

As vast reserves of oil are discovered and new technologies unlocked, energy security in this decade is well within our reach. The amount of oil that could be flowing to U.S. refineries in the Keystone XL represents nearly 50 percent of the oil that we currently import from the Middle East.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to sitting on two of the subcommittees that held hearings on this legislation, I have a long history of involvement with TransCanada and the Keystone pipeline as a former environmental regulator in North Dakota. From 2003 until my election to Congress last year, I carried the pipeline portfolio as one of three members of the North Dakota Public Service Commission.

As you might imagine, the oil and gas pipeline construction business is robust in my State, as the Bakken shale development has elevated North Dakota to the position of the number two producing State in the country.

One of the pipelines we sited while I was on the PSC was the original TransCanada Keystone pipeline. It carries over 500,000 barrels of crude from the Western Canadian Sedimentary Basin in Alberta to U.S. refineries in Illinois and Oklahoma.

The first 217 miles of this pipeline actually run through our State. It crosses the border in Cavalier County, North Dakota, and runs through seven more counties, crossing 600 landowners' land, two scenic rivers, and includes five pumping stations.

While not universally loved, I can tell you that not a single inch of this line in North Dakota required condemnation proceedings—not because I was such a great regulator, but because I represent such great citizens. Our citizens understand the value of energy security and the jobs that energy development creates, and that same sentiment exists in our Nation today.

The environmental safeguards we demanded on the Keystone are rigorous and appropriate. They've been tested and they work.

I toured the Keystone during construction and met many of the men and women, who were grateful for the good-paying jobs that built the line, and many other local restaurant and hotel proprietors, retailers, subcontractors who were happy to have the work and the business. The local officials and school administrators are grateful for the tax revenue that would not be there but for the Keystone pipeline, and, of course, the tax relief it provides local farmers, in addition to the easement payments, are a blessing.

Mr. Speaker, I've sited hundreds, maybe thousands of miles of oil pipelines that operate safely and efficiently throughout North Dakota, but none as thoroughly vetted and safe as the Keystone XL.

I've heard the arguments from my friends across the aisle who claim the Keystone only helps Canada and does nothing to the benefit of the United States. They also claim that the car-

bon footprint is too great. The fact of the matter is the Keystone has already signed up over 60,000 barrels of North Dakota crude and has the capacity for at least 100,000 barrels.

Today, 71 percent of North Dakota crude is shipped by rail. Now, I have nothing against trains, but rail oil costs more and is not as safe as pipelines. It also requires trucks to get the oil to the train.

According to the director of the North Dakota Department of Mineral Resources, Lynn Helms, approval of the Keystone XL will cause two things to happen: 300 to 500 truckloads per day will be taken off North Dakota highways, and there will be one to two fewer trains leaving the State. He calculates that greenhouse gas emissions from rail are 1.8 times and trucks 2.9 times greater than the emissions from pipeline transportation, and spills from truck transportation occur at three to four times the rate of spills from pipelines.

Approval of the Keystone will result in 450,000 to 950,000 kilograms per day less in greenhouse gas emissions in North Dakota alone, as well as significant decreases in dust, and 60 to 80 fewer spills per year.

North Dakota officials also expect highway fatalities will be reduced by three to six per year, and injury crashes by 85 to 150 annually if the Keystone XL is built.

Mr. Speaker, America's national security and America's economic security are tied directly to America's energy security, and the Keystone XL pipeline is a critical weapon in that security.

END HUNGER NOW

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

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today for the 12th time this year to talk about the need to end hunger now.

I am honored to serve on the House Agriculture Committee, and last week the committee held a markup on H.R. 1947, the farm bill. I believe we need a farm bill that contains a smart, forward-thinking policy, a farm bill that ensures that farmers are able to make a living, a farm bill that benefits the American economy, a farm bill that ensures that the food grown in America makes it to the plates of every American, and a farm bill that isn't rife with fraud, waste, and abuse.

The good news, Mr. Speaker, is that a component of that smart, forward-thinking policy already exists. It's called SNAP. This program ensures that 47 million people out of the 50 million hungry in this country are able to put at least some food on their tables when they otherwise couldn't do so. This program ensures that the food grown on our farms makes it to every American's table, not just the wealthy few.

SNAP provides an economic catalyst because the SNAP benefit is spent in our local grocery stores and farmers' markets, generating jobs and revenue. Indeed, every SNAP dollar results in \$1.72 in economic activity—an amazing return on our investment. And SNAP has one of the lowest error rates of any Federal program.

But H.R. 1947 would undermine all of this. It cuts \$20.5 billion from the program. That cut means that 2 million people would be kicked off of SNAP entirely. It means that 210,000 kids would be kicked off the free school meal program. It means that 850,000 people will see their SNAP benefits cut by \$90 a month, and this is on top of a \$25 a month cut for a family of four that will already take effect in November no matter what happens to the farm bill.

You know, there was a time not so long ago when solving the problem of hunger in America was a bipartisan priority. Former Senators George McGovern and Bob Dole worked tirelessly in the 1970s to make America hunger-free. Their partnership brought us to the point where we nearly eradicated hunger altogether. And I will insert at the end of my remarks an op-ed from yesterday's New York Times highlighting this bipartisan work.

Mr. Speaker, the problem today is that it has become far too fashionable in this House of Representatives to beat up on the poor. In fact, there is now a bipartisan effort to cut hunger programs. I'm sad to say that even some Democrats are willing to support this farm bill, even with these terrible SNAP cuts. Instead of moving forward together, we are moving backward.

Mr. Speaker, the farm bill, with these SNAP cuts, is a bad piece of legislation. It's bad policy. It deserves to be defeated. Whatever good may be in this bill—from increased access to organic foods, to more humane treatment for animals, to increased job creation in agriculture—it is not an understatement to say that this bill will make hunger worse in America.

For the life of me, I do not understand why we should be forced to choose between cutting access to food and providing jobs for our ailing economy. We can and we should achieve the joint mission of ending hunger now and creating jobs together. They are very much connected and should not be pitted against each other. But that's exactly what the farm bill would do—to the tune of \$20.5 billion.

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We should end hunger now, not make hunger worse. We need a comprehensive effort to end hunger now. We need Presidential leadership. We need a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. And we need a Congress determined to address hunger in America and bring it to an end, not make it worse.

Hunger in America is a political condition. Nothing demonstrates that more than this farm bill. We have

enough food to end hunger now; we just don't have the political will to do so. This effort to cut SNAP—to make hunger worse—must not stand.

I hope my colleagues will join me in restoring these senseless cuts. Should that effort fail, I hope my colleagues will join me in defeating the farm bill when it is considered on the House floor. We can and we must do better.

[From The New York Times, May 20, 2013]

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN ENDING HUNGER WAS A NATIONAL GOAL FOR REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS

(By Dorothy Samuels)

"That hunger and malnutrition should persist in a land such as ours is embarrassing and intolerable." So declared Richard Nixon in May 1969 in his now widely forgotten "Special Message to the Congress Recommending a Program to End Hunger in America." In that document, he summoned the country to a new level of generosity and concern and laid out a series of strong legislative steps and executive actions, including a significant expansion of the food-stamps program.

While campaigning for the White House in 1968, Mr. Nixon did not focus on the existence of a serious hunger problem. His conversion came as public calls to do something about hunger rose—driven, in part, by Senator Robert Kennedy's highly publicized trip to Mississippi in 1967 where he encountered nearly starving children and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s focus on hunger as part of the Poor People's Campaign.

During the '70s, another Republican leader, Senator Bob Dole of Kansas, forged a partnership with George McGovern, the South Dakota Democrat defeated by Mr. Nixon in 1972. They helped pass legislation to improve the accessibility and antifraud provisions of the food-stamps program. For example, it eliminated a requirement that recipients buy food-stamp coupons, a prohibitive burden for the lowest-income Americans.

That kind of dedicated bipartisan commitment to ending hunger was light-years ago in American politics—before President Ronald Reagan and, later, Speaker Newt Gingrich made attacking food stamps a prime Republican obsession, and certainly before moderate Republicans, a disappearing breed, lived in fear of making any move that might provoke a primary challenge from a Tea Party-supported candidate. The modern food-stamps program, built with Republican and Democratic support, succeeded in eliminating the most extreme pockets of hunger in parts of the country.

Today, the program remains an immensely important source of support for low-income families and children living below or near the poverty line. Still, some 50 million Americans live in households that cannot consistently afford enough food, even with the food-stamps program, now formally called the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP.

Come November, temporary increases for food-stamp aid approved in the 2009 economic recovery act are scheduled to expire, which would result in a loss of about \$25 in monthly food stamps for a family of four. If anything, Washington should be allocating more money to address tremendous unmet needs.

Yet, every Republican on the House Agriculture Committee voted to approve an omnibus farm bill containing a \$20 billion cut in food stamps over the next decade in the program's \$800 billion or so 10-year budget. While less devastating than turning the program into a capped block grant to the states,

which the House Republicans have previously endorsed, the cut is nearly five times the reduction approved by the Democratic-controlled Senate Agriculture Committee, which already is too much.

The House bill's cuts would end food-stamp assistance for nearly two million people, with the pain falling mainly on low-income working families with kids and older Americans, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. And as many as 210,000 children would lose access to free school lunches and breakfasts because eligibility for those meals is tied to their family's receipt of food-stamp benefits.

"It is just not right," said Representative Jim McGovern, a Massachusetts Democrat (no relation to George McGovern) before his amendment to strike the cut was defeated. Not a single Republican voted to approve it.

A MORE SECURE ENERGY FUTURE IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, again and again we have heard from this President and this administration that we need to embrace an "all-of-the-above" approach when it comes to meeting and supplying our country's energy needs. At the end of the day, this has simply turned into a "none-of-the-above" strategy of failure by this administration.

Mr. Speaker, this is not complicated. Approving construction of the Keystone XL pipeline is the first and easiest step that we can take in order to embrace our energy future immediately, build jobs, and gain economic security.

The application to build the Keystone XL pipeline has been gaining dust at the U.S. State Department for more than 4 years awaiting approval. Each subsequent day that decision isn't made further denies this country greater energy security and the creation of over half a million jobs by 2035.

By the State Department's own calculations, the number of potential jobs through construction alone stands at over 42,000. With the unemployment rate being above 7.5 percent for 4 of the years that the Presidential permit has been pending, this just economically is irresponsible.

With over 15,500 pages already produced in its National Environmental Policy Act review over the past 4½ years, under the President's schedule, we must still wait for yet another report and even more pages to determine whether construction of the pipeline would be in the "national interest."

At any moment, the President could step in and immediately order approval of the pipeline, yet he continues to sit idly by while more and more people, including a majority of the general public and even members of his own party, come out in support of the XL pipeline.

Mr. Speaker, it is beyond a reasonable doubt that creating thousands of jobs and providing the American people more sources of oil by approving this

infrastructure project that costs the American taxpayers no money is definitely in the national interest. So what are we waiting for?

Today, the House of Representatives will take up H.R. 3, the Northern Route Approval Act, which will approve the Keystone XL construction application without a Presidential permit and let the American people know that we will not wait around any longer. At the end of the day, this crude will find its way to foreign markets one way or another, and construction of this pipeline will guarantee our access to it and help secure energy independence in North America.

Today, the average price for a gallon of gas in America is around \$3.60, which is nearly \$2 more than when President Obama first took office. As the summer driving season approaches, that historically threatens to bring even higher gas prices for American families and businesses. Ensuring that every environmentally safe source of oil is available in order to maintain an adequate domestic supply is absolutely vital.

Because the President, yet again, refuses to act on an issue of such great importance for the Nation, this Congress will lead by sending a clear message to the families of this great Nation that we stand with you, we stand with jobs, and we stand for a more secure energy future here in America.

MEMORIAL DAY

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, this week-end throughout America, in cemeteries across the land, we will celebrate and memorialize those men and women who have served, who are serving, and those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in giving their lives to protect our Nation's freedoms embodied in our Constitution and our Bill of Rights that we hold most dear. While Memorial Day is a time when family and friends gather to be together, we know it is much more than that.

This Memorial Day, we should all give thanks to the sacrifices that our men and women have made who have served in our Nation's military. We should say thanks to our family members, to our neighbors, to all those who have served, and we must always, always remember those who are no longer with us. We in our country, I believe, can never say thank you enough, for this great country we live in is made dear for all of those who have made those sacrifices over 238 years.

So this weekend, as we gather across the land to be with our families and friends, let us pay thanks, let us take evidence of what it means to be an American, knowing that at the end of the day the bonds that we share in common as American citizens are much stronger than whatever differences we may have.

God bless those who are serving and those that have served and those who