liquid corn) declined by 23 percent." Unhealthy food is cheap. Healthy food is expensive. The obesity and diabetes epidemics affect low-income Americans more often and with more severity.

The bill contributes to a host of environmental problems. It shortchanges conservation programs that can reduce global warming pollution. It removes the sod saver program which would have discouraged the alteration of valuable native grasslands and rangeland into crop production. It includes cuts to the Conservation Reserve Program and Wetland Reserve Program, which respectively substitute crops for resource conserving plantings on highly erodible and environmentally sensitive land and encourage restoration of lands to their original natural conditions.

It continues to encourage factory farms where our antibiotics are rendered weak or useless because of overuse on cattle, where cattle are treated inhumanely, where toxic runoff contributes to contaminated drinking water, and where employees suffer the highest rates of workplace injuries of almost any other industry.

Finally, this Farm Bill maintains massive giveaways to corporate agribusiness and rich families instead of helping the vanishing family farmer. Though the thresholds have been lowered compared to the past, this bill allows families with up to \$2.5 million in income to get subsidies. The result is that the top 10 percent of all the benefactors will get about two-thirds of the payments. This bill continues the failed policies that allow the profits of agribusiness to skyrocket while pushing family farmers off their farms, forcing them to sell their farms to survive.

Increasing funding to buy more nutritional foods is a good idea in the short term. But we need to stop perpetuating the very policies that cause food prices to increase and cause unhealthy food to be cheap. We need to move away from corn-based ethanol. We must shift subsidies toward healthier foods, like locally and regionally grown fruits, vegetables, grains and meats if we ever hope to address nutritional deficiencies. And we need to come to the aid of the family farmer. The Farm Bill does little to address these problems, and I could not vote for it.

### HONORING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF ANALY HIGH SCHOOL, SEBASTOPOL, CALIFORNIA

**HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 16, 2008*

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, today I rise with great pride to join in celebrating the 100th anniversary of Analy High School, located in Sebastopol, CA, and one of the most successful schools in my district.

Prior to the founding of Analy High School, students from West Sonoma County commuted to Santa Rosa High School, travelling by train or wagon, or even boarding during the week in Santa Rosa. When the people of the Sebastopol area decided the student population was large enough to support its own school, the Analy Union High School District (now the West Sonoma County Union School District) was started. From its origins in 1908 with a student body of 37, Analy has grown to support more than 1,200 students this year.

In 1910, five students received diplomas—the first graduating class of Analy High School. Since then, Analy High School has been named a California Distinguished School, and has graduated more than 30,000 students, including Dr. Willard F. Libby, the 1960 Nobel Prize winner in chemistry for his work in developing the process of carbon dating; actress Karen Valentine; Chicago Bears star tight end Jim Thornton; and numerous students who went on to become teachers, police officers, firefighters, business leaders, housewives, parents and grandparents of Analy graduates.

Madam Speaker, Analy High has come a long way from the days when students rode to class on horseback. It has contributed an educated populace to Sebastopol, to Sonoma County and beyond. I am proud to have such citizens in my district, and I ask you to join me in congratulating Analy High School on the past 100 years and wishing them the best of luck and continued success for the next 100 years.

### SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

SPEECH OF

**HON. BETTY McCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 15, 2008*

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, today Congress will once again fund President Bush's Iraq War. With this \$162 billion in funding for the Pentagon there will have been more than \$750 billion committed to fight wars in Iraq and Afghanistan—all of it paid for with debt. In Iraq, the American people have witnessed tremendous valor from our armed forces, including the sacrifice of more than

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

4,000 Americans who have lost their lives and another 15,000 who were seriously wounded. Unfortunately, presidential leadership has not risen to this same high level of commitment for our soldiers. The Bush administration and their supporters in Congress are responsible for the greatest foreign policy disaster in American history and today their failed policies will be financed with debt for another year.

Today, I will oppose continuing to fund the Iraq War as I have in the past. This war is not making America safer, but it is weakening our military capacity, exhausting our troops and undermining our Nation's economic security. It is time to invest in America and the needs of the American people. I am appalled by the stories about defense contractors engaging in war profiteering, corrupt Iraqi officials fueling the sectarian divide, and reconstruction projects financed by the American people left unfinished or unused because of poor planning.

Now in the sixth year of the Iraq War, America is seeing the conflict in Afghanistan, the heart of the war on terror, grow more intense as the Taliban resurges. My support for the on-going U.S. effort in Afghanistan remains strong. I was in Afghanistan and Pakistan in March and the threats posed by the Taliban and al-Qaeda in those countries are real. It is tragic that the Bush administration's deception and failed policy in Iraq has taken the focus off of al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

Mr. Speaker, despite the failings and costly mistakes made by the Bush administration, the Democratic leadership in Congress is giving this Nation hope that the Iraq War will come to an end and that Washington will once again invest in the needs of the American people. Yet, the Bush administration rejects any spending on domestic priorities that will benefit the American people.

Look around our country. Healthcare is in crisis. America's infrastructure is deteriorating and collapsing—as we've seen with the 1-35W bridge in Minneapolis. With oil prices reaching \$125 per barrel there is still no significant federal investment in a massive expansion of renewable energy research, development and implementation. The list is long and it is the result of absolute neglect to invest in America by the Bush Administration and a Republican Congress that together led this nation from 2001 through 2006.

Democrats have new priorities for America and some of those priorities are clearly reflected in H.R. 2642. This bill provides a significant investment in those men and women who have served our country and deserve our gratitude and our support. H.R. 2642 restores GI education benefits to the veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars to help ensure their future success and our economic recovery. The cost of providing four-year college scholarships for our veterans for an entire year is less than we spend in one day in Iraq, and helps to change our mission from squandering tax dollars in Iraq towards investing in America.

The Majority has also responded to the economic crisis facing too many families by including extended unemployment benefits for workers who have exhausted the 26 weeks of regular benefits. The U.S. economy has lost 260,000 jobs in the last four months, and 1.35 million workers have been unemployed longer than 26 weeks. This extension will provide relief for the over 4 million Americans, including

nearly 70,000 Minnesotans, who are struggling to find a job, and help to stimulate the economy in a cost-effective, fast-acting way. To ensure that states and hospitals can continue to provide health care services for our most vulnerable, this bill includes a rejection of the Bush Administration's proposed regulations to slash federal funding from Medicaid.

H.R. 2642 gives relief to a growing global crisis by providing \$1.6 billion in emergency international food aid. Food assistance is desperately needed by the millions of families facing hunger and starvation this year due to rising food prices, natural disasters, economic downturns, and conflict situations. This is a moral and humanitarian response to end suffering around the world and is also a positive step the United States can take to restore our reputation in the international community.

Democrats will also try once again to change the policy and mission in Iraq. An amendment I support will require redeployment out of Iraq by December 2009, require that Iraqis contribute to the cost of their reconstruction, require that our military does not pay more for fuel than the Iraqis, requires additional training and rest for our soldiers and would finally and explicitly prohibit torture. Unfortunately, the Administration continues to oppose these common-sense, responsible policies to keep our troops safe, reduce the burden on the American taxpayer, and repair our standing in the world.

America needs a new direction—in Iraq and at home. Democrats are fighting to end the war responsibly, to reduce the debt burden on our children and grandchildren, and to reinvest in our future.

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#### SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

SPEECH OF

**HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 15, 2008*

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose this most recent war funding appropriation brought before the Congress. While I cannot in good conscience provide the President with any additional funds that would continue this disastrous war well into the next president's administration, I do support Amendment #2, which attaches conditions to the war funding and would hold the President accountable. I also support Amendment #3, which would honor our veterans and provide desperately needed humanitarian funds to people both here and abroad.

As I have said before, the American people sent a clear message to the Congress on November 7, 2006: We must end the war in Iraq. In the ensuing months, the calls for withdrawal have only increased. A recent ABC News/Washington Post poll shows that 57 percent of Americans believe that the United States should withdraw its military forces from Iraq to avoid further U.S. military casualties, even if it means that civil order is not restored there.

Unfortunately, we stand here today, no closer to responding to the demands of the American people. This development frustrates me to no end and I know it frustrates the American people. Yet, it also strengthens my resolve to press harder for the outcome this country needs.

The ultimate, unequivocal authority of the Congress is the power of the purse. We must use it. The only way to truly support our troops is take them out of harm's way. The American people understand that marching ahead blindly into oblivion is anything but supporting our troops.

The longer this war drags on, the more its effects are felt in our communities and homes. Last year, the citizens of Detroit spent \$231.3 million to fund the war in Iraq. With those same funds, the Congress could have provided healthcare for 172,984 children. Even when faced with historically high food prices, a crumbling infrastructure, and the subprime mortgage crisis, the Administration continues to demand that the American people continue to pour billions of their taxpayer dollars into an unwinnable war. The priorities of this Administration could not be any more misplaced.

Of course, appeals to reason fall on deaf ears with this President. In an interview this week, President Bush was asked about the worst that could happen if the U.S. were to pull out of Iraq next year. The President responded: "The doomsday scenario of course is that extremists throughout the Middle East would be emboldened, which would eventually lead to another attack on the United States."

The President's overreliance on the tired rhetoric of fear, unchanged after five years of bloody occupation, exemplifies how intellectually bankrupt the justifications for his war policies have become.

Mr. Speaker, this lame duck President cannot scare the Congress and the American people into continuing his war. We know that it is the presence of our troops on the street corners of Basra and Fallujah that lures extremists to Iraq. We know that it is the unintentional desecration of holy sites, like the Golden Dome of Samarra, that inspires outrage in the hearts of young men throughout the Middle East and makes America more susceptible to another terrorist attack.

There is only one sensible way forward in Iraq. If the Congress acts this day to cut off funding for the war or to impose a timetable for withdrawal, we can begin the immediate phased drawdown of American troops and conclude it within 18 months. Such redeployment does not constitute "cutting and running." Instead, it offers the only hope for a diplomatic solution to the civil war raging inside of Iraq. With 160,000 troops in Iraq, Washington lacks the leverage on its own to push the Maliki government to take meaningful steps to accommodate Sunni concerns and thereby empower Sunni moderates. Similarly, the U.S. presence in Iraq allows the rest of the world to avoid responsibility for stability in and around Iraq, even as everyone realizes the stakes involved. Only a plan to draw down U.S. forces, coupled with a robust diplomatic surge, will prompt Middle Eastern states, European governments, and the United Nations to be more constructive and proactive in working to salvage stability in the Persian Gulf.

I came to Washington 43 years ago on a platform of Jobs, Justice, and Peace. Because it is my firm belief that we will never achieve peace in Iraq as long as this war continues, I cannot support a supplemental funding bill that allows a politically unaccountable President to continue an unwinnable conflict. Enough is enough.