

as Americans during that Olympic period will join us on this floor of Congress as we seek to form a more perfect Union.

FARM BILL

(Mr. BERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BERG. Madam Speaker, last night the House Agriculture Committee finished its work on the farm bill, late last night, and I applaud Chairman LUCAS and Ranking Member PETERSON for their work. I rise today to call for full consideration of the farm bill before the House.

Agriculture is the backbone of North Dakota, and North Dakota farmers and ranchers deserve the stability and certainty that a long-term reauthorized farm bill would provide.

With the farm bill passing through committee with bipartisan support, including strong crop insurance, now is the time for the full House to act on it. I urge my colleagues to join with me and work together to get this bipartisan farm bill passed.

HONORING PRISCILLA DEWEY HOUGHTON

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, Priscilla Dewey Houghton, beloved wife of our dear colleague of 18 years, Amo Houghton, passed away last Friday.

She was a playwright, a linguist, a poet who, together with Amo, formed a special type of power couple. Priscilla was intelligent, curious, and gracious. She was the perfect partner for Amo.

While her efforts 40 years ago led her to introduce children and adolescents to joy and creativity in Massachusetts, here in D.C., with Amo, she fought against rancor and mean spiritedness in our Nation's capital.

Priscilla was the first honorary member of the Congressional Bike Caucus. Cycling was significant to her because of an early bout with polio that left her bedridden for a year. Priscilla was a very special woman whose battle with adversity never slowed her down or dimmed her spirits.

Our hearts go out to Amo and her family and friends gathering for her memorial service in Boston this Saturday.

LIFE SAFETY EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR: MARSHA GIESLER

(Mrs. BIGGERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BIGGERT. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor Marsha Giesler, an Illinois native and a recipient of the 2012 National Fire Protection Associa-

tion's Fire and Life Safety Educator of the Year award.

Marsha serves as the Downers Grove Fire Department public information officer, and in that role she coordinates with emergency service personnel to provide Downers Grove residents with valuable, lifesaving information and safety-related materials. She is also assistant to the chief and a juvenile fire interventionist. To help others promote safety within their own communities, she published a 400-page reference book, "Fire and Life Safety Educator," the most easily accessible reference book of its kind.

Madam Speaker, Marsha Giesler's more than 20 years of excellent public service have demonstrated her commitment to keeping our community safe, and I want to commend Marsha for her leadership, her dedication, and her hard work.

NEW YORK STATE'S I-STOP LAW

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, yesterday New York State's Eric Schneiderman was in western New York to celebrate the passage of New York State's I-STOP law. This law uses online databases to connect doctors and pharmacists helping to combat the tragic prescription drug abuse epidemic.

I was pleased to join the effort by leading a bipartisan State delegation letter in support of this law. While there are many important players in the passage of this bill, I would like to especially congratulate Senator Tim Kennedy, Avi and Julie Israel for their efforts.

The passage of I-STOP raises awareness of the growing importance of integrating health information technology and electronic medical records into the field of health care.

Madam Speaker, I am hopeful that other States move to implement this and other electronic medical record technologies. This is a serious problem, and it is our responsibility to act swiftly.

□ 0910

GETTING SPECIFIC ON HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. HULTGREN. Madam Speaker, now that the health care law is out of the judicial process, it's back in the hands of the legislature. It's time to face the real consequences of this law.

This week, the Ways and Means Committee has started examining the tax effects. The Oversight Committee is looking at the impact on patients and doctors and on the economy. But in reality, we know what to expect. An average American family will see a \$1,200

increase in health care premiums after this law is fully in effect. More than 1 million Americans are at risk of losing their plan because their plan was denied a waiver. The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that we will see 800,000 fewer jobs by 2012. The law contains 22 new tax increases. And 9 in 10 seniors with retiree benefits will lose their retiree prescription drug coverage through their employers.

It's time to get specific with the American people about what this law means for them.

PROTECTING THE STUDENT LOAN INTEREST RATE

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Last Friday, President Obama signed into law a bipartisan compromise which extended a lower student interest rate of 3.4 percent. Incredibly, the ink was barely dry on that measure when the Romney campaign introduced their higher education plan, which would take us back to wasteful taxpayer subsidies to private student loan lenders.

This is what the conservative Cato Institute said about that proposal:

A meaningless change from a college affordability standpoint. Obviously, it would have an effect for banks, who would be happy to go back to that. It was a great gig for them.

A Romney supporter at the new New America Foundation said on this issue:

On this issue, Romney is just ridiculous. His campaign staff doesn't have any new ideas. So they just said, Let's go back to what we were doing before the Obama administration.

For young Americans, the choice this fall is becoming clearer. We have a President who successfully challenged this Congress to protect the lower student loan interest rate, and his opponent, who is looking to take \$60 billion in taxpayer funds and give it away to special interests.

THE PULSE OF TEXAS: AVA

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, when I am back in southeast Texas, I hear from individuals and businesses who are concerned about how ObamaCare will affect them. Ava, a senior from Houston, tells me this:

I am a senior who is very concerned that I will lose the great health care that I am presently receiving under Medicare. I am pleased with my doctors and with my health care plan. At the present, I can afford it, and I am concerned I will not be able to in the future if ObamaCare goes completely through and that I might not get the care I need for the health issues I already have.

Seniors cannot afford ObamaCare, nor do they want it. Living on limited income today is hard enough without this new health care plan wanting more of my money. Seniors seem to be taking it on the chin tremendously on this issue.

Madam Speaker, Ava is right: ObamaCare is not good for seniors on Medicare. They will pay more for less care because of this expensive government takeover of America's health.

And that's just the way it is.

FOOD SHOULD BE OUT OF THE CONVERSATION

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. One of the most significant congressional accomplishments in 1965 was to create a program whereby American citizens could have the opportunity for nutritious foods. The SNAP program allows 46 million Americans to avoid being hungry. The benefits go to deserving individuals. Fifteen percent are elderly; 20 percent are disabled. The average gross monthly income for a food stamp household is \$731. The average net income is \$336.

Now we see an effort to roll back these benefits to these vulnerable populations. The Ryan House budget calls for \$35 billion in cuts. The Lucas-Peterson plan marked up last night calls for \$16 billion. That will result in 3 million Americans losing basic nutrition.

Madam Speaker, this proposal will hurt real people and literally take food off of their table. It's wrong, it's immoral, and it's irresponsible to take food away from deserving American citizens to balance a budget that is unbalanced because of reckless policies that have benefited the rich.

I urge my colleagues to develop a balanced approach to deficit reduction, to include cuts and new revenue. But food should be out of the conversation.

NATIONAL STRATEGIC AND CRITICAL MINERALS PRODUCTION ACT OF 2012

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extra-neous material on the bill, H.R. 4402.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 726 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 4402.

The Chair appoints the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 0915

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the

consideration of the bill (H.R. 4402) to require the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to more efficiently develop domestic sources of the minerals and mineral materials of strategic and critical importance to United States economic and national security and manufacturing competitiveness, with Mrs. CAPITO in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, the United States of America is rarely last at anything. Unfortunately, that is not the case when it comes to permitting mining projects. In 2012, the U.S. was ranked dead last, along with Papua New Guinea, out of 25 major mining companies on the pace of mining permitting. Now I can't speak for Papua New Guinea, but the reason the U.S. is so slow to issue new mining permits is simple: government bureaucracy.

Burdensome red tape, duplicative reviews, frivolous lawsuits, and onerous regulations can hold up new mining projects for more than a decade. These unnecessary delays cost Americans jobs as we become more and more dependent on foreign countries for raw ingredients to fuel manufacturing and our economy. The lack of American-produced strategic and critical minerals are prime examples of how America has regulated itself into 100 percent dependence on at least 19 unique elements.

Rare Earth elements, a special subset of strategic and critical minerals, are often used as core components for the manufacturing of everything from national security systems to consumer electronics to medical equipment to renewable energy components and everyday household items. Even though America has a plentiful supply of rare Earth elements, our negative approach to producing these crucial materials has resulted in China producing 97 percent of the world's rare Earth elements. Just like the United States' dependence on foreign oil causes pain at the pump, Americans will soon feel the impact of China's monopoly on the rare Earth element market. Those impacts will be felt when they need a CAT scan or they want to buy a new computer for their small business or purchase an iPhone or install solar panels on their roof.

H.R. 4402, the National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act, introduced by our colleague from Nevada (Mr. AMODEI) will help to end this foreign dependence by streamlining government red tape that blocks strategic and critical mineral production. First and foremost, this is a jobs bill, and

the positive impact of this bill's intent will extend beyond the mining industry. For every metals mining job created, an estimated 2.2 additional jobs are generated. And for every nonmetal mining job created, another 1.6 jobs are created. This legislation gives the opportunity for American manufacturers, for small business technology companies, and construction firms to use American resources to help make the products that are essential for our everyday lives, and in the process this will put Americans back to work.

As China continues to tighten global supplies of rare Earth elements, we should respond with an American mineral mining renaissance that will bring mining and manufacturing jobs back to the United States. The National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act will help supply our national security, high-tech, health care, agriculture, construction, communications, and energy industries with homemade American materials. This bill is the latest example of House Republicans' commitment to and focus on American job creation. The House has passed over 30 job creation bills that still sit in the Senate, where their leaders, unfortunately, refuse to take any action.

□ 0920

This includes several bills from the Natural Resources Committee to increase production of our all-of-the-above energy resources and to protect our public access to public land.

H.R. 4402 will enable new American mineral production. We must act now to cut the government red tape that is stopping American mineral production that furthers our dependence on foreign minerals.

So I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" for this underlying legislation; and with that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARKEY. I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

It is really quite fitting that the Republican-controlled House of Representatives is taking up a bill today to weaken environmental regulations for the hard rock mining industry. Because just last night the Republican candidate for President held a lavish \$25,000-a-plate fundraising dinner out in Montana. For those who don't know, the Daly mansion where that event was held was owned by a famous guy, Marcus Daly, was one of the three "copper kings" of Montana during the Gilded Age. He was infamous for his epic battles with other robber barons for control over the copper industry in Montana and around the country.

In fact, the Supreme Court's recent 5-4 decision to invalidate the Montana election law of 1912 overturned a law that was originally enacted to respond to the very excesses of mining barons like Marcus Daly.

So here we are out here on the House floor embracing the Gilded Age. But here in the Republican House, we are