

given to GTM for donating the t-shirts and Cox Communications for their generous support. A quarter of a million dollars raised by K-State Proud over the course of 3-plus years emphasizes the enormous impact this campaign has had on K-State's student body. The results are real and undeniable.

K-State Proud allowed a student whose hometown of Greensburg, Kansas, which was destroyed by a tornado, to stay in school despite the enormous loss of life and property. K-State Proud provided support to a cancer survivor that would otherwise have had a difficult time completing a college degree. K-State Proud provides these financial awards while also providing the recipients with an emotional boost to overcome their struggles. Money is a necessity, but knowing that someone recognizes your pain and is there to support you is very powerful as well. This sense of community, that we're all in this together, has made K-State Proud a huge success. Some people worry about the future of our country. When I see the K-State Proud movement at work, I realize that there is a new crop of compassionate, principled leaders preparing themselves to better our State and our Nation.

K-State Proud has become a model for other universities searching for a way to unite their student bodies and communities. People familiar with K-State know how special this university is. It is only fitting that the rest of this country learns how special it is as well. I urge you to tune in to the basketball game this Saturday and witness this student body's commitment to each other.

I have used the word "proud" many times in these remarks. I'm the proud father of two current K-State students. I'm proud to be associated with such great ambassadors for our State. And I'm proud to be a Kansan. In this case I'm proud to be a K-State Kansan.

WOMEN FARMERS BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Equality for Women Farmers Act, a bill Congresswoman ANNA ESHOO of California and I have introduced. It aims to close an ugly chapter in our history and end a systematic legacy of discrimination at the Department of Agriculture.

Our bill provides a process for women farmers who have experienced discrimination to make claims against a compensation fund appropriated by the Congress. It requires USDA to institute the much-needed reforms that will end this shameful gender discrimination in their loan system forever.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, there are approximately 300,000 women farm operators across the United States, which is over 17 percent of the family farmer population.

This is by far the largest group of minority farmers in the country, and their numbers are growing. And yet new census data recently revealed that women farmers have been consistently underreported by USDA over the past 15 years. Worse, it is estimated 43,000 women farmers have been discriminatorily denied more than \$4.6 billion in farm loans and loan services from the USDA over the years. In fact, by USDA's own reckoning, women have seen less than their fair share of loans in every single State in the country.

Like male farmers, tens of thousands of women have gone to local offices of the Farm Security Administration over the years to file loan applications and ask for this government's help in sustaining their family farms. But there the differences often end. Many women have been told that money or applications had run out even though men seem to be finding them with no trouble at all. Others were told to return to the loan office with their fathers or husbands or brothers so that the men could file the applications on their behalf. Still others were told that "farming is not for women" or saw their applications filed in the trash right before their eyes. Some were even subjected to crude and horrible advances by loan administrators who demanded a sexual quid pro quo in return for approving their loans. This is simply not right. It is beneath us and it must end.

To his credit, Secretary Vilsack has initiated a task force to look into these and similar civil rights issues at USDA, but we also need to move here in the Congress and quickly, if nothing else so that these women can get the resources that they now need to preserve their family farms in this troubling economy.

Unfortunately, this subject of discrimination by USDA loan and credit officers is not a new one. In fact, only 2 years ago Congress was so moved by the lengthy history of discrimination and long-pending lawsuits brought by minority and socially disadvantaged farmers that we addressed the situation in the 2008 farm bill. That provision urged the Bush administration to settle those discrimination lawsuits brought by women and other minority farmers.

Just last week the Obama administration announced that it had reached an agreement to settle the remaining claims for African-American farmers who experienced similar discrimination. While I applaud the administration for recognizing the need to settle these important claims, I am dismayed that they did not come forth with a more comprehensive proposal to settle claims for women, Hispanic, and Native American farmers who have suffered similar prejudice.

It's time for us to own up to the mistreatment of women and other minority farmers as well. They have had to deal with needless, mindless discrimination as they have tried to preserve

their family farms. This Congress should grant them the compensation and the damages they are due.

What would the bill do? It establishes a compensation fund of \$4.6 billion for these farmers. It sets up a Special Master in the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service to process, review, and adjudicate their claims. The Special Master will award eligible claimants who were denied loan applications or whose applications were not acted upon \$5,000 in damages.

For eligible claimants who were denied farm loans, loan benefits, or loan servicing, whose damages are presumably greater than those denied applications, the Special Master may also award additional damages based upon the application of a formula described in the legislation.

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For those who will seek to apply for loans and loan management in the future, the legislation will ensure that their requests are finally considered equally with all others. This is a matter of fundamental fairness. And action cannot come soon enough for these women who have suffered under these discriminatory practices. So please join me in being part of this solution. We can help make whole these women who have suffered so much, and we can make USDA a better resource for our nation's family farmers for generations to come, regardless of their gender, race or origin.

From our earliest days, the small family farm has been considered the bedrock of this nation, the font of its virtue and its citizenship. "Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God," wrote Thomas Jefferson, "if ever He had a chosen people." Our Founding Fathers strongly believed our government should be there to help America's family farmers, not to undermine them at every turn.

As such, it is time to do right by all of these family farmers that have been discriminated against in our past and present. And I invite my colleagues to join with us to reach a solution to settle these discriminatory claims. It is time to live up to our founding principles, to do right by our family farmers no matter what their race or sex, and to legislate an end to this unfortunate and regrettable era.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE ABSURDITY OF STIMULUS PROJECTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. We keep hearing about how great the trillion-dollar stimulus bill was and how well it has worked. It has been 1 year or so, so lest we forget, let's see where some of that stimulus money got spent.

In Buffalo, New York, the State university got about \$400,000 to study the effects of drinking malt liquor while smoking pot. For 3 weeks, 100 people are paid \$45 a day of taxpayer money to drink malt liquor and smoke a little marijuana—this party stupor paid for by Americans throughout the country.

Taxpayers are footing the bill for other parties, like the one in Boca Raton, Florida. But this one is not for people, this one is for lab mice. That is right, Atlantic University is getting about \$15,000 for two summer researchers to measure how alcohol affects a mouse's motor functions. I wonder where the PETA people are on this one. Now, do these drunk lab mice count as jobs saved or jobs created? We don't know.

We are not through. In Nebraska, we are funding another wasteful bridge project. First we had the Cornhusker Kickback, and now Americans are sending \$7 million to Thelford, Nebraska, to build a bridge. That doesn't sound so bad, but this \$7 million bridge is so 168 people don't have to wait so long to cross a railroad track. Sounds like we are wasting money. By the way, that is \$43,000 per person waiting for that train.

And the U.S. Forest Service is getting \$2.8 million in stimulus money to spend on wildfire management in Washington, D.C. But the problem is Washington, D.C. doesn't have a national forest. But that doesn't make any difference to the bureaucrats. In Washington, you don't need a forest to get wildfire management funds; you just need out-of-control spending.

The Florida Department of Transportation, and this is my favorite one of all, is spending \$3.4 million in stimulus funds to build a turtle tunnel in Tallahassee. A turtle tunnel in Tallahassee, Florida; \$3.4 million. That is about four times as much money as the average working American will earn in their entire life. But the stimulus slush fund is doling out \$3.4 million for the turtle tunnel for turtles to cross the highway. Before we had a stimulus bill, Mr. Speaker, how did the turtle cross the road? For that money we could get the turtles limos to cross that street.

The Picher Housing Authority in Oklahoma, here is another one, received \$135,000 in stimulus money to remodel homes and businesses at the Tar Creek Superfund site. The most obvious problem with that scenario is the Tar Creek Superfund site is scheduled to be destroyed. It is going to be remodeled and then destroyed. Only the Federal Government would spend taxpayer money to fix up a home and then a few years later pay to tear it down.

Mr. Speaker, this whole philosophy of the stimulus project and fiasco is a flawed premise. It is the idea that we

can take taxpayer money and give it to the government, and then the government can decide how special folks, special projects will get that money and spend that money for government make-work programs. See, these aren't real jobs; these are jobs that the taxpayers have to pay for, jobs that aren't permanent, that will eventually go away.

Real jobs are not created by Uncle Sam. Real jobs are created by the private sector. We call those people small business communities. And they can make real jobs where other taxpayers don't have to pay for those jobs. And that is when more businesses have more of their own money, rather than paying taxes to the Federal Government so the government can decide which special friends throughout the government to get this stimulus money.

Mr. Speaker, the American people are fed up with this insanity. They are telling Washington stop the spending. They are saying no, stop the spending. Stop the wasteful projects. Stop the fraud, stop the abuse. Stop borrowing money. We don't have the money for all these projects, so we borrow it. And of course we borrow it from our friends, the Chinese. Sixty percent of our debt is owned by the Chinese. And of course someday there is going to be a day of reckoning. We are going to have to pay back that money. And that will be paid back in the form of taxes or it will be paid back by people yet to be born.

The White House seems to want to spend the people into the poor house, mortgage off their homes, the mineral rights, and then pay for this massive spending bill.

And that's just the way it is.

PROBLEMS WITH THE REPUBLICAN HEALTH CARE PLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, after more than 70 years of false starts on fixing health care, the Congress is on the brink of passing sensible, comprehensive reform legislation. We are extremely close to giving all Americans access to quality, affordable health care, while reducing the deficit. After a year of trying to instill fear in the American public about the Democratic approach to fixing our broken health care system, my Republican colleagues have really entered the debate. I commend my colleague from Wisconsin for putting forward the Republican plan.

The sweeping Republican bill lets the public know where their party truly stands. Their bill would radically reorganize both the health care system and the Social Security system. Once again, they want to spend more time hating government than helping people.

The Republicans want to give the seniors a voucher. A voucher government. If you qualify, you get a little check and then you are on your own to deal with the insurance companies and Wall Street. The Republicans wish the American people the best of luck. If you aren't lucky enough to outsmart Wall Street and the insurance executives with the rules stacked against you, well, that's too bad.

Under the Republican plan, you will likely end up sick and poor, but they think you will love the free market choices you have had on the way down. Sadly, the Republican plan is filled with the same old policies to dismantle Medicare and Social Security that they have been putting forward for decades.

To understand the clear difference between the different approaches, let's look at health care. Health care is big, and a complex part of our economy, and it needs thoughtful and common-sense approaches. Instead, the Republicans have put forward a plan that would put more Americans at risk, drive millions into bankruptcy, lock in the skyrocketing costs, and enrich the insurance companies. In the Republican plan, insurance companies could get richer while Americans get poorer and sicker.

The Republican approach to health care has two parts. First, the Republicans would give American seniors a voucher for health care and do nothing to keep the insurance companies from taking them to the cleaners. The Republican plan would essentially do away with the Medicare program as we know it today, which many seniors rely on.

The hypocrisy of the Republican plan is maddening. They say one thing and do another approach is really reprehensible. The Republicans not only want to dismantle Medicare, but at the same time they denounce the Democratic plans to stop wasteful spending in the program.

The second part of the Republican plan puts health savings accounts at the center of the program. Health savings accounts have existed for years. These accounts are small, and history shows that many Americans underfund them or can't use them. When illness strikes, any significant co-payment or deductible can wipe out a family's savings in a minute.

Finally, the Republican plan does more to take our health care system down the road to ruin. It goes another step and privatizes Social Security. After the Wall Street meltdown, the crazy lesson the Republicans learned was to trust Wall Street with the future of our seniors.

This week we learned that by 2019, national health care spending will be over 19 percent of our economy. That is \$4.5 trillion. If we don't act to control those costs now, people will no longer be able to afford the essentials like housing and food. When the public has to deal with the market to satisfy basic needs, the government has to