



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 159

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, MAY 14, 2013

No. 67

House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WEBSTER of Florida).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 14, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DANIEL WEBSTER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2013, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

END HUNGER NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, this is farm bill week. Today, the Senate Agriculture Committee is marking up their version of the farm bill, and tomorrow the House Agriculture Committee will do the same. Although one bill is written by a Republican and the other is written by a Democrat, these two bills have one thing in common: they make hunger worse in America.

There are 50 million hungry Americans; 17 million are kids. Yet the Sen-

ate is going to mark up a bill that cuts over \$4 billion from SNAP, our Nation's main antihunger program. But that cut pales in comparison to the cuts included in H.R. 1947, the House farm bill.

Mr. Speaker, tomorrow we are going to mark up a farm bill that includes a \$20 billion cut in SNAP—\$20 billion. Mr. Speaker, at a time when we have 50 million hungry Americans, at a time when we have 17 million hungry kids, a Republican-led Congress is going to mark up a farm bill with \$20 billion cuts in SNAP.

Mr. Speaker, we were elected to solve problems and help people, not make things worse. We were elected to help make lives better. We were elected to do the right thing. Cutting SNAP, making it harder for hungry Americans to put food on their tables, is the wrong thing. Taking \$20 billion out of this program will do real harm to Americans who simply are trying to make ends meet.

Now, there are some in this House, some on the Agriculture Committee, who say this is about reducing error rates in the program, that this is good getting at fraud. Well, let me remind them that SNAP has one of the lowest error rates, in the Federal Government. That is something that we should be proud of, and it is something that we should celebrate.

Mr. Speaker, these cuts do not get at fraud. These cuts do not make the program more efficient. These cuts don't help reduce or end hunger in America. These cuts in this bill will make things worse. That's because the cuts in this bill will kick 2 million people off of SNAP. That's 2 million hungry Americans who currently rely on SNAP to help feed themselves and their families, and that's 2 million low-income Americans who are having trouble making ends meet.

These cuts will cause 850,000 households to see their SNAP benefit re-

duced by \$90 a month—\$90 a month. That's a big cut for poor families struggling to get by.

The cuts in this bill will cause 210,000 children to lose access to their free school meals. These 210,000 poor children currently receive free school meals because their parents can't afford to pay for their meals. But the cuts in this bill will result in 210,000 losing access to free school meals.

This bill even cuts the nutrition education program, a program that is designed to help educate SNAP beneficiaries about how to buy and prepare more nutritious foods. Imagine cutting this critical education program while obesity and access to unhealthy food is on the rise.

To put this in proper context, these cuts would come on top of an across-the-board cut in SNAP that every recipient will experience starting on November 1, 2013. Because SNAP has been used as an ATM to offset other worthy programs, a family of four will already be seeing their SNAP benefit cut by an average of \$25.

So, to recap, not only will we see automatic cuts in SNAP this November, the House farm bill will make things worse by cutting \$20 billion additionally from the program. This simply cannot stand.

Tomorrow, during the farm bill markup, I will offer an amendment that will restore these cuts. I hope that all my colleagues on the Agriculture Committee will vote for my amendment, and, if it fails, I hope they'll vote against the farm bill.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot just indiscriminately make hunger worse in the name of fiscal austerity. No, Mr. Speaker, we should look at these programs and ask ourselves: Are these programs working? Are they doing the job that they were designed to do? Are they succeeding or failing? And how can we make them work better? But that's not what we're doing.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

H2577

Do you know how many hearings we've had on SNAP in this Congress? Do you know how many the Agriculture Committee has held? None. That's right, the Agriculture Committee is about to cut \$20 billion from SNAP, and we haven't had one single hearing. Yet there are 20 new members of the Agriculture Committee in this Congress, 20 new members who deserve the right to learn about these issues, including the details of SNAP and the impact of these cuts.

Mr. Speaker, this is not how we should be approaching this program. We should be holding hearings; we should ask questions; we should be thoughtful; and we should look at the program in an honest way, and our goal should be to end hunger now. Unfortunately, this bill, as written, is more about protecting big agribusiness and corporate welfare than it is about protecting hungry Americans who need help today.

Mr. Speaker, we need to do something about hunger in America. I've urged the administration to host a White House conference on food and nutrition to come up with a plan to end hunger now. Hopefully, they will act on that soon. But for today and tomorrow, we must protect SNAP from needless, unnecessary, and harmful cuts. We must stand for the most vulnerable in our country, and we must end hunger now and not make it worse.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 6 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. STEWART) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: We give You thanks, O God, for giving us another day.

We ask Your blessing upon this assembly and upon all to whom the authority of government is given. Help them to meet their responsibilities, enlightened by Your eternal spirit.

We gather after celebrating Mother's Day. We thank You for the gift of self modeled by our mothers, who chose to place each of us before themselves in giving birth to us and nurturing us as we grew. May we all earn the pride of our mothers in the service we provide to the benefit of this Nation.

There are many serious issues confronting our Nation these days. May the truth be served and the Nation's interests be met in the proceedings of this day.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.
Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

OVERSIGHT IS A PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITY OF CONGRESS

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last week was very revealing about misstatements of truth from the White House. On Wednesday, the administration was heavily criticized as the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform held a hearing, led by Chairman DARRELL ISSA, to investigate the Benghazi terrorist attack. Additionally, on Friday, the IRS secret operation to target conservative groups was admitted after 3 years of denial.

Thomas Jefferson once said, "The whole art of government consists in the art of being honest."

As a congressional body, the Members of the United States House and Congress have an obligation to carry out oversight responsibilities. When situations arise where there is administration misconduct, we must pursue investigations to protect the American people. I look forward to working with my colleagues by demanding answers to the countless questions of intentional misrepresentations.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

SCOTTSBORO BOYS

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

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I applaud the Alabama Legislature's Scottsboro Boys Act, which granted posthumous pardons to eight African American young men wrongfully accused in Alabama in 1931. The Scottsboro Boys case profoundly impacted America's civil rights movement and American law.

In two different landmark decisions, the United States Supreme Court ruled that the Constitution requires legal counsel for criminal defendants and held that arbitrarily excluding African Americans from jury pools was unconstitutional.

It is never too late to call wrong by its name. As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., wrote in his "Letter from Birmingham Jail":

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

I pray that the families of Olen Montgomery, Haywood Patterson, Ozie Powell, Willie Roberson, Charlie Weems, Eugene Williams, and Andy and Roy Wright may take comfort in Alabama's full acknowledgement of the innocence of these wrongfully accused young men.

OBAMACARE'S THREAT

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

Mr. MULLIN. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today not only as a Member of Congress, but as a concerned business owner angered by the fact that ObamaCare may be putting my companies at financial risk. Currently, those businesses employ over 120 people in the State of Oklahoma. Because of the size of these companies, when ObamaCare is fully implemented, it will mean an immediate cost of over \$200,000 to that business.

I ran for Congress because I got fed up with the Federal Government becoming my biggest threat.

The President says he wants to grow the economy and encourage job creation, but in reality he is punishing those who are trying to thrive. As a business owner, you are penalized \$100,000 for hiring that 50th employee.

ObamaCare is the number one threat to businesses in Oklahoma and across this country. This week we'll vote to repeal this law, along with its harmful new mandates and tax hikes.

For the sake of this country's job creators, we must repeal ObamaCare. I urge my colleagues to join me and America in putting America back in business.

SECRETARY SEBELIUS CONTINUES TO VIOLATE CONGRESSIONAL AUTHORITY

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, the Constitution allows the Congress, specifically the House of Representatives, to hold the purse strings of the Federal Government—not the executive branch, not the Federal agencies.

This week, we've heard reports that the Secretary of Health and Human Services has been calling executives