

wildlife habitats—Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, groups such as that. We have an extraordinary program in South Dakota that has benefited the economy enormously by creating recreational opportunities, hunting opportunities, and it all comes back to having the right kind of habitat and that comes back to conservation policy that is in place in this farm bill.

As I said, anybody who is connected to the renewable energy industry, the nutrition programs, this farm bill has a very broad reach in terms of who it impacts. It is not just about farmers and ranchers, it is about renewable energy, it is about conservation programs, it is about nutrition programs.

As a consequence, the ramifications of our lack of action are very far reaching. I am very hopeful this will happen and happen soon. But I wanted to come down here this evening and convey to my colleagues in the Senate and to the leaders the importance of this happening and happening in a very short order.

I again suggest the leadership appoint conferees and the conferees begin to meet and let's get this train moving forward.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FOOD INSECURITY

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, we are the wealthiest nation in the world. Yet American children go to bed hungry, and American seniors choose between food and medicine, between food and heating their home. American families stand in line at food banks stretched too thin to serve them.

There is a term for what millions of Americans face every day. It is called food insecurity. It means children are not getting the food they need to grow up healthy in too many cases. It means mothers and fathers foregoing food for themselves so they can feed their kids in too many cases. It means seniors who are rationing their food to one meal a day in too many cases.

I stood on this floor as long as a year ago telling the story of Rhonda Stewart who testified in front of the Agriculture Committee about food stamps. Ms. Stewart has a 9-year-old son. She has a full-time job, she is president of her local PTA, she is involved in the Cub Scouts for her son, and she teaches Sunday school. Yet she is squeezed at the end of every month because her food stamps simply do not go far enough. She gets about \$6 a day from food stamps. The average food stamp in this country is \$1 per person per meal. She told me that early in the month,

she makes pork chops for her son because that is her son's favorite meal. They might do that once or twice early in the month. By the middle of the month, maybe the second or third week, she said she takes her son to a fast food restaurant, once, maybe twice. But at the end of the month, she often sits at the kitchen table with her son as he eats. She sits there not eating, and her son asks: Mom, is there something wrong? Are you sick? She says: I just don't feel like eating tonight. She runs out of food month after month.

Food insecurity, not having enough food, to put it bluntly, affects one in six seniors in this country. Our Nation letting children and seniors go to bed hungry is as shortsighted as it is heartless.

An hour and a half ago, from 6 o'clock until about 7 o'clock, I was in a call with more than two dozen people in Ohio who run food banks and food pantries from all over the State. Let me tell you some of the things they told me.

They told me they have pretty much about the same amount of dollars to run their food pantries as they had a year ago or 2 years ago or 3 years ago. A woman by the name of Tina Ossa in southwest Ohio, generally a pretty affluent part of the State—Butler County, Claremont County, that area—said she is running out of food in part because the cost of frozen chickens—she used to be able to buy a tractor trailer load of frozen chickens—has gone up almost 50 percent. She said a tractor trailer load of egg noodles has doubled in cost in the last year or so whether they are buying it wholesale or buying it directly from the food manufacturer.

Others told me on this call that the food banks are always sort of the last stop, an emergency safety net. The food stamp benefit is limited to \$1 per meal per person. The cost of energy to heat their home has gone up. The cost of going to work has gone up with the cost of gas at \$3 a gallon. And the last emergency stop for so many people is to go to a food bank because it is a safety net. Yet these food pantries are running out of food.

One food pantry told me typically this time of year they have 1 million pounds of food on hand. Now they have 400,000 pounds of food on hand. The lady, Ms. Ossa from Fairfield, OH, in Butler County, told me she started that food bank in 1983. It has never been close to as difficult a situation as today. They are getting fewer donations partly because the Government has not stepped up and partly because the people who have given to them—charity—in the past, who have given dollars for food, are hurting themselves and not as likely to contribute or contribute as much.

She said the companies, the supermarkets and food manufacturers, are more efficient and squeeze any waste out of their system. Any slightly damaged cans, any kind of items they

might have given to a food bank before they are not doing so. They are more in tune to Wall Street and the bottom line, so they are less likely to give these charitable contributions.

One person on this call from Cleveland said there is a large bank in Cleveland where a woman at the bank organized other employees for a dress-down Friday. You can wear jeans on Friday if you give \$5 to a local food bank. It has raised significant dollars for the food pantry as a result.

The husband of this woman who organized this drive at this major bank in Cleveland lost his job. She is now barely making it. They together are barely making it. The father-in-law has moved in because he has had problems, and she now is going to this food bank. She is a full-time worker with a good job in Cleveland, and she is going to this food bank because she cannot make it.

There is story after story. The most amazing story took place in Logan, OH, in the southeast, probably the most hard-hit Appalachian part of the State. It looks a lot like the area of the Presiding Officer in western Pennsylvania. This is southeastern Ohio.

In Logan, OH, on a cold day in December 6 weeks ago, people began to line up at 3:30 in the morning to get food from this food bank which opened at 8 o'clock. By 8 o'clock, cars were snaked all over the city streets in the town of Logan, a county of about 30,000 people. At 8 o'clock, they opened the door. By 1 o'clock in the afternoon, 2,000 people had been to this food bank, in a county of 30,000; 7 percent of the residents in this country had gone to this food bank, and many had driven 20 and 30 minutes to get there because it is a rural, pretty spread-out county.

I might add, Mr. Dick Stevens who runs this food bank told me that probably half of those beneficiaries who visited that food bank at the United Methodist Church in Logan, OH, were employed. Imagine that: You work hard every day, you play by the rules, you work as hard as any of us who dress this way in this institution do, many harder in some cases, you are working hard for your family, involved in your community, and you have to go to a food pantry to get enough food to make it through the week. Something is wrong that we in this body allow that to happen.

Another person involved in food pantries told me 90 percent of the people who come into food banks in Warren County, an affluent county straight northeast out of Cincinnati, the first county out of Cincinnati, 90 percent of food bank recipients are employed. In some places, it might be 30 percent employed or 90 percent. The fact is, nobody who has a full-time job ought to have to go to food banks, especially since those food banks, in most cases, are giving enough for 1 week, not 2 or 3, and they don't let them come back as often because they are running out of food. They have the same amount of

food or less trying to serve more people.

It is pretty clear this is as bad a situation as we have seen in recent memory. One of my constituents told me that he and his wife for years have donated time and money to Cleveland area food banks and soup kitchens. Over time, as his wages did not go up and with the higher cost of transportation, the cost of heating their home and the cost of food, Tim and his wife quit donating money but donate their time to the food banks.

Today, Tim is going to the food bank for food. Tim said: It took great humility in that food bank to ask for food. He said: I used to consider myself middle class, but the salary and cost of living don't make it anymore. The Emergency Food Assistance Program that helps fund our Nation's food banks is the quickest, most efficient way to get food into the hands of people as their last stop emergency measure. But since 2002, because the President has had other priorities—tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans, a \$3-billion-a-week war—the President has flat funded these food banks. Its current level of \$140 million does not come close to taking care of these problems. Think about that. We talk a good game about personal responsibility, we talk about family values, yet for the basic level of nutrition, one in six seniors does not have enough food, and even a higher percentage of children in this society do not have enough food, and people who work full time in this society—forget about health care; we know many of them don't have health care—do not have enough food. Yet the President, because of the \$3-billion-a-week war in Iraq, because he insists, even in his State of the Union Message, on more tax cuts, as Senator CASEY, the Presiding Officer, was talking about earlier today, more tax cuts for the richest people in the country, we continue to spend exactly the same shrinking dollars for the last 5 years because you cannot buy nearly as much food on \$140 million today as you could 5 years ago. We worked with other concerned colleagues to increase funding for food banks to \$250 million in the farm bill. There has been bipartisan agreement there. Unfortunately, the President has threatened to veto this bill, in part because of increased spending on nutrition.

We have also seen the President flatline funding of the Women, Infants and Children program, which is about as pound-foolish and penny-wise as you can imagine. We are going to spend less to keep women who are pregnant, low-income women, healthy, spend less on nutrition for them, so we will have more low birth weight babies, more children not getting what is most important after they are born—at the most important time in their lives, in utero and after they are born—having the kind of nutrition they need—we are not going to fund that? What kind of priority is that?

It is all a question of priorities. Do we give tax cuts to the wealthiest people in this country or do we take care of low-income women who are pregnant and children after they are born? And are we going to fund this \$3 billion-a-week war in Iraq or are we going to look at some other priorities to take care of the 1-in-6 elderly people who have to choose between food and heat or food and the medicine they take? Are we going to continue to do these tax cuts for the wealthy at the expense of the middle class, at the expense of people who can't always help themselves?

Again, most of these people who go to food banks are people who are employed. They are working hard and playing by the rules, and they simply can't quite make it because their incomes haven't kept up with the cost of gasoline in getting to and from work; the cost of heating, to stay warm in the winter; and the increasing cost of food.

The President hasn't called for emergency measures to aid hungry Americans. He has consistently, as I have said before, tried to cut nutrition programs that target populations in desperate need. Indifference to human suffering is a moral failure, a moral failure that obscures our Nation's values and dampens our Nation's potential. Think about that: children in this country who don't have adequate food growing up, pregnant women who don't have the right nutrition. Considering what our other priorities are and how much we are spending on those other priorities, it is clearly something we should be doing in this body and in the House of Representatives.

In the stimulus package that is about to pass the Senate, we have an amendment to provide an increase of \$100 million for emergency food assistance. I know the Presiding Officer supports that, and I know most of my colleagues do. We also fear the Republicans will filibuster that because they do not think we should spend money directly on food programs. Some don't, some do. We know the President has threatened to veto anything in the stimulus package that wasn't his idea.

There are few things in our country more important than making sure seniors, people who have worked all their lives, and children whose parents are working hard and playing by the rules and doing their best should be adequately fed and adequately housed. So I urge that this Congress, in the next couple days, amend the stimulus package to include this food assistance.

REVISED RULES OF THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 2, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I submit for publication in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the revised rules of the Committee on Finance for the 110th Congress, adopted by the committee on

January 30, 2008. I ask unanimous consent to have the rules printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

I. RULES OF PROCEDURE

(Adopted January 30, 2008)

Rule 1. *Regular Meeting Days.*—The regular meeting day of the committee shall be the second and fourth Tuesday of each month, except that if there be no business before the committee the regular meeting shall be omitted.

Rule 2. *Committee Meetings.*—(a) Except as provided by paragraph 3 of Rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate (relating to special meetings called by a majority of the committee) and subsection (b) of this rule, committee meetings, for the conduct of business, for the purpose of holding hearings, or for any other purpose, shall be called by the chairman after consultation with the ranking minority member. Members will be notified of committee meetings at least 48 hours in advance, unless the chairman determines that an emergency situation requires a meeting on shorter notice. The notification will include a written agenda together with materials prepared by the staff relating to that agenda. After the agenda for a committee meeting is published and distributed, no nongermane items may be brought up during that meeting unless at least two-thirds of the members present agree to consider those items.

(b) In the absence of the chairman, meetings of the committee may be called by the ranking majority member of the committee who is present, provided authority to call meetings has been delegated to such member by the chairman.

Rule 3. *Presiding Officer.*—(a) The chairman shall preside at all meetings and hearings of the committee except that in his absence the ranking majority member who is present at the meeting shall preside.

(b) Notwithstanding the rule prescribed by subsection (a) any member of the committee may preside over the conduct of a hearing.

Rule 4. *Quorums.*—(a) Except as provided in subsection (b) one-third of the membership of the committee, including not less than one member of the majority party and one member of the minority party, shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of business.

(b) Notwithstanding the rule prescribed by subsection (a), one member shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting a hearing.

Rule 5. *Reporting of Measures or Recommendations.*—No measure or recommendation shall be reported from the committee unless a majority of the committee is actually present and a majority of those present concur.

Rule 6. *Proxy Voting; Polling.*—(a) Except as provided by paragraph 7(a)(3) of Rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate (relating to limitation on use of proxy voting to report a measure or matter), members who are unable to be present may have their vote recorded by proxy.

(b) At the discretion of the committee, members who are unable to be present and whose vote has not been cast by proxy may be polled for the purpose of recording their vote on any rollcall taken by the committee.

Rule 7. *Order of Motions.*—When several motions are before the committee dealing with related or overlapping matters, the chairman may specify the order in which the motions shall be voted upon.

Rule 8. *Bringing a Matter to a Vote.*—If the chairman determines that a motion or