

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Mr. CHILDERS. I also want to thank Chairman BENNIE THOMPSON of the Homeland Security Committee and Chairman BARNEY FRANK of the Financial Services Committee, as well as Chairwoman MAXINE WATERS of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity and our ranking members, also, for working together on this piece of legislation.

I, too, congratulate our two newest Members of the House, Congressman CAZAYOUX from Louisiana and Congressman CHILDERS from my home State of Mississippi for drafting H.R. 6276.

As you know, earlier this month, Ms. WATERS and I teamed up to hold a hearing examining the roles and responsibilities of HUD and FEMA in providing affordable housing to disaster victims under the direction of Chairman FRANK and Chairman THOMPSON. During this hearing, there was confusion as to which agency is responsible for providing disaster recovery funds to public housing authorities damaged during disasters.

The Public Housing Disaster Relief Act of 2008 will strike section 9(k) of the U.S. Housing Act of 1937 clarifying the funding structure for public housing authorities in the wake of disasters. After Hurricane Katrina, housing authorities received no funds from the 9(k) account, and it's not hard to see that this account is no longer needed. In fact, this account only caused us confusion as to who is responsible for providing disaster recovery funds to public housing authorities. Let's do our part to eliminate this confusion.

This legislation, H.R. 6276, will eliminate the 9(k) account and clarify the funding structure by identifying FEMA as the responsible party for providing assistance to public housing authorities through the Stafford Act. We need to streamline government and provide services to our constituents in a more efficient and effective manner, and this is exactly what H.R. 6276 does.

So I encourage our Members, all of my colleagues, to support H.R. 6276.

Again, I congratulate both Mr. CAZAYOUX and Mr. CHILDERS for bringing up this good piece of legislation.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve my time.

Mr. CHILDERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JEFFERSON) 2 minutes.

Mr. JEFFERSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, no place on the planet needs this more than my district in Louisiana. Before the storm, there were some 5,000 families in public housing representing some 30-or-so thousand people who were living there. Since the storm, there are some 800 people or so, well down from our prior number. That's because the storm damaged almost all the public housing virtually thoroughly to the point now that the areas where public housing used to occupy are laid as a wasteland,

and we have had nothing but administrative fighting and confusion over this issue.

And what is happening here today that Chairman FRANK and our two newest colleagues, Mr. CAZAYOUX and Mr. CHILDERS, are bringing today is a bill that is very much needed.

In my area, the cost to rebuild public housing is going to be astronomical, but the families who are depending on it, it's quite a large number of people. And there is no way we can restore affordable housing in our area without restoring public housing. There is no way to restore public housing unless there is an agency that has a tradition of dealing with bringing public buildings back into place as FEMA does. It's an unusual argument for us to make that we want FEMA to do more in our area, to have more responsibility, given the record it has of being far less than perfect. But that is a case where it makes sense for FEMA to take over and fill the gap.

So I want to congratulate you again for coming forward. This legislation is going to mean a lot to our people in Louisiana, a lot to the folks I represent in New Orleans, and a lot to the families who are struggling to get back into their homes.

So thank you very much. I appreciate it.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I was going to inquire to see if the gentleman has other speakers.

Mr. CHILDERS. I actually have one more speaker.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve.

Mr. CHILDERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time, 2½ minutes, to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS).

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, Members, I would like to commend all of our authors and co-authors on this legislation. We learned a lot because of Hurricane Katrina. We learned that FEMA and HUD are confused. They don't work together. As a matter of fact, they work against each other. And the most vulnerable of those who were victimized by Hurricane Katrina, the public housing residents, were so negatively impacted by all of this.

We found that when there was a subcommittee hearing that we held, this joint hearing with Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emergency, Communications, Preparedness, and Response, we talked about the roles of HUD and FEMA in responding to affordable housing needs following natural disasters and emergencies. At that hearing, we learned that HUD Section 9 program, the public housing reconstruction, has never been funded because of language in appropriations acts that has barred the program from receiving any appropriations. Although HUD has been providing a limited amount of funds from its already underfunded capital fund this year, the department proposes not to provide any emergency capital funds.

In addition, because section 9(k) is authorized, FEMA has refused to allow PHAs to access funds under its section 406 reconstruction program. This is in spite of the fact that there is no statutory or other prohibition on PHAs using these funds. FEMA is simply refusing to grant PHAs access to section 406 funding because it says that PHAs have another source for this purpose, section 9(k), which has never been funded.

You've heard a lot from Members here today about this, and I'm going to yield back my time so that the gentleman can do a close appropriate to this legislation that he so courageously authored.

Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. CHILDERS).

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers, and I would like to say I think this does go a long way to probably eliminate some confusion between these two agencies. It makes sense to do this.

I want to welcome the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. CAZAYOUX) to the committee and thank him for his willingness to participate in this issue.

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

Mr. CHILDERS. Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to thank those who spoke on behalf of this today. And in conclusion, I simply, again, urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 6276.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. CAZAYOUX) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6276.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AMERICAN VETERANS DISABLED FOR LIFE COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 634) to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of veterans who became disabled for life while serving in the Armed Forces of the United States.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the Senate amendment is as follows:

Senate amendment:

On page 3, strike line 24 and all that follows thru page 4 line 3 and insert:

(1) DESIGN.—*The design of the coins minted under this Act shall be emblematic of the service of our disabled veterans who, having survived the ordeal of war, made enormous personal sacrifices defending the principles of our democracy.*

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

Kansas (Mr. MOORE) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MOORE from Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation that we consider today is a simple, straightforward bill that would take one small but important step to honor more than 3 million American veterans currently living with disabilities as a result of their service in the United States Armed Forces. In fact, out of 26 million American veterans living today, nearly 1 in 10 lives with the physical cost of their service to our country in the form of some sort of permanent disability.

While there are many constructive steps that Congress should take to improve the lives of disabled veterans, by passing this bipartisan legislation today, which I introduced with my friend and colleague, Mr. KIRK, we hope to honor their sacrifice and the toll this has taken on their lives.

Specifically, Mr. Speaker, this legislation provides for the design, manufacture, and sale of special \$1 commemorative silver coins and authorizes special surcharges on these coins to be contributed toward the construction of a memorial to disabled veterans in our country. The American Veterans Disabled for Life will command an impressive two-acre site located just southwest of the Rayburn House Office Building adjacent to the National Mall in full view of the United States Capitol.

The memorial will symbolize America's lasting gratitude for the men and women whose lives are forever changed by their service to our country. It will also serve as a continual reminder to Members of Congress about the human cost of warfare and the need to support our American war veterans.

The House approved this legislation unanimously in May of 2007 by a vote of 416-0. The Senate recently followed suit by approving the legislation by unanimous consent with one small amendment giving the Secretary of the Treasury more discretion over the design of the coin.

I once again urge my colleagues to adopt this important legislation, Mr. Speaker. We will never forget the sacrifice that our American heroes made and continue to make in order to promote a better world for their fellow citizens. Building this long-overdue memorial is something we need to do as Americans.

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

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

I rise in strong support of this legislation of this bill sponsored by the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MOORE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) which honors those who have sacrificed so much so that we may live in peace, and this is long overdue that we build a memorial for them.

This legislation, as the gentleman mentioned, passed in the House on April 15 of last year by a margin of 416-0 and comes back to us from the other body with that minor amendment describing the coin's design that is totally acceptable, and I urge immediate passage.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, if I could just add one thing.

I want to thank Mr. NEUGEBAUER and Mr. KIRK, who really drafted this bill and got me involved with this, for their generous work on this legislation.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I want to yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), one of the co-authors of this bill and someone I have a great deal of respect and I know has worked tirelessly for the great men and women who have served in the past and are currently serving in our country such time as he may consume.

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, as the co-author of this legislation, the American Veterans Disabled For Life Commemorative Coin Act, I want to especially thank my partner, DENNIS MOORE of Kansas, for his leadership in bringing this bill to the floor, where we are now, on to the White House for enactment.

Our legislation seeks to recognize the sacrifices made by more than 3 million living disabled veterans by building a memorial for them right here within sight of the Capitol.

In 2000, Congress authorized the construction of this memorial just southwest of the Rayburn building. In December 2006, the President signed a law that transferred control of the land for the memorial from the District of Columbia to the National Park Service. In February 2007, I joined my colleague from Illinois (Mr. HARE) in introducing a bill that extended the authorization for this memorial through 2015, and that was signed into law in October.

□ 1515

Now, the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial Foundation needs to raise approximately \$65 million for the construction of this memorial.

Our legislation today will authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative silver dollars that will be sold with a surcharge to help the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial Foundation to raise the money it will need to construct this memorial to our heroes. Not only will these coins be collector's items, but they will help raise millions for the memorial.

In crafting the bill, Congressman MOORE and I had the privilege to meet an extraordinary young man, Sergeant Bryan Anderson from Rolling Meadows, Illinois. Bryan's story is, unfortunately, all too common for many veterans from Iraq, but his spirit is very uncommon, and his attitude sets him completely apart from the average person.

You see, Bryan at the age of 26, who finished basic training on September 12, 2001, lost both his legs and an arm to a roadside bomb in Iraq. Bryan jokes that he would have lost both his arms if he hadn't been smoking when the bomb detonated. His constant sense of humor and his determination are clearly apparent and came through loud and clear in a long interview he gave to Esquire magazine.

In it, Bryan said, "This doesn't define me. It may be how I look on the outside, but it's not who I am. I guess you could remember me easily as being a triple amputee, but it's not who I am, has nothing to do with who I am. I've always been the same person."

Bryan is a self-described "adrenaline junkie," who hopes to become a Hollywood stuntman. Since his appearance on the cover of Esquire, he's had numerous opportunities to use his story for some sort of political gain, but he has always forgiven that opportunity. For Bryan, he doesn't like to talk about politics, but always wants to talk and support the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial.

Washington has many advocates for many causes here in this town but none more effective than Bryan Anderson. With Bryan, you see what you get. He is a veteran with an inspirational story, who wants to see this memorial built, not just for himself but for all of his disabled veterans from World War II, from Korea, from Vietnam, from Desert Storm, and from his conflicts both in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Bryan is about as genuine as you can ever get, and with passage of this legislation, we come closer to the day when Bryan will return to Capitol Hill to visit the memorial that he helped to build.

I want to thank my friend Dennis and also a member of my staff, Patrick Magnuson, for helping shepherd this legislation through the House.

With more than 3 million disabled American veterans alive today, it is fitting that we now take the time to build a memorial in memorializing their sacrifice here within sight of the Capitol in Washington, D.C.

As someone who is one of the only Members of Congress still serving in the military as a Naval Reserve intelligence officer, it's my honor to be the lead Republican cosponsor of this legislation. It's our hope now that we go to the White House, enact this legislation, mint this coin, raise millions for our fellow disabled American veterans, and then build this memorial, not just to show all of the veterans how much we care about them and honor them but

also to remind future Congresses that freedom is not free, that a price is very high when the President calls on our Armed Forces to deliver, and when they do, we honor them and will always remember their memory.

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I just want to again thank Mr. KIRK and Mr. NEUGEBAUER for their very, very hard work and important work on this legislation and colleagues on both sides of the aisle who came together in a bipartisan spirit to pass this.

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

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MOORE) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 634.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate amendment was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FOOD, CONSERVATION, AND ENERGY ACT OF 2008—VETO MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 110-125)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following veto message from the President of the United States:

To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 6124, the "Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008."

The bill that I vetoed on May 21, 2008, H.R. 2419, which became Public Law 110-234, did not include the title III provisions that are in this bill. In passing H.R. 6124, the Congress had an opportunity to improve on H.R. 2419 by modifying certain objectionable, onerous, and fiscally imprudent provisions. Unfortunately, the Congress chose to send me the same unacceptable farm bill provisions in H.R. 6124, merely adding title III. I am returning this bill for the same reasons as stated in my veto message of May 21, 2008, on H.R. 2419.

For a year and a half, I have consistently asked that the Congress pass a good farm bill that I can sign. Regrettably, the Congress has failed to do so. At a time of high food prices and record farm income, this bill lacks program reform and fiscal discipline. It continues subsidies for the wealthy and increases farm bill spending by more than \$20 billion, while using budget gimmicks to hide much of the increase. It is inconsistent with our objectives in international trade negotiations, which include securing greater market access for American farmers and ranchers. It would needlessly expand the size and scope of government. Americans sent us to Washington to achieve results and be good stewards of their hard-earned taxpayer dollars. This bill violates that fundamental commitment.

In January 2007, my Administration put forward a fiscally responsible farm bill proposal that would improve the safety net for farmers and move current programs toward more market-oriented policies. The bill before me today fails to achieve these important goals.

At a time when net farm income is projected to increase by more than \$28 billion in 1 year, the American taxpayer should not be forced to subsidize that group of farmers who have adjusted gross incomes of up to \$1.5 million. When commodity prices are at record highs, it is irresponsible to increase government subsidy rates for 15 crops, subsidize additional crops, and provide payments that further distort markets. Instead of better targeting farm programs, this bill eliminates the existing payment limit on marketing loan subsidies.

Now is also not the time to create a new uncapped revenue guarantee that could cost billions of dollars more than advertised. This is on top of a farm bill that is anticipated to cost more than \$600 billion over 10 years. In addition, this bill would force many businesses to prepay their taxes in order to finance the additional spending.

This legislation is also filled with earmarks and other ill-considered provisions. Most notably, H.R. 6124 provides: \$175 million to address water issues for desert lakes; \$250 million for a 400,000-acre land purchase from a private owner; funding and authority for the noncompetitive sale of National Forest land to a ski resort; and \$382 million earmarked for a specific watershed. These earmarks, and the expansion of Davis-Bacon Act prevailing wage requirements, have no place in the farm bill. Rural and urban Americans alike are frustrated with excessive government spending and the funneling of taxpayer funds for pet projects. This bill will only add to that frustration.

The bill also contains a wide range of other objectionable provisions, including one that restricts our ability to redirect food aid dollars for emergency use at a time of great need globally. The bill does not include the requested authority to buy food in the developing world to save lives. Additionally, provisions in the bill raise serious constitutional concerns. For all the reasons outlined above, I must veto H.R. 6124.

I veto this bill fully aware that it is rare for a stand-alone farm bill not to receive the President's signature, but my action today is not without precedent. In 1956, President Eisenhower stood firmly on principle, citing high crop subsidies and too much government control of farm programs among the reasons for his veto. President Eisenhower wrote in his veto message, "Bad as some provisions of this bill are, I would have signed it if in total it could be interpreted as sound and good for farmers and the nation." For similar reasons, I am vetoing the bill before me today.

GEORGE W. BUSH.
THE WHITE HOUSE, June 18, 2008.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The objections of the President will be spread at large upon the Journal, and the veto message and the bill will be printed as a House document.

The question is, Will the House, on reconsideration, pass the bill, the objections of the President to the contrary notwithstanding?

The gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield 30 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE).

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

I'm not going to take a lot of time because I think people have heard enough about this issue, and we apologize. I guess we have to be in this position, but what we're doing here today is overriding the veto hopefully for the final time on the farm bill because of the enrolling error that was made on the initial override or veto that happened a few weeks ago.

At the time, we made a decision to move ahead. Even though the wrong bill was vetoed, we moved ahead to override that veto, which we prevailed on the floor here by a substantial margin. I think in retrospect that was a good idea because 14 titles of the farm bill have been law since then.

We had a meeting this morning with the Secretary to talk about implementation. So the work has been going on within the department to get ready for implementation. We have gained a couple or 3 weeks in that process. Just a couple of days ago, the administration Secretary put out the loan rates and target prices for this crop year. So that process is moving along.

What this bill does, the 14 titles are now law. The trade title was left out. What this bill does is reenact the entire 15 titles as they were passed by the original conference report and does it all as one complete whole. And in the bill, what it does, it vitiates the 14 titles that have been law for the last 3 weeks I guess, or so.

It cleans up the technical problem that we had created by the enrolling office and puts into law what was intended by the conference committee.

This is a good bill. It has wide support in the Congress, as we have seen by the number of votes that we've had here on the floor. It is not perfect, but it does address all of the issues that have been brought to the Agriculture Committee by the various different groups that have been interested in this piece of legislation, and I encourage my colleagues to override the veto.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of overriding the farm bill veto. Currently, 14 of the farm bill's 15 titles have been enacted into law, and the passage of the veto override will ensure that the whole bill, including the trade title, becomes law.

□ 1530

The content of the bill before us today is the exact same as it was when