

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, the House just passed the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act which will protect the unborn from some heinous conduct by certain physicians. I know I have good colleagues. There are good citizens on both sides of the abortion issue, and they are heartfelt. But a free, honest, and caring society cannot, at any term, tolerate the conduct by the physician in Philadelphia and those like him who would create the most savage, barbaric abortion methods to take the life of children that were 20 weeks or older.

This bill goes a long way toward addressing that cruelty that we cannot let stand in this country. I'm proud of my colleagues who voted for it this evening, and I appreciate the passage of this bill.

FARRM ACT WILL SERVE AMERICA WELL

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

Mr. ROONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the 2013 FARRM Bill, which will help ensure a safe, affordable, and abundant food supply for all Americans. I represent one of the largest agricultural districts east of the Mississippi, and I'm proud to represent Florida's dairy and vegetable farmers, citrus and sugar growers, and beef cattle ranchers. This bill will serve them well, and it will serve Florida's taxpayers well, too.

The FARRM Bill includes much-needed reforms to agricultural programs. It provides relief from unnecessary Federal mandates. It saves the taxpayers \$35 billion and reduces the size of government by eliminating or consolidating more than 100 programs.

In particular, I am pleased that this bill addresses the growing problem in my district of citrus disease. Diseases like greening have already wiped out over one-quarter of the citrus acreage in Florida. If we don't reverse this trend soon, we won't have enough crop to sustain our existing processing plants, and the problem will only spiral from there. Florida will lose jobs and our economy will suffer. But this will impact all Americans, because if Florida isn't growing oranges, you won't be putting orange juice on your breakfast table.

Mr. Speaker, if we want to have a safe, abundant, and affordable food supply, we need to pass the FARRM Bill.

□ 1900

DREDGING OUR NATION'S SMALL PORTS

(Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the issue of dredging our Nation's small ports, a critical issue for hard-

working folks in Washington State, southwest Washington, in particular, in Wahkiakum County, Chinook, Ilwaco and other parts of my district.

This is a job issue in my region and for those along waterways throughout our Nation. The issue is this: ports are lifelines to several towns and communities across the Columbia River and the Pacific Coast in my district, and they are literally being choked off by lack of maintenance dredging.

One of my local newspapers, the Chinook Observer, commented, if a farmer were unable to ship his wheat because a road became impassable within our Federal highway system, the Federal Government would rightly fix this issue immediately.

It is no different for the dire circumstances facing our Nation's navigable waterways. We need to address this issue as soon as possible.

As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I've taken action in search of a swift solution. And thankfully, the committee included \$1 billion out of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund for dredging and maintenance of waterways in our Energy and Water Development appropriations bill.

We must maintain our Nation's maritime ports.

END HUNGER NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this time to address my colleagues about one of the most important issues that we face in this country, and that is hunger.

We have a problem in the United States of America, I'm sad to say, where we have 50 million of our fellow citizens who are hungry; 17 million are kids. This is the case in the richest, most powerful Nation on the planet.

We should be ashamed of ourselves. Food is not a luxury. It is a necessity, and everybody in this country ought to have a right to food, and that should not even be controversial.

Yet, we have a FARRM Bill that we will begin debating tomorrow that cuts SNAP, which used to be the food stamp program. It cuts it by \$20.5 billion. That's billion with a B.

What does that mean?

It means that 2 million people who currently receive the benefit today, tomorrow will lose it. It means that over 200,000 kids who are eligible for free breakfast and lunch at school today will lose that benefit tomorrow.

Those aren't my numbers. Those aren't the numbers of some liberal think tank. Those are the numbers by the Congressional Budget Office, CBO. They say that if the FARRM Bill passes, and if those numbers stay in, 2 million of our fellow citizens will lose their food benefit.

Mr. Speaker, I find that unconscionable. We are trying to emerge from one of the worst economic recessions in our history. Record job losses over the last few years. We've had people of all backgrounds lose their jobs, find themselves working now in jobs that don't pay very much, struggling, trying to keep their families afloat.

And one of the lifelines during this difficult economic time has been the SNAP program. It has enabled many families to be able to put food on the table.

You can't use SNAP to buy a flat-screen TV. You can't use SNAP to buy a car. You can only use SNAP to buy food. That's what this is all about.

And in the FARRM Bill, for whatever reason, it was decided that, rather than looking for savings in the crop insurance program, which we know is rife with abuse, rather than looking for savings in some of these special kind of giveaways to agribusinesses, these sweetheart deals, rather than trying to find savings there to put toward balancing our budget, it was decided to go after, almost exclusively, this one program, SNAP.

Mr. Speaker, I heard up in the Rules Committee, during our consideration of the amendments today, people, a number of people say, well, all we're doing is eliminating categorical eligibility.

A lot of people don't know what categorical eligibility is. A lot of people who are supporting these cuts don't know what categorical eligibility is.

Basically, this was a Republican idea to kind of streamline a lot of bureaucracy and paperwork at the State level. So if you qualified for welfare, then you would automatically be enrolled in the SNAP program. It doesn't mean you would automatically get a benefit. It means you would be enrolled in the program, and if you qualified for the benefit, you would get it.

It was kind of one-stop shopping for people who were poor, for people who found themselves experiencing a difficult situation.

It has saved States lots and lots and lots of money. It has made it easier for people, during these economic difficulties, to be able to get the benefits that, quite frankly, they're entitled to.

And so when you eliminate categorical eligibility, what do you do you put an extra burden on States. States will end up having to pay more for additional bureaucracy. There'll be more paperwork. There'll be more confusion.

The other thing that happens when you get rid of categorical eligibility is that you will make it more difficult for people who are eligible to get the benefit and, therefore, many people who are still experiencing tough times, who are eligible for a food benefit, will not be able to get it.

Mr. Speaker, this used to be a bipartisan issue. And I remember, during the 2008 farm bill, you know, one of the things that saved that farm bill was the food and nutrition part of the farm bill. Congresswoman ROSA DELAURIO,

whom I'll yield to in a few minutes, working with then-Speaker NANCY PELOSI, and I was happy to play a little bit of a role in it, helped fight to up the nutrition program in the farm bill in 2008.

As a result of that, we were able to pass a farm bill. And as a result of that, we were able to help millions and millions and millions of families. That's a good thing.

But, for whatever reason, in 2013, programs that help poor people have become controversial. My Republican friends have diminished and demeaned this program called SNAP. They have diminished the struggle of poor people.

I said in the Rules Committee today, I reminded my colleagues in the Rules Committee today that the average food stamp benefit, the average SNAP benefit is \$1.50 a meal, \$1.50 a meal, and \$4.50 a day. That's like one of those fancy Starbucks coffees. That's what this is.

This is not some overly generous benefit. This is not even an adequate benefit, quite frankly. But in some cases it is a lifeline for many families. That's what it is.

A number of us, over this last week, have been trying to dramatize the fact that this is a modest benefit, so we have lived on a food stamp budget for this last week. I've got two more days to go, but I've lived on \$1.50 a meal, \$4.50 a day. It's hard.

It's hard to be poor. It's hard to shop when you're poor. It's hard to plan meals when you're poor. Given the opportunity between being poor or being able to be self-sustaining, to be able to buy whatever food you want, whenever you want it, you would prefer the latter. Nobody enjoys being on this benefit.

Some of my friends say that this creates a culture of dependency. Well, I remind those people who think that that there are millions and millions and millions and millions of people in this country who work for a living who earn so little that they still qualify for SNAP. They rely on SNAP to put food on the table.

And by the way, that's not enough, so they go to food banks and food pantries to be able to add to their ability to be able to put food on the tables for their families.

In 1968, there was a CBS documentary entitled "Hunger in America," and it created quite a stir, because a lot of people in this country looked the other way and didn't realize that hunger was as bad as it was.

George McGovern, a liberal Democrat from South Dakota, and Robert Dole, a conservative Republican from Kansas, got together and helped create the food stamp program, now known as SNAP, helped create WIC, helped expand school meals for kids in schools, made sure that poor kids had access to meals during the summer.

They worked in a bipartisan way, and proudly, in a bipartisan way, doing what they could to make sure that no-

body in this country went hungry. And in the late 1970s, by the late 1970s, we almost eliminated hunger in America. I mean, this kind of bipartisan coalition produced incredible results that almost eliminated hunger in this country.

And then in the 1980s we started taking steps backwards, and today we have 50 million of our fellow citizens who are hungry.

I would say to my friends who are thinking about how to vote on this FARRM Bill, you know, we should not have to choose between a good and adequate nutrition part of the FARRM Bill and good and adequate farm programs. They should go together.

□ 1910

In fact, the only thing you can buy with SNAP is food, so who benefits from food purchases? Well, farmers grow food, so farmers benefit from those purchases. So they're not separate and distinct. In fact, they're very, very much related. And this marriage between nutrition and farm programs has resulted in the passage of many important farm bills over the years. But for whatever reason, we find ourselves in a situation where that kind of coalition is breaking apart, and I regret that very, very much.

I want a farm bill. I represent a lot of agriculture in my part of Massachusetts. But I want a farm bill. I want a good farm bill. But I'm not going to vote for a farm bill that makes hunger worse in America. That's not the legacy I think we want to have here in this Congress. I think what we want to be able to do is to tell our constituents that we passed a good farm bill that not only helps our farmers but also helps people who are struggling.

There is nothing wrong—in fact, there is everything right—about our dedication to helping the least fortunate among us. Those who have said that, well, we don't want to be known as the food stamp Congress, I would respond to them as follows: I am proud to live in a country that has a social safety net. I am proud to live in a country where we don't let people starve. I am proud to live in a country that has programs like SNAP, like WIC and like school feeding to make sure that our citizens have enough to eat. Why is that all of a sudden controversial?

I'm going to tell you that SNAP is not a perfect program. Yes, there has been some abuse in the program to be sure. And to the credit of USDA and Secretary of Agriculture Vilsack, under his leadership, there has been a concerted effort to go after those who abuse the program. Anybody who abuses this program, in my opinion, ought to have the book thrown at them. These are taxpayer dollars going to support a program to help people get enough to eat. And when people abuse the program or misuse it, we ought to throw the full extent of the law at them. They ought to be fined and, in some cases, even arrested when they abuse taxpayer dollars.

But I will also say to my colleagues that SNAP, according to the General Accountability Office and according to a whole bunch of other studies, has one of the lowest error rates of any Federal program. I only wish some of the mis-sile programs under our Pentagon's jurisdiction had as low an error rate and had as low a record of abuse of taxpayer dollars as the SNAP program has.

This is a good program. This is a good program. It can be better, and we should make it better. But let me say this: if you want to make it better, then maybe what we ought to have done in the Agriculture Committee is actually have a hearing. When people say that there are reforms in the FARRM Bill with regard to SNAP, I kind of cringe because how did you get to that number? How did you get to this so-called "reform" when there wasn't a single hearing in the Subcommittee on Nutrition? There wasn't a single hearing in the full Committee on Agriculture.

It is important that we make this program as perfect as it possibly can be. It is important that we try to make sure that every bit of abuse and fraud is taken away from this program, but there's a right way to do it. We deliberate. That's what we're supposed to do in Congress. You hold hearings, you listen to all different sides, you listen to how you can improve the program, and then we come together and we make those improvements.

But we ought to also understand that we need a larger discussion in this country on how to end hunger. We need to understand, as we debate the FARRM Bill, that SNAP is one tool in the anti-hunger toolbox. It doesn't solve everything. It doesn't solve everything. What it is is one program to help alleviate hunger. What we need, and I've called for, is the President of the United States to bring us all together under the auspices of a White House Conference on Food and Nutrition. Let's talk about this issue holistically. Let's take on some of these big issues of how do you end hunger in America.

Let's deal with that. And in convening such a summit, the President could bring all the different agencies in our Federal Government that have a piece of the pie in terms of battling hunger in America because not all of these programs fall into one agency. They fall into multiple agencies. Let's bring them all together. Let's figure out how we can better connect the dots. Let's call in our State and local governments. Let's call in businesses, the philanthropic community, our hospitals, our schools and our nutritionists. Let's call in our food banks, our food pantries and all the NGOs that have been out there struggling to end hunger for decades. Let's get everybody in a room together and lock the door until we have a plan.

If you want to end hunger, the first thing is you ought to have a plan. We

in this country, quite frankly, do not have a plan. So until we get to that point where we get a plan, what we ought not to do is take away from these programs that at this point do help alleviate hunger. We ought not to undercut the importance of SNAP. We ought not to throw 2 million more people off the program and hundreds of thousands of kids off free breakfast or lunch programs.

What do we do? I asked a question when I was reading the CBO numbers about how many people would lose their benefits. My question is, Where do these people go? What do they do? What do they do without a food benefit? Do they just show up at food banks, 2 million more people just show up at food banks? Talk to your local food banks. Talk to your local food pantries. They're at capacity. They can't take any more people. This notion that somehow charity will just pick up all the slack is a bunch of nonsense. Talk to the charities. Talk to the churches. Talk to the synagogues. Talk to the mosques. Talk to the food banks and food pantries. They can't handle what they're dealing with right now.

Just one final thing, and then I'm going to yield to my colleague from Connecticut. I also want my colleagues to understand another thing. Over the years, we have used SNAP as kind of an ATM machine to pay for other programs. As a result, come November of this year, if we cut nothing else, if we cut nothing else, people's benefits are going to go down. The average family of three will lose about \$25 to \$30 a month. That may not seem like a lot of money to some of my colleagues here in Congress, but \$25 or \$35 a month might be a week's worth of groceries. It might be what keeps somebody afloat for a week. It is a big deal to somebody who is in poverty, and we ought not to diminish that. We ought not to diminish that.

I'd also say that it really troubles me when I hear people demonize these programs and again diminish the struggle of those who need to take advantage of these programs. Listening to some of my colleagues testify before the Rules Committee today, you would think that our entire Federal deficit and our debt is all because we have programs like SNAP. They are wrong. They are wrong. SNAP didn't cause the debt that we have right now. What caused the debt are two unpaid-for wars that are in the trillions of dollars, tax cuts for wealthy people that weren't paid for, a Medicare prescription drug bill that wasn't paid for, and bad economic policies. Not this. Not this. This is a safety net; and it's a safety net that, yes, can be improved, but it's a safety net.

One of the things that we in Congress are supposed to be focused on is how we help people, help people who are in need. Donald Trump doesn't need our help. He's got all the money in the world. He's fine. But there are lots of

people who don't live on Wall Street, but who live on Main Street who are just holding on by their fingertips, who, in some cases, their Sundays are spent trying to figure out how to just put food on the table for their families. There is not a congressional district in America—not a single one—that is hunger-free. There is not a community in America that is hunger-free.

□ 1920

If you've ever met a child who is hungry, it breaks your heart. And it just shouldn't be. It just shouldn't be. We are a better country than that.

So rather than going after this program, rather than going after WIC and SNAP and programs to help poor people put food on the table, we ought to be talking about the larger question about how to end hunger now.

Having said that, let me yield some time to my colleague from Connecticut, who's been a leader on this issue and who, in 2008, helped boost up the nutrition components of the farm bill, which made it a better farm bill and helped millions of people. So I yield to Congresswoman ROSA DELAURO.

Ms. DELAURO. I want to thank my colleague, Congressman MCGOVERN.

And I want to say a thank you to you. You have been steadfast and courageous on this issue. I know the strong and personal relationship that you had with Senator McGovern, who, with every fiber of his being, was devoted to making sure that both in the United States domestically and overseas that people, and particularly children, had enough to eat. And I think it was so special that he partnered with Bob Dole of Kansas.

When you take a look at the federally commissioned report that you spoke about, when you take a look at the people who were involved, the strength of that commission on hunger in America was its bipartisanship. Since this effort has begun, Members of both sides of the aisle have focused on this as a substantial problem. Therefore, as a Nation, we have to come together to try to address it.

Unfortunately today, in the environment, in the atmosphere, in this body, in this institution, in the Congress, there seems to be not much view that this is a problem and one that we have the opportunity, the capacity, and the ability to do something about. What we lack, as you've said so often in the past, is the will, the political will to do something.

We are highlighting tonight the severe, the immoral cuts made to antihunger and nutrition programs, particularly the food stamp program in the House FARRM Bill. Again, as you pointed out, millions of families are struggling in this economy.

We've had the worst recession since the Great Depression, and people are trying to survive. We're looking at an unemployment rate that is 7.5 percent. We are looking at incomes which are

not increasing, but wages that are decreasing. Why we would pick this moment really to throw more people into poverty?

You can take a look at all kinds of statistics, and I'll quote some in a few minutes, that talk about the food stamp program and how it has kept people from falling into poverty and how it has kept kids from going hungry. And we would choose this moment to increase that poverty number and to say to children and disabled and seniors, I'm sorry, you're on your own. That's what this is about. It is immoral.

You know, you talked about the 50 million Americans—almost 17 million children—suffer with hunger right now. It's a problem across the country.

You talk about my district, the Third District of Connecticut. Connecticut, statistically, is the richest State in the Nation. We have a very affluent portion of the State, which is known as Fairfield County, sometimes referred to as the "Gold Coast." Lots of people on Wall Street come to live in Fairfield County in Connecticut. Yet, in my congressional district, the Third District, one out of seven go to bed hungry at night. They don't know where their next meal is coming from.

One out of seven individuals nationwide take part in the food stamp program. People today who never thought they would have to rely on food stamps are having to do so because they lost their job, they lost their income, and they're looking for a way to feed their families.

I was at the Christian Cornerstone Church in Milford, Connecticut, just a few days ago. A young woman, Penny Davis, she was working, taking care of herself, taking care of her family. She lost her job. She didn't think much about it. She would get another job. She hasn't been able to get another job in this economy. In the meantime, in the interim, she's become separated from her husband. She is now responsible for herself and her family.

She didn't know what she was going to do. She called on the Christian Cornerstone Church. She called on the food bank to help her, to see what she could do. She spoke eloquently about wanting to work and not being able to find a job. So today she has accessed a program that she never thought she would have to use—the food stamp program.

Why can't we be there to help people bridge that gap? Because the genius of this program is that, in difficult times, the numbers of participants go up, but when the economy gets better, those numbers come down. And the numbers are coming down. So why, at this moment, would we jeopardize these folks' livelihoods, their well-being, and their ability to eat and to feed their families?

We've got a wonderful, wonderful phrase these days that we use about people being "food insecure." Plain and simple—and you know this, Congressman MCGOVERN—this is people being

hungry. They're hungry. It makes you feel good to talk about food insecurity, but it's hunger. I talked about my district, but let's take a look.

Mississippi, 24.5 percent suffer food hardship. They're hungry. Nearly one in four people. West Virginia and Kentucky, that dropped to just over 22 percent, one in five. In Ohio, nearly 20 percent. California, just over 19 percent. The estimates of Americans at risk of going hungry here in the land of plenty are appalling, and we have a moral responsibility to do something about this.

Our key Federal food security programs become all the more important at this time, which, as you know and I know and so many others know, it is true of the food stamp program. It is the country's most important effort to deal with hunger here at home, and it ensures that American families can put food on the table—47 million Americans, half are kids.

This is about helping low-income children's health and development, reducing hunger in America, and continuing to have an influence so that those youngsters can have positive influences and opportunity into adulthood.

You stated it. Food stamps has one of the lowest error rates of any government program at 3.8 percent. I was upstairs at that Rules Committee meeting as well. You know, I loved the discussion about program integrity. Many, many times in the Agriculture Appropriations Committee, where I did serve as chairman for a while—I'm still a member of the committee, probably 16, 18 years on that committee—program integrity. Let's cut back on the waste, the fraud, and the abuse. The only programs that get debated in those efforts are WIC, food stamps, other nutrition programs. No one bothers to take a look at the defense bill. No one bothers to take a look within the FARRM Bill of other instances of waste, fraud, and abuse.

□ 1930

We believe in program integrity for every program in the Federal Government, not just one or two or pick out the programs that you don't like and focus in on them.

I sat on the Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture for the last 16 or 17 years. I chaired that Appropriations Subcommittee. I was part of a conference committee on the farm bill in 2008. In fact, as you've heard me say in the past, appropriators don't usually get onto a conference committee. But the then-speaker, NANCY PELOSI, appointed me there, particularly for the nutrition issues. Some of the conferees were a little nervous. As I've said, they thought I was some sort of invasive species in this context.

We worked hard on that farm bill. You know it because you worked hard on it. We said it was a safety net, and it is a safety net. The farm bill is a safety net, but it is a safety net for

American farmers and for American families. We need to have that safety net. With then-Speaker PELOSI's strong support and leadership we passed a farm bill. We supported nutrition and antihunger programs. We made investments in the programs that targeted specialty crops and organic production. We were there and we voted for that bill.

I am for a farm bill, but that's not the case this time around. It's a different set of circumstances and a different environment, which is why, like you, I cannot support this farm bill.

The changes that you talk about, in addition to the \$20 billion in cuts to beneficiaries, you talk about the eligibility program and the tool that States use to streamline the administration of the program; went back years in working this system out. They would unravel all of that.

Then they would like to talk about the food stamp program and the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program. They are two separate issues—categorical eligibility and the tie with food stamps and the LIHEAP program, the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program. They'll say that if you get LIHEAP, then you're automatically on the food stamp program. That's not true. You have to qualify. I want to get to a couple of points that talk about qualifying and what people are forced to qualify and those who are not forced to qualify for the benefits that they receive in this farm bill.

It's important I think to note that we were able to get funding for the food stamp program in the Economic Recovery Program. You worked hard at that, I worked hard at that, the chair of the Appropriations Committee at that time, Mr. Obey, fought for those dollars. That has come to an end, the Economic Recovery Program.

Come the beginning of the next fiscal year every single recipient of food stamps will see it is \$37—we got confirmation—\$37 a month in a cut. What's happening in this farm bill will only add on.

It is important to note that our colleagues will say: Well, we have a deficit and we are going to use this money and we are going to pay down the deficit. Very interesting to know. In the past 30 years, every major deficit reduction package signed into law on a bipartisan basis was negotiated on the principle of not increasing poverty or inequality in deficit reduction.

Simpson-Bowles, the latest iteration of a deficit reduction package which so many people said went too far in changing the aspects of the social safety net, did not cut the food stamp program to achieve its deficit reduction. We need to follow this bipartisan effort in the same way that we did in these instances on deficit reduction and follow that bipartisan road, the same way we did in the recognition of the problem and the willingness to do something about it.

I've got two other points. You may hear from some that the direct pay-

ments—they'll say, well, we're cutting direct payments in the farm bill, and that the bill also makes very real reforms to the crop support programs. The bill finally ended direct payments, saving about \$47 billion over 10 years. The commodity title of the bill only says that they're saving \$18.6 billion. Why? Why the differential?

Because the rest of those savings are being plowed back into the commodity support programs. It creates a brand new program, which is called a "price loss program," to protect these commodities if prices change. In essence, that safety net is working for farmers. I don't begrudge that. If you want to provide a safety net for farmers, fine.

But where's the safety net, where's the safety net for the benefits of the food stamp program? They're not there. The food stamp beneficiaries have nowhere else to go, as you pointed out, nowhere else to go in the farm bill to be made whole. Those who were receiving direct payments, they're going to be held harmless, if you will, through crop insurance and a new program, a shallow loss protection program that protects them if the commodity prices begin to fluctuate.

Where is the protection for the food stamp beneficiaries? It's not there. The only people who are going to lose benefits are the most vulnerable in our society today. It's wrong and, again, it's immoral.

The bill, as I said, expands the crop insurance program. I think it is important for people to understand that crop insurance—again, safety net, useful, good concept, very good, I wish it applied to our part of the country as it does to other parts of the country—but I don't know that the American taxpayers know this about the crop insurance program: taxpayers, U.S. taxpayers, foot the bill for over 60 percent of the premiums for beneficiaries, plus U.S. taxpayers pick up the tab on administrative and operating costs for the private companies that sell the plan, including multinational corporations, some of whom trace back to companies in tax havens. Switzerland, Australia, Ireland, Bermuda, that's where these companies have their headquarters, so they're making out like bandits. We pick up the tab, they don't pay their fair share of taxes in the United States. It really is quite incredible.

You and I talked about, Congressman MCGOVERN, that \$4.50—there's an income threshold, there's a cap on the amount of money they can receive on the assets that they hold. This program on crop insurance where 26 individuals received at least \$1 million in a subsidy, at least \$1 million, they're protected statutorily and we can't find out who they are. We don't know who they are. They have no income test, no cap, no income threshold, no asset test that they go through. They just get the money—they get the money. Do you know what? They're eating and they're eating more, more than three squares a

day I bet, but not our kids, not our kids.

□ 1940

Our kids are going to bed hungry, and this program, by the way, does not even require the minimum conservation practices that other farm programs have on the books. It is pretty extraordinary when you think about a family of four when you have to qualify for this program for eligibility. It is at less than 130 percent of poverty, which means that a family of four has to live on \$2,200 a month. As for our colleagues in this institution who are taking the food stamp challenge and doing it for a week—some may do it less, and some may do it more—do you know what? They're not doing it every single day with their kids.

There are serious problems with this FARRM bill. There really are very, very serious problems, and they need to be addressed. It should never have come out of the committee with \$20 billion in cuts—never. It shouldn't have happened. I might also add that the President, as my colleague knows, has issued a veto threat primarily because of the food stamp cuts.

There are just a couple of quotes that I think are important.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops said last year:

We must form a circle of protection around programs that serve the poor and the vulnerable in our Nation and throughout the world.

Catholic leaders last month wrote:

Congress should support access to adequate and nutritious food for those in need and oppose attempts to weaken or restructure these programs that would result in reduced benefits to hungry people.

We received a letter today asking us and asking Representatives—my God, there must be 80 or 90 organizations, probably over 100 organizations, that are saying don't do this, including the bulk of the medical profession. We've got Bread for the World, Children's HealthWatch, the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, First Focus, Network, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Public Health Association, Share Our Strength, and the list goes on.

Harry Truman said:

Nothing is more important in our national life than the welfare of our children, and proper nourishment comes first in attaining this welfare.

I will close with the piece that was put out today by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities:

New research shows that the food stamp program is the most effective program pushing against the steep rise in extreme poverty. One reason the SNAP program is so effective in fighting extreme poverty is that it focuses its benefits on many of the poorest households. Roughly 91 percent of monthly SNAP benefits go to households below the poverty line, and 55 percent go to households below half the poverty line. That's about \$9,800 for a family of three. One in five SNAP households lives on a cash income of less than \$2 per person a day.

Earlier in the article, it reads that the World Bank defines poverty in de-

veloping nations as households with children who live on \$2 or less per person per day.

This is the United States of America. This is not a debate about process. It is not a debate about deficit reduction. It's not about politics. This is a debate about our values and our priorities in this great Nation. Let's go back to the days of George McGovern and Bob Dole and of those who came forward to say, There are those in this country who are starving. There are those who are without food.

We sit in the most deliberative body in the world. We can do something about it. Let's do something about it.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I thank my colleague from Connecticut for her eloquent remarks. I think tomorrow, hopefully, we can do something about it. I will have an amendment, I hope, if the Rules Committee makes it in order, to restore the SNAP cuts, to reverse the \$22.5 billion worth of cuts. Members on both sides of the aisle will have an opportunity to vote up or down on it. I think how we vote on that is a statement of our values and whether we think that government has a role and, indeed, whether our community has a role to be there for the least among us.

I tell people all the time that hunger is a political condition. You can't find anybody in this place who is pro-hunger or who at least will admit it, but somehow the political will doesn't exist to end this scourge once and for all. We can end it. The maddening thing about this problem is that it is solvable. When people say to me, Well, we can't spend any more money, my response is, The cost of hunger is so astronomical that we need to figure out a way to end it. If that means spending a little bit more in the short term to help extend ladders of opportunity for people to be able to get out of poverty, then we ought to do it.

Hunger costs. I mean, kids who go to school who are hungry don't learn. They can't concentrate. They don't learn. Senior citizens who can't afford their medications and their food and who take their medications on empty stomachs end up in emergency wards. One of the pediatricians at Boston Medical Center told me about young children who have gone without food for periods of time who end up getting something that is nothing more than a common cold, but their immune systems are so compromised that they end up spending several days in the hospital.

So if you're not moved by the moral imperative to end this problem, then you ought to be moved by the bottom line, which is that it costs us a lot of money to not solve this problem.

There was this great film that just came out a couple of months ago called, "The Place at the Table." Two great young filmmakers—Kristi Jacobson and Lori Silverbush—directed this film. It documents hunger in urban, rural, and suburban America. It

shows the face of hunger in America— young, middle-aged, old. I mean, it is there and it is heartbreaking.

We brought up to our Democratic Caucus in a meeting a few weeks ago some SNAP alumni, people who grew up and were on food stamps and who came back to say thank you for investing in them, for helping them get through a difficult time. Many of them now are doctors and lawyers and engineers and professors and have been very successful in paying back much more than we invested in them.

We want success stories. This place, this Congress, should be about lifting people up, not telling us how bad things have to be, not telling us that we have to put people down in order to move forward—trample over people—because that's what we do when we cut programs like this. We ought to be thinking big and bold about "how do you end hunger?" and "how do you end poverty in this country?" There is a way to do it. We saw what happened in the 1970s with George McGovern and Robert Dole. Things have obviously changed.

Let's perfect this program, but let's connect the dots so that we are creating a circle of protection that actually helps lift people out of poverty. I would like to think the goal of those of us on the Democratic side and the goals of those on the Republican side are to help people become self-sufficient—to succeed. That's what we want, but you are not helping people succeed when you take away food. That's what is at stake in this FARRM bill.

I know the gentlelady agrees with me, and I know she feels very strongly about this, but we will have an opportunity, hopefully tomorrow, to be able to have a debate and a vote up or down on whether we should cut this program in a very draconian way—to throw 2 million people off the benefit, hundreds of thousands of kids off free breakfasts and lunches. What happens to those people? What do we tell them to do—go to your local charity?

□ 1950

Ms. DELAURO. You were talking about the effect. It's about growth and development. There is wonderful material which we sent out to our colleagues from Dr. Deborah Frank, who talks about what happens to children. It isn't just concentrating, but it is their ability to grow, to develop, to be physically well. And the cost of dealing with what happens to the health issues only adds to our health care costs. I'm of the view that if you can't deal with humanity, let's deal with the economics of this. The studies are so clear about what happens with the absence of food, particularly with children.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I would say to the gentlelady that the points she raises are very important because the health of our children should be first and foremost, and we are now experiencing in this country a record level of obesity.

There is a tie-in between food security, hunger, and obesity.

People who are struggling in poverty do not have the resources to be able to buy nutritious food. Sometimes they live in food deserts and they rely basically on food items that just kind of fill them up with empty calories. So now we're dealing with that.

So if we looked at this issue holistically, we could solve a whole bunch of problems in this country. I'd like to think that there is a lot of bipartisan consensus on what we can do in ending hunger and promoting better nutrition and trying to build those ladders of opportunity to help people get out of poverty, perfecting these programs to go after the waste, to go after the abuse, to go after those who are outliers in this program who choose to try to basically rob the American taxpayer. Let's go after them, but let's not throw the baby out with the bathwater here. Let's not just turn our backs on the success stories.

Ms. DELAURO. I would just say this to the gentleman. The program has worked very hard, as you know, over the years to decrease that error rate in this program. I don't see the same concentration and the same effort in other programs.

And I mentioned here the crop insurance program. There's an article in the paper today that talks about the program is rife with fraud. Why aren't people interested in looking at that effort and the billions of dollars that we are losing every year? For the life of me, I don't understand it. People who view themselves as fiscal hawks, that we have to watch every dime and every dollar, they are only focused on nutrition programs and antihunger programs.

I think you may have alluded to this earlier, Congressman MCGOVERN. I think so many times that those who would cut these programs and do it in such a savage way just don't have much respect for the people who find themselves in a position to have to participate in the food stamp program. They think they're dogging it. They think they don't want to work, and they think they're looking for charity. It is such a misconception and a lack of understanding of the difficult economic times that people find themselves in today.

Sometimes we ought to walk in people's shoes and understand the lives that they're leading and what they're trying to do, like those of us here who believe we work hard and care and et cetera. People work hard. They care about their families. They want to make sure their kids are eating. Quite frankly, when it comes to feeding your kids, you'll do whatever you have to do in order to make that happen.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Let me say to the gentlelady that I couldn't agree more.

I've met with countless parents who have tearfully told me the anguish that they experience when they're not quite sure whether they'll be able to put food

on the table for their children's dinner or for their breakfast or for their lunch.

I'm the parent of two children, an 11-year-old daughter and a 15-year-old son. I can't imagine what it would be like to not be able to provide them food. I think as a parent nothing could be worse because your kids are your most precious and important things in your life.

This is for real. This is real life.

Ms. DELAURO. In Branford, Connecticut, a woman with three boys, 18, 14, and 12, said that they eat one meal a day. In Hamden, Connecticut, there's a woman who says that she has just enough food to feed her children, but she has to say "no" if they want to invite someone over. She said sometimes she feeds the boys a little bit more because they're hungrier than the girls. We've heard about this internationally where the girls get short shrift when it comes to both education and food. My God, it's happening here. It is happening here.

We have the obligation—and I know you take it seriously. Our colleagues need to have that sense of moral responsibility to turn this around and do something that's better, do the right thing. Say "no" to \$20 billion in cuts to the food stamp program.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I thank the gentlelady for her comments and for her passion and for her efforts on this issue.

I hope that my colleagues, in a bipartisan way, will indeed say "no" to these terrible cuts.

It's hard for me to believe that we're going down this road, that we're going down a road where 2 million people are going to lose their food benefits, hundreds of thousands of kids are going to lose their access to a free breakfast and lunch, and we're all just kind of saying, "It is what it is." Well, it isn't. This is a big deal.

I don't quite know why it's easier to pick on programs that help poor people versus programs that help rich people. You outlined earlier all these kind of little sweetheart deals and special interest kind of giveaways that kind of go untouched, such as how crop insurance oversight is not what we all think it should be. Yet a lot of times lucrative interests get those monies and get those benefits. Maybe there's a political consequence if you take on a powerful special interest. Maybe they won't show up to your fundraiser. Maybe they'll contribute to a super PAC and say that you're bad.

By contrast, poor people don't have a super lobby, don't have a super PAC. So maybe there's a debate going on of where will I get the most heat and not what is the right thing to do.

Ms. DELAURO. The most disingenuous thing is there are a number of people in this body who talk about this issue and themselves are getting subsidies and they have commodities or whatever it is. That's been information that's been in the paper. They will deny food stamps to families who have

no wherewithal, but they're taking in sometimes, in some cases, several million dollars in subsidies that are coming from the Federal Government. Then it's okay.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Where's the justice in that?

Ms. DELAURO. There is no justice in that.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I received a postcard from a young mother who is on SNAP and who is kind of watching this entire debate unfold. She sent a very simple message to me that said, "Don't let Congress starve families."

We should be about lifting people up. This is not about a handout. It's about a hand up. This is not about a culture of dependency. This is about making sure that there is an adequate safety net in this country to deal with people who have kind of fallen on hard times.

Ms. DELAURO. With farmers and with families.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Absolutely.

We want a farm bill that supports our farmers, that supports small- and medium-sized farmers in particular, that helps promote good nutrition, that helps deal with the challenges that farmers all across this country face, but it cannot sacrifice the well-being of some of the most vulnerable people in this country.

I thank the gentlelady for her participation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 2000

FATHERHOOD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, Father's Day was this past Sunday, and I am very thankful that I had an opportunity to spend some time with my father, with my sister and her family. Everybody was there. I had an opportunity to thank him for the role that he has meant and continues to mean in our lives, and to thank him for that. It was also an opportunity for my daughter and I to do something special for my husband.

But, you know, Father's Day also presents us with the great opportunity to focus on the importance of fathers in this country. The presence of a father has such a tremendous impact on the life of each and every child and adult in America. A father serves to provide a sense of protection, guidance, and above all, love for their child. Fathers also push their children to pursue their dreams and to never give up.

I think of my own father, Ted Zellmer, and the profound influence that he has had on my life. Not only has he taught me the meaning of hard work and dedication, but he has supported me throughout my entire life to where I am today, representing the