

we will eventually get there—and I thank the chair for her strong leadership. The fact that we are discussing this bill on the floor of the Senate right now is a testament to it.

This Nation has a diverse fabric of agriculture with a variety of risks, and writing a farm bill that serves as a safety net for all crops and regions is no easy task. Yet, this is a responsibility we must embrace to ensure that the United States continues to have the safest, most reliable, and most affordable supply of food and fiber in the world.

Our Nation is at a crossroads and we are in desperate need of fiscal discipline. I am pleased that this farm bill includes important reforms, reduces spending by more than is required of this committee, and eliminates duplicative or obsolete government programs to ensure that we are getting the most out of every dollar we invest in agriculture.

The Forestry title contains important improvements that will benefit Arkansas's forestry industry. The improvements to the USDA Bio-based Markets program in the managers' package will allow forest products to be included in the program. The current USDA Bio-based markets program favors foreign products over our American forest products, which puts American workers at a disadvantage. So I am happy with the progress on this issue, and I appreciate the effort to promote and purchase our renewable, home-grown products.

Crop insurance also contains some improvements, and the provisions for irrigated and non-irrigated enterprise units, supplemental coverage options, and yield plugs will help many producers who may have otherwise been left unprotected by the elimination of direct payments and the counter-cyclical program.

At the same time, this is not a perfect bill and I have serious concerns about the Commodity title and the impact it will have on southern producers and the planting decisions they make. I also have concerns about some missed opportunities in terms of eliminating waste and abuse in the Nutrition title.

The Commodity title, as it is currently written, will have a devastating impact on southern agriculture which relies heavily on irrigation and, therefore, benefits less from crop insurance. Furthermore, the new revenue plan is designed to augment crop insurance, so this new program leaves gaping holes in the Southern Safety Net. Even with a reference price, this revenue plan may not be strong enough for our farmers to get operating loans. For example, most estimates find that rice would lose more than 70 percent of its baseline, far more than their fair share. However, this is not about just one crop. Every farmer in America knows the real threat of multi-year price declines, and we need a Commodity title that treats all crops and regions fairly.

I am very concerned that this proposal is couched in the assumption

that we will continue to have these high commodity prices. A revenue plan is attractive when prices are high, but I am not sure there is anything in this plan that protects producers from a multi-year price decline and an untested, one-size-fits-all program, with no producer choice could leave many producers vulnerable.

Throughout this process, I have said that anything that goes too far in any direction can violate the core principles of this effort. I am afraid that this Commodity title does that in its current form.

It is my opinion that we could have done more to eliminate waste and abuse in the Nutrition title and ensure that we are getting the most out of these investments and that they are, in fact, going to the neediest among us. We should fully close the LIHEAP loophole, which artificially inflates benefits for SNAP recipients, and there are other things we can do to save money without reducing benefits and reinvest in other critical nutrition areas and deficit reduction. When we tell Americans that we cannot find more than \$4 billion in savings from programs that account for nearly 80 percent of all agriculture spending, I can not think that they would believe we are trying hard enough.

But just because there is not full agreement, does not mean that our farmers stop needing a safety net. I am committed to continuing the fight for a safety net that works not just for Arkansans—but for all farmers, of all crops, in all regions of the country. With a responsible producer choice, I believe we can build the consensus necessary to usher a farm bill through the entire legislative process and see it signed into law this year.

We can do this while preserving the safety net, making reforms, and achieving deficit reduction. I am confident that we can craft a bill that we are all proud of, and I look forward to continuing to work with the chair, ranking member, and all the members of Congress and seeing this through.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

AUTO MANUFACTURING

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, people in my home State of Ohio know how to make things. We know how to make big things. For decades, Ohio has been a national leader in auto production, in chemicals, in steel, in concrete, in aluminum, and in the aerospace industry and food processing. Now we are a leader in solar power, in wind turbine components and batteries and all the kinds of things that really create middle-class jobs and help us lead the world in manufacturing production. Ohio is the third leading manufacturing State in the country. We make more in Ohio than any State but

California, three times our population, and Texas, twice our population.

What Ohio perhaps is best known for in production is the auto industry. The auto rescue did not just save the U.S. auto industry 3, 3½, 4 years ago, it saved thousands of auto-related jobs in Ohio. Estimates are that some 850,000 jobs in Ohio—a State of 11 million people, only smaller than the Presiding Officer's home State of Pennsylvania—that 800-plus thousand jobs in Ohio are related to the auto industry. It is clear from the auto rescue that the President, the Senate, and the House supported that it saved tens of thousands and created tens of thousands of those jobs.

New data shows manufacturing is at the forefront of the economic recovery, with factories adding 250,000 jobs since early 2010—the first sustained increase in manufacturing employment since 1997.

From 1965 until the late 1990s, America had about the same number of manufacturing jobs in the late nineties as it did in the midsixties—a smaller percent of the workforce, a smaller percent of GDP, but a pretty constant number of manufacturing jobs, with some ups and downs, obviously, during that period. But from 2000 to 2010, during that philosophy of trade agreements that ultimately cost us jobs, tax cuts and tax policy that contributed to outsourcing jobs, and an economic policy of “trickle down” during the Bush years—from 2000 to 2010, America lost one-third, more than 5 million manufacturing jobs. One out of three manufacturing jobs disappeared during those 10 years from 2000 to 2010.

Thousands of factories closed, never to be reopened, as jobs were outsourced, as jobs left our country. But since 2010, almost every single month in Ohio and across the country we see manufacturing jobs increasing. The auto industry has led the rebound, with more than 20,000 jobs at General Motors and Chrysler saved or created thanks to the 2009 auto rescue, and thousands more were saved or created in the auto supply chain.

Too many Ohioans are struggling. Many are still looking for work, while others have seen their wages cut or their hours reduced.

There are also important signs of recovery at our manufacturers, auto suppliers, and small businesses. Just 4 years ago the auto industry, many people thought, was faltering and imploding. But look where we are today. As a result of the auto rescue, we are seeing a healthy turnaround. The Toledo Supplier Park employs 1900 people. The GM assembly and stamping plant in Lordstown employs some 4,500 Ohioans. GM Powertrain in Defiance is home to some 1,200 workers. Following the auto rescue, these facilities all created new jobs due to increased demand.

Some Members of Congress were willing to bail out Wall Street without so much as asking for reasonable executive compensation restrictions on

banks that received taxpayer help but then attacked middle-class auto workers. Bonuses and huge salaries have continued unabated for far too many Wall Street executives. Yet some of my colleagues have said that auto workers' retirement—union and nonunion retirement—and health care and wages were simply too much. Let's be clear. Ohio would be in a depression if these naysayers had their way and let the auto industry collapse or let it "go bankrupt." It was about rescuing middle-class workers, and it was about fueling the next generation of U.S. automakers and auto manufacturing.

Ohio is home to an almost completely Ohio-made automobile, the Chevy Cruze. Its engine was made in Defiance, the transmission in Toledo, the sound system in Springboro, the steel in Middletown, the underpinning steel in Cleveland, and the aluminum wheels in Cleveland. The car is stamped in Parma, OH. The Chevy Cruze is assembled in Youngstown, OH. The Jeep Wrangler had only 50 percent America-made components 4 years ago. The Jeep Wrangler and the Jeep Liberty are assembled in Toledo, now made with more than 70 percent U.S.-made parts.

When things looked bleak and when nobody wanted to stand with workers or auto companies, we didn't give up on American auto companies or American manufacturing. The decision wasn't popular, and there were clearly some naysayers. But it was the right thing to do.

Our work is far from over. In particular, we have to keep our foot on the gas pedal and fight back against China's unfair trade practices and other new threats to our auto industry. Our trade deficit in auto parts with China—the parts that are obviously used, that you buy at various retail operations to fix your car when something goes wrong—grew from about \$1 billion 10 years ago to about \$10 billion today, fed by unfair subsidies, currency manipulation, and illegal dumping of Chinese products. This is an unlevel, tilted playing field that will cost hundreds of thousands of jobs.

My China currency manipulation bill—the biggest bipartisan jobs bill to have passed the Senate this session—costing taxpayers zero, would level the playing field for American manufacturers when China tries to cheat by manipulating its currency. A recently released report shows that addressing Chinese currency manipulation could support the creation of hundreds of thousands of American jobs—without adding a dime to the deficit. It is time to take bold action and stand up to China, and it is time to put American workers and businesses first. We did it in 2008 and 2009. The Presiding Officer played a role in that, as did so many in this body. We can do it again if our colleagues in the other Chamber take up this currency bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may speak as in morning business.

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

ARREST OF JORGE LUIS GARCIA "ANTUNEZ"

PEREZ

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I come to the floor outraged that following a hearing that I held as chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee of the Foreign Relations Committee entitled "The Path to Freedom: Countering Repression and Supporting Civil Society in Cuba," after testimony from Cuba of Jorge Luis Garcia Perez, known as "Antunez"—and this is a picture taken from that video feed—he was taken into custody by the Castro regime this weekend, arrested, and beaten unconscious.

This is the account of his wife, Yris Tamara Perez Aguilera, who provided this account to Radio Republic, an independent radio station in Miami that she was able to call so that she could denounce what was taking place and let the world know what was happening. Here is the exact statement that she gave the radio station:

My name is Yris Tamara Perez Aguilera, wife of Jorge Luis Garcia Perez Antunez, a former political prisoner—

—a former political prisoner who spent 17 years of his life in Castro's prison simply because of his peaceful pro-democracy action.

This Saturday, June 9, my husband, together with Loreto Hernandez Garcia and Jonniel Rodriguez Riverol, after a brutal beating by the part of the political police—[that is State security]—were transferred to the precinct here in Placeta. All this occurred around 3:30 in the afternoon.

After this, at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, we—Yaite Cruz Sosa, Dora Perez Correa, Arturo Conde Zamora, and myself, Yris Tamara Perez Aguilera, left for the police precinct to bring my husband clothing since he was taken away in shorts, since he stepped outside [of his home] to call Damaris Moya Portieles, who was currently on hunger strike. After leaving about one block away from my house, I was intercepted by a police officer, who arrested me where I was once again beaten by Police Officer Isachi, ordered by the Chief of Confrontation of the municipality of Placetax, better known as Corporal Pantera.

I was handcuffed and driven to the police precinct. Upon arriving to the precinct, once again Officer Isachi, one of the main oppressors here in Placetax—[that is a town in Cuba]—of the ill-named National Revolutionary Police, strikes my head very strongly, where once again my cervical vertebrae was damaged.

At that point, the screams of my husband, Loreto, Jonniel, and the prisoners there who said, "Stop hitting her. Stop hitting her, you abusers; can't you see she's a woman?" Then a military garrison officer approached the cells where my husband and the other prisoners were pepper-sprayed. When they were pepper-sprayed, my husband lost consciousness due to lack of air. Thanks to the activist Yaite Cruz Sosa, whom stood nearby, emptied a bucket of water on his face and fanned him with a jacket until he regained consciousness.

My husband, arounds 7 p.m., cried from his cell, "Yris, they're taking me away, Yris, they're taking me away." I was not able to

speak because of the terrible headache from all the beatings I took to the head. He said to me, "The special brigade put me on a chain of prisoners to take me from the cell and place me on a bus; I don't know where they are taking me."

She goes on to say:

I am very worried about what may happen to my husband. He has heart problems, and that pepper spray, as many know, is toxic and may bring bad consequences since my husband has a blocked artery and vein, and I am afraid for his life. Furthermore, my husband is currently missing.

I don't know my husband's whereabouts. I was freed yesterday [Sunday, June 10, 2012] in the afternoon, and I was given no information as to where I could find my husband.

I lay the responsibility of what may happen to my husband on the government. I know they took reprisal against him for his participation in congress. In these moments, I am leaving for Santa Clara, and together with me, I have Yaite Cruz Sosa. I am going to the State Security Forces and they must tell me where I can find my husband so I can bring him his affairs.

That is the end of her statement.

Mr. Antunez spent 17 years of his life in Castro's jail simply for fomenting peaceful democracy efforts, an effort to create a civil society. We had asked him to testify before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Western Hemisphere Subcommittee's hearing on moving toward democracy in Cuba, and at personal risk he traversed from where he lives—a countryside—on foot to make it to the intrasection. We knew that his willingness to testify was a risk, and so we did not put his name on the committee's notice until he arrived at the intrasection, so that we then amended the notice to the public so that he could be safe because we knew that, as others we invited to testify who were stopped and could not make it to the hearing, that if we talked about Mr. Antunez coming before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee via a video feed, he would likely not make it.

He testified before the committee about the Castro regime's abuses and beatings. He told us that day—among many other things—before the hearing that he witnessed the death of Antonio Ruiz in the city of Santa Clara, where prodemocracy peaceful activists had gathered. He said:

I had to walk many kilometers behind trees and bushes, as if I was some type of criminal, to attend an event that in any other free and democratic country in the world would be an everyday occurrence.

He went on to say at the hearing that, at the very moment he was there testifying before us, an Afro-Cuban woman had been on a hunger strike for several days in Santa Clara because state security had threatened to sexually assault and rape her 6-year-old daughter as punishment for her prodemocracy actions.

This is the life inside of Castro's Cuba—not the romanticism some people talk about. This is the life of those who struggle as human rights activists and political dissidents simply to create a space for civil society inside of