

might have a flurry of activity. And I would suggest, you've seen lots of interest on our side, that hopefully part of that flurry of activity could be an energy bill. I think now we're in the 18th or 19th straight day of highest gasoline prices ever. Tomorrow may be the 19th or 20th straight day of that. That would be one of the things that we would certainly like to see Members of the House address before we leave here for the Memorial Day break.

I would yield.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Without going into the polemics of the politics that we exchange on this of what legislation we have passed through here, which was, we think, directed at trying to address the short-term problems, dealing with OPEC, dealing with manipulation of prices, dealing with price gouging, which many, if not all of you, on your side voted against. Suffice it to say I think all of us are concerned about the high prices of gasoline. Suffice it to say that all of us, if we're honest, know that in the short term it's going to be very difficult to impact on that. Thirdly, that the solution longer term is obviously moving towards alternative sources of energy and renewable sources of energy.

We passed a major piece of legislation last year. Happily we passed it in somewhat of a bipartisan fashion, not totally, I don't mean everybody unanimously voted for it. But the President did sign it. The President said it was a step forward. For the first time in a very long period of time it said our automobiles need to be more efficient. For the first time in a very long time it required the use of alternative fuels. So that we addressed initially, and there's much more that needs to be done, longer term solutions.

Short-term solutions are tough. There is discussion about the SPR. There are discussions about taxes, gasoline taxes, as you know. There are other discussions. If you have ideas, we would be glad to have them in terms of what can be done in the short term.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank the gentleman.

I think we've brought some ideas in the last couple of weeks to the floor on bills that didn't necessarily relate to this and we will probably have more that we will be talking about.

I yield back.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, MAY 5, 2008

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

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

There was no objection.

□ 1445

ON THE RETIREMENT OF MARK O'SULLIVAN

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

Mr. HOYER. Ladies and gentlemen of the House, many of you have heard me, and Mr. DREIER as well, over the years speak to how extraordinarily advantaged we are in the House of Representatives, and the American people are, by the quality and commitment of the staff that serves this institution.

It doesn't serve Republicans or Democrats, but it serves the purposes of assuring that this institution runs in a way that gets the business of the American people done in a way that's productive and positive for them and for our country.

Regretfully, I am going to observe the retirement of one of those people. Happily, I can extol his virtues. I've known him for a very long period of time. I've seen his work, conscientious, able, and a very positive impact on this institution.

Mark O'Sullivan, who is sitting just to my left on the second-level rostrum, has been with us 31 years in the House, and he commutes from Baltimore every day. I don't know whose district he is in, maybe Mr. CUMMINGS' or Mr. RUPPERSBERGER's. I'm not sure whose district he is in, but I'm sure they are happy that he is living there, although he's totally bipartisan, I'm sure.

He has done an outstanding job. I have always found him to be in even humor, even in the toughest of times. Even in the times when the body sometimes gets more loud and uproarious than at other times, he maintains an even demeanor. And, as I say, the competency and the talent and the commitment and the character he has brought to his job has advantaged our country and the House of Representatives.

Mark, we thank you. Congratulations to you. We wish you the very best, and we look forward to seeing you back here in the near future and repeating it.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 2419, FOOD AND ENERGY SECURITY ACT OF 2007

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct conferees.

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Ryan of Wisconsin moves that the managers on the part of the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 2419 be instructed, within the scope of the conference, to use the most recent baseline estimates supplied by the Congressional Budget Office when evaluating the costs of the provisions of the report.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the motion be considered as read.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) and a Member opposed each will be recognized for 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, it's not my intention to consume the full amount of time, as we had discussed earlier.

At the beginning of this Congress, the Speaker of the House said the following: "After years of deficit spending, this new Congress will commit itself to a higher standard: pay-as-you-go, no new deficit spending."

Well, the majority did follow through on half of their promise. One of the first things they did when they took control of this place was put in a new pay-as-you-go rule.

But things haven't quite worked out as well on the deficit. This year's deficit is projected to double as spending is projected to rise by over \$200 billion. But at least they did put in the rule. And one of the things that makes this rule interesting, that requires this rule, is that the House must use the most recent CBO baseline when determining whether a bill complies with PAYGO. Let me read this rule word for word to be clear:

"The effect of a measure on the deficit or surplus shall be determined on the basis of estimates by the Committee on Budget relative to the most recent baseline supplied by the Congressional Budget Office."

It sounds pretty straightforward, Mr. Speaker. You've got to use the current baseline when you apply PAYGO, no questions asked.

But despite this, everyone I have talked to about this issue, everything I've heard, everything I've read in the newspapers had told me that the farm bill isn't going to use the updated 2008 baseline but instead is going to use the 2007 baseline, an outdated baseline from over a year ago. Now, I hope that this is not the case. I hope that this does not happen. But it sounds like that's the direction they are headed. And that is what this motion is all about.

This motion is very simple. All it would do is require that the House will follow its own rules and use the current CBO baseline when determining whether or not the farm bill complies with PAYGO.

Why should we care? Why does this seemingly technical issue make a difference?

First of all, economic conditions have changed in the past year. Agricultural profits are way up. Food prices are soaring. And it's simply not accurate to use an estimate that's over a year old.

Second, there's a strong possibility that using the old baseline could hide

billions and billions of dollars in new spending. We don't have all the details yet, and we don't know exactly how CBO is going to score it, but based on what we've heard, based on rising food prices and other factors, we think it's quite likely that this bill is going to appear to cost billions of dollars less under the old baseline than it really does under the current one.

Now, isn't that convenient? I'm sure that a lot of taxpayers would love to have this type of choice. I'm sure that when they were filling out their taxes a few weeks ago, a lot of people thought it would surely be nice to have the option of paying taxes on either last year's income or this year's income. They could just pick the year where they made less money and save a couple bucks.

But the taxpayers don't have that choice. They are required to play by the rules. They have got to pay taxes on their current income whether they like it or not. And if the majority follows the rules, it doesn't have this choice either. They must use the 2008 baseline, or they will be in clear violation of their PAYGO rules.

Now, the majority has dodged PAYGO before. The farm bill they passed last year had over \$5 billion in timing shifts and other gimmicks in it, and I wouldn't be surprised if you saw some of those in the conference report again this year. But if they use an old baseline, this would take it to a whole new level, Mr. Speaker. This would be the first time the majority actually used baseline shopping to violate the PAYGO requirement.

You see things like this, and it's no wonder people think Washington is broken. These types of games are exactly what make people cynical about Congress. And I agree. This just isn't the way the House should operate. The American people deserve better than having the House play games with its own rules and then go home and claim they have entered a new era of fiscal discipline.

You know, some people might find it odd for me to be down here talking about PAYGO, and I will be the first to admit that I have been critical of this rule and don't think it's the best way to proceed with respect to fiscal discipline. But let's put those concerns aside for a minute. Budgetary rules are only as good as the integrity of the numbers that you use to enforce them. So let's enforce those rules with updated CBO estimates. Let's have a strong bipartisan vote for this motion and say that these games have got to end. Let's not manipulate the rules and pick and choose whichever baseline is more convenient.

With that I urge my colleagues to support this motion.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER).

Mr. DREIER. I thank my friend for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this motion.

My friend has outlined very clearly exactly where we are. And I will tell you from the perspective of the House Rules Committee, while we have not been enthusiastic supporters of this PAYGO procedure, I will say that while my friend used the tax analogy, as I listened to the exchange between the distinguished Republican whip and the majority leader, I couldn't help but think about the gasoline price issue. It would be tantamount to one of our constituents or any of us being able to go up to a gas pump and say, "You know what? I'd like to pay the price of gasoline as it was 6 months ago as opposed to where it is today." This is not the way this should be done.

I urge my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans alike, to come together in support of this motion.

I rise in support of this motion. We don't actually know what's in the Farm Bill Conference Report, because the Conference Report has yet to be finalized, which is precisely why we are here seeking to instruct the conferees on the part of the House. But if press reports are accurate, the Conference Report could be in violation of clause 10 of Rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, known as the PAYGO rule. Now, I am not a supporter of the PAYGO rule. Ostensibly it is intended to impose fiscal discipline—a worthy goal that I share. But in reality it does nothing more than mandate tax increases. If the Democratic Leadership were to recognize this reality and propose a rule change to eliminate PAYGO, I'd support it. So far, they have not yet recognized the error of their ways, and PAYGO is a rule of the House.

At issue here is the number that is used as the baseline for determining deficit neutrality. The rules of the House are unambiguous. The most current baseline estimate must be used. Clause 10 of Rule XXI provides: "the effect of a measure on the deficit or surplus shall be determined on the basis of estimates made by the Committee on the Budget relative to the most recent baseline supplied by the Congressional Budget Office."

This does, after all, make perfect sense. If out-of-date and irrelevant numbers can be used, the rule would be a complete farce, even to those who support it in principle. In the case of the Farm Bill, the most up-to-date estimate was released on March 3, 2008. And yet it has been rumored that the Farm Bill's authors may choose to use the fiscal year 2007 numbers.

This would be akin to pulling up to the gas station and rather than having to pay the current 2008 price of \$3.62 per gallon, you tell the gas station attendant that that price doesn't apply to you, and you get to pay the 2007 price of \$2.97.

If Democrats insist on following this path, their bill will be in violation of PAYGO. And if the Rules Committee chooses to waive PAYGO, I suspect they would have trouble garnering enough support to pass such a rule within their own caucus. While the Democratic Leadership has proven they have no qualms about breaking House rules, or circumventing them altogether, a number of their Members are committed to the current incarnation of PAYGO. The Democratic Leadership knows that failure to comply with this rule is a non-starter for a large bloc of their caucus.

So if their solution was to simply cook the books, pretend their bill was PAYGO compliant, and hope no one noticed, then I'm sorry to say, we noticed. To all of my colleagues who support PAYGO, and to all of my colleagues who oppose PAYGO but also oppose budget gimmickry and backroom deals to thwart the rules of the House, I urge you to join me in supporting this motion. Let's send the Farm Bill conferees a strong message that a budgetary shell game will not get them their 218 votes. And let's send a message to the Democratic Leadership that they can't piously claim to follow the rules, while perpetrating an end-run around them.

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

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose the motion to instruct.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from North Dakota is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. POMEROY. I thank the Speaker.

We agree that under normal circumstances a farm bill considered at this time ought to be scored on the March, 2008, baseline. But let me emphatically emphasize there has been nothing normal about the development of this farm bill.

We're moving into our 17th month of intensive work on this farm bill. I'm telling you we have encountered every barrier you can possibly imagine, and we are almost done. We have almost got this to conference committee and to the floor. As the majority leader indicated, we are hopeful it will be on the floor next week.

During the period of time we have been working on this bill, the House passed this farm bill July 27, 2007, and it took nearly 5 months in addition before the Senate passed its bill, December 14, 2007. If they would have gotten their bill done earlier, we probably could have concluded this. This wouldn't even have come up. We would have had the farm bill out of here by now. The Senate-passed bill, however, is 1,876 pages long; the House bill, 160 pages long. That alone will tell you we had an awful lot of work to reconcile these two bills.

The Senate uses a different rule relative to determining baseline, a rule used by the House in the construction of the 1996 farm bill as well as the 2002 farm bill. This principle is pretty simple: If you have done most of the work on the legislation under the old baseline, you can conclude the work. It would undo everything to suddenly have the new scoring requirement. And if the Senate didn't go along, you would have the crazy situation of trying to do one baseline for the House, another baseline for the Senate, trying to meld those in conference committee, and you will never get this thing done.

So the gentleman's motion to instruct has an intellectual basis for it, but the reality of this farm bill is we have worked now 17 months building the bill, most of that time under the 2007 farm bill. When we passed the bill in the House, we had no idea what the 2008 baseline would be; so it's not like

we were forum shopping or trying to pick the most lenient number. It was just the only way we could proceed. And if we would at this point in time do a baseline shift, I'm telling you this project, so close to home, gets put back to square one.

I have asked my friend and colleague Chairman John SPRATT to join me in this discussion because, obviously, when it comes to budget matters, he has broad respect across both sides of the aisle and I believe he can advance a more detailed discussion on some of the rules at issue as we respond in opposition to the motion.

Mr. SPRATT. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. POMEROY. I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina.

Mr. SPRATT. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, more than a year ago, in meetings with Chairman PETERSON and the Ag Committee staff, the Budget Committee made it clear that the new farm bill had to stay within the CBO baseline for the current farm bill. Policies could be added or altered, but the aggregate cost could not exceed CBO's current baseline. We based that position on the so-called "pay-as-you-go" rule. Pay-as-you-go requires that any new legislation, in the form of mandatory spending, be fully offset, that it not exceed the current baseline.

In this instance, with the new farm bill, which about to come from conference, it appears that the farm bill will be complied with the fiscal year 2007 baseline but perhaps not fully complied with the fiscal year 2008 baseline. I have not seen the numbers yet.

CBO produces many baselines, and for a time the House PAYGO rule was ambiguous about the proper time for switching to a newer, updated baseline. Over time the House Budget Committee, in consultation with the Parliamentarian, came to an agreement to use longstanding scoring principles. These principles or guidelines allowed the Budget Committee discretion so that we could choose the appropriate baseline. This principle evolved over many years as a rule of practicality. It was founded on the rationale that we should not change the rules in the middle of the game or the middle of the legislative process or, in this case, in the middle of a complex conference. This rule was applied in 1996 to the farm bill passed then and again in 2002 to the farm bill which was passed then. Once again, the underlying idea is to avoid changing the rules in the middle of a contested process that is complex and protracted enough already.

The House PAYGO rule, the rule which we adopted in January of 2007, does set a limit to it. It does say that the latest baseline can and should be used until such time as the Budget Committee reports a budget resolution. The Senate has a different rule. The Senate PAYGO rule also sets a limit. It proposes that the last baseline be used until a conference report on the budget is adopted.

□ 1500

So there is a significant disagreement in the position between the two rules in the two bodies. As part of the resolution of all the differences in the conference, this too has to be resolved.

Much of the farm bill about to come before us was hammered out in 2007. The bill passed the House and passed the Senate and the conferees on all sides believed that the final package would emerge certainly no later than March of this year. The Budget Committee determined and informed the conferees that any farm bill would have to be scored against the FY07 baseline up until the Budget Committee reported a budget resolution for fiscal year 2009.

The budget resolution was passed on March 7. Our committee staff informed the conferees that the baseline for measuring compliance with PAYGO would now be the fiscal year 08 baseline. In rendering that advice, we didn't resolve or really consider the pertinent problem. As I said earlier, the rules require that the conferees use the March 07 baseline until the Senate adopts the conference report on the budget for fiscal year 2009. This makes sense because then you will have something done definitively by concurrent budget resolution passed in both Houses. And the purpose of a conference is to resolve disagreements between the two Houses.

Here, we have such a disagreement, as I said earlier. Either we use the FY07 baseline or we use the FY08 baseline. We can't use base because there is a significant difference between the two. It seems fair and reasonable to me to use the FY07 baseline since so much of this conference agreement was written with the FY07 baseline as the yardstick, and to revert to FY08 would require more protracted negotiations and maybe no conference report at all.

I have to say to you I could argue you this either way. But I believe on balance that this is a good application, a proper allocation of the baseline rule, and certainly the rule of practicality in this instance.

Mr. POMEROY. Reclaiming the time—

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. If the gentleman is willing to yield back his time, I will just have a 1-minute speaker and then I will close—fast.

Mr. POMEROY. I would just like to point out one quick thing. This is what PAYGO accomplishes. In 2002, pay-as-you-go budget discipline was allowed to expire. The farm bill, when it was passed, added to the baseline \$73.5 billion. I believe the gentleman from Wisconsin voted for that farm bill. I did.

Now we have an important restoration of pay-as-you-go discipline, and under the 2007 baseline we have accounted for every dollar of spending in this farm bill. No deficit added, no deepening of the deficit, as figured on the 2007 baseline, compared to a very, very different situation in the 2002 farm bill.

So the gentleman's motion involves, in my view, pointing out that this might not technically jibe with the House rule. I believe that we have learned a lesson from the gentleman's motion. We ought to have our rule like the old rule where the baseline on a discretionary call by the Budget Chair can continue to be the baseline under which you drafted the legislation, because otherwise all of this work could be lost. We need to get this bill done. And we are this close to getting it done.

So with respect to my friend, Mr. RYAN, I would urge that we reject the motion. I will let this statement serve as the close. Let the Ag Committee finish its work; let's pass the farm bill. Let's reject this motion to instruct.

I yield back.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND).

Mr. KIND. I thank my friend for yielding.

He and I and others have tried to introduce the concept of more reform in this next farm bill. But I didn't intend to speak on this motion; I just want to point out a little bit of irony in what this motion would do.

It's my understanding that by using the 2008 numbers, it would result in a lower baseline for the commodity subsidy programs by about \$11 billion, which I don't have a problem with because we have introduced a 10-point option plan to find over \$10 billion of reasonable savings under these commodity programs already. So it's consistent with that.

But it would also call for an increase of the baseline under the conservation title of close to \$2 billion and under the nutrition title of close to \$35 billion because of increased food costs and eligibility under these nutrition programs. If the nutrition groups knew what the practical effect of this motion to instruct would be, they will be doing cartwheels all over this town for the next week.

I just wanted to point out the irony of today's baseline versus last year's baseline.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I am curious, does the gentleman want time from me or time from them?

Four quick points. The war supplemental, been working on it for a year. That is going to be done under the new baseline. Number two, CBO can score this on time. They have already told us they are going to give us simultaneous scores under the 2008 baseline.

Number three, you have had plenty of time to do this. The CBO baseline has been out for 2 months. But number four, and lastly, this isn't an option, this isn't a choice. You don't have discretion. It's the rules. This is your PAYGO rules.

So the question is: Are you going to violate your rules or not?

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN).

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

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 2419, FOOD AND ENERGY SECURITY ACT OF 2007

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to instruct at the desk.

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Kind moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 2419 (an Act to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012) be instructed to—

(1) insist on the amendment contained in section 2401(d) of the House bill (relating to funding for the environmental quality incentive program);

(2) insist on the amendments contained in section 2104 of the House bill (relating to the grassland reserve program) and reject the amendment contained in section 2401(2) of the Senate amendment (relating to funding for the grassland reserve program);

(3) insist on the amendments contained in section 2102 of the House bill (relating to the wetland reserve program); and

(4) insist on the amendments contained in section 2608 of the Senate bill (relating to crop insurance ineligibility relating to crop production on native sod).

Mr. KIND (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the motion be considered as read.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND) and a Member opposed will be recognized for 30 minutes each.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. KIND. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very simple motion. I understand we are in the waning, perhaps minutes of conclusion of the farm bill. But, nevertheless, I think it's important that we get the policies right. We do need a farm bill. We need it as soon as possible. It's planting season back home. Our farmers need some predictability. They need to know what rules they are being to be operating under, one way or another. But we need a good farm bill, not a bad farm bill; one that tries to get the policy right, not the wrong way.

I still believe there's more room for reform under the commodity programs in light of record high commodity prices. It's tough to justify to the average taxpayer that what is still being considered under the current farm bill is close to \$25 billion of direct payments to go out over the next 5 years, bearing no relationship to price or production. It's not a safety net. These are entitlement funding, automatic payments that go to large producers, primarily merely due to their existence and not because of market.

But there's another important feature of this farm bill and that is the conservation title. This farm bill offers this Nation the greatest public investment in private land ownership in regards to anything else we do around here. For a very long time, we have had important land and water conservation programs set up on a voluntary and incentive basis to help our producers be good stewards of the land; good manure management practices so they are not running off and polluting our rivers and streams and lakes and tributaries, making sure we have got buffer strips in place, making sure we have got the ability to absorb more CO₂ from the atmosphere so we don't lose ground on the global warming battle that we are confronting.

This is something that also benefits the American farmer, family farmers in every region. But it also benefits the community at large through enhanced water quality programs, through habitat protection, and wildlife, which is also vital to our own local and regional economies. Yet what is being considered right now in the conference is a dramatic reduction in the level of funding that came out of the House.

The House had an historic passage of conservation funding last year, calling for another over \$5 billion in these conservation programs. This, I think, in part, is to address the backlog of demand because today, under current funding, close to two out of every three farmers applying for conservation funding assistance are turned because of the inadequacy of funds. So the demand is there.

But what makes these programs especially attractive is their so-called "green box payments." They are non-market, nontrade-distorting, still a way to help our family farmers manage their own land, but in a way that doesn't distort the marketplace. What's being considered now is a dramatic reduction in the level of funding that came out of the House originally.

Our motion to instruct today would merely ask the conferees to try to get back to that House level of funding rather than going even below where the Senate took it. The Senate was proposing a \$4.2 billion increase. We were over \$5 billion. It's my understanding, and I haven't been privy to the ongoing negotiations, but they are talking about just a \$4 billion increase under conservation, substantially below where the House went.

More specifically, this motion would instruct conferees to maintain the House funding for the Environmental Quality Incentive Program. That is the main program that helps with manure management projects throughout the Nation, especially beneficial to large animal feedlots that have to control that and prevent the spillage into the environment.

It would also maintain the allotment for the Grassland Reserve Program. There is more pressure being put on these highly sensitive and highly erodible lands because of the increase in commodity prices. It would also maintain House funding for the Wetlands Reserve Program. That, of course, is a great filter that exists throughout our communities to enhance quality water supplies but also crucial to water fowl populations in North America.

It would also accept the Senate Sod Saver Provision so that the Federal Government doesn't incentivize the conversion of sensitive virgin prairie land back into crop production. Again, given the pressure that exists with these historically high commodity prices, it's a real concern that more of this virgin prairie land that has been vital for conservation efforts, especially in the Great Plains, are going to be brought back into production with the consequent adverse environmental and conservation effects that would result.

So that is merely what this motion to instruct would do; get back to what the House passed last year under conservation, give the farmers throughout the country the tools they need to be good stewards of the land, and do it in a nonmarket, nontrade-distorting fashion, especially in the tremendous increase in commodity prices today and the pressure that producers are under to bring the land that has been conserved for many years back into production and resulting with a lot more sediment and nutrient runoffs that will be a consequence of that action.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Oklahoma is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to now yield half of that time to my colleague, Chairman HOLDEN.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOLDEN) will be recognized for 15 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. HOLDEN. I thank the gentleman from Oklahoma for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I say to my friend from Wisconsin and my friend from Oregon that we appreciate their support for the funding for conservation at the House level. I have got to say honestly, though, we wish we would have had your support last July. I also say to my friends, and I mean my friends, that we