

"That oyster grows fast and it grows strong," said Mr. Leggett, who was in a position to see all sides of the argument. "It reaches market size in less than a year, so the whole industry was drooling over the thing. But it didn't belong in our bay." Introducing nonnative species has often led to unforeseen problems, like the proliferation of kudzu and the infamous "walking catfish" in the Southeast.

So Mr. Leggett, 58, became an activist for virginica farming. Although aquaculture was already well established in the Northeast and internationally, it hadn't caught on here, partly because the wild stock was so plentiful. Long after the beds up north ran out, baymen here were still pulling up enough oysters (along with blue crabs, striped bass and other valuable creatures) to make a living.

But eventually, Mr. Leggett couldn't support a family on his catch. "First the hard clams tanked, then the oysters tanked, then the crabs tanked," he said. "I could see which way the bay was going."

Mr. Leggett set up a demonstration oyster farm for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, and began to preach the advantages of aquaculture: the ability to sustain the supply, predict the harvest and control the quality of your catch by creating optimal growing conditions at each life stage. Oysters grow from tiny spat, the most juvenile stage, to market size of three inches, in about 18 months.

An oyster farm doesn't look much like a farm. The oysters grow in metal cages, eating the same food in exactly the same water as their wild counterparts. But they are groomed for market: brought into dock, sorted and tossed in a tumbler, then bagged for sale or returned to the water. The process gives each oyster room to grow a full "cup," which brings a premium price, and keeps the shells looking pretty.

It's a low-tech system, but it lets growers raise oysters for high-end restaurants the way farmers raise vegetables: with consistency in shape, size, texture and flavor; with careful handling from farm to table; and with an eye to beauty and shapeliness. Aquaculture has begun to turn the tide back toward virginicas. Last year, for instance, the take from the Chesapeake was about 400,000 bushels. Anderson's Neck, Choptank Sweets and Misty Points are just a few of the euphoric new oysters to hit the market, and Mr. Leggett's own York Rivers fetch premium prices.

The Croxtons did not grow up as oystermen (Travis studied finance; Ryan, Southern literature), and neither did their fathers. "Grandpa told them to go to college instead of messing around with oysters," Travis said. The boys inherited the leases on the river, and by law they had to grow oysters there or give them up.

Thus began the road to Le Bernardin, the Grand Central Oyster Bar and beyond. The two have reinvested what they've earned, opening restaurants with high visibility, one in Richmond, Va., another in the busy Union Market in Washington.

After building a steady market for their trademark oyster, the Rappahannock River, they began to build a range of flavors. Now they grow oysters in several locations, where the water varies in salinity and depth, each producing somewhat distinct flavors: crisp Stingrays in Mobjack Bay, briny Old Salts in Chincoteague Bay and the oyster for the people, the Barcat.

The Barcat is an all-purpose Chesapeake oyster, distributed and marketed along with the Croxtons' premium oysters, but at a lower price to feed the current boom in raw bars and \$1 oyster happy hours. Instead of

growing Barcats themselves, they hatched a new cooperative of oyster farmers, mostly current or former watermen, that serves as an entry point to aquaculture. The members can grow as few or as many as they like but still go fishing and crabbing on the bay.

These watermen, Travis said, have seen that farming helps sustain both the bay and their businesses. In the last decade, all the Chesapeake fisheries have become more tightly controlled, and law enforcement more persistent. Illegal fishing in protected waters, or at night, or out of season, was a low-risk income stream for generations of watermen. Now, it's far more difficult. This month, Maryland's Natural Resources Police scored its first conviction for oyster poaching based on evidence from a state-of-the-art surveillance system it shares with the Department of Homeland Security.

Under these conditions, the peaceful, lucrative life of the oyster farmer grows ever more attractive. "Even the roughest, meanest water guys notice when their friend is driving a new truck," Travis said. "Suddenly, they get interested."

THE RYAN REPUBLICAN BUDGET: DANGEROUS TO OUR NATIONAL SECURITY AND DANGEROUS TO OUR SAFETY IN NATURAL DIS- ASTERS

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 28, 2014

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in opposition to the severely regressive Paul Ryan Budget Proposal, a radical and erosive bill that undermines our national security by slashing funding for essential emergency assistance and jeopardizes our preparedness and safety in natural disasters.

The Ryan Budget would be a fiscal wreck to high-growth states and states affected by natural disasters. In the immediate aftermath of a disaster, states and local areas often depend on help from the Federal Government. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) helps people affected by the disaster get food, water, and shelter, and helps with search-and-rescue missions and providing electric power. FEMA also helps states and local governments repair or replace public facilities and infrastructure, which often is not insured.

Last year New York was completely devastated by Hurricane Sandy. Sandy's impact included the flooding of the New York City Subway system, many communities, the closure of all road tunnels entering Manhattan except the Lincoln Tunnel, and the closure of the New York Stock Exchange for two consecutive days. Thousands of homes and an estimated 250,000 vehicles were destroyed during the storm. Economic losses across New York were estimated to be at least \$18 billion. In my district, it was nothing less than a miracle that the section of the Shore Parkway connecting Sheepshead Bay with Canarsie was not destroyed; which by coincidence, a National Park Service project had placed a huge amount of soil near the bridge, which effectively saved it.

The Federal Government's ability to respond to natural disasters, like Hurricane Sandy would be significantly hindered under Chairman RYAN's Budget Proposal and shift very

substantial costs to states and localities forcing them to make do with less during difficult times of disaster.

House Republicans continue to push for devastating cuts that threaten the safety net designed to provide the most basic needs for millions of Americans at their most vulnerable time. It is for these reasons that I will vote "no" on this budget and I ask my colleagues to oppose this budget as well.

RECOGNIZING THE SAN JOAQUIN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 28, 2014

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate San Joaquin Farm Bureau Federation as they celebrate their 100th year anniversary.

The San Joaquin Farm Bureau Federation was formed in 1914; it began with 650 members and 14 Farm Centers. In 1919, the San Joaquin Farm Bureau Federation helped hold the County's first fair, located in Oak Park. By 1931, SJFB was the largest Farm Bureau in the United States with 2,301 members.

The SJFB soon outgrew their building and dedicated their new, larger building in 1938. During this time, their vision created structure. Subcommittees comprised of local farmers were established in every area of the county. They were charged with mapping out and organizing the sections. The idea behind the plan was to prevent sabotage and fires, provide information, develop a cooperative use of farm implements and labor, as well as to assist in any national food production plan.

During World War II, the Farm Bureau devoted a major part of war emergency to defense work.

The top 10 priority issues declared by the Farm Bureau in 1952 were: economy, good government, citizenship, schools and school costs, international trade, adequate labor, inflation, water, terminal market waste, and a better understanding of the relationship between the farm bureau and the consumer.

In the mid-1950s, there were many changes to the local politics and organizations. The Farm Bureau took a hard stance opposing a certain State Assembly bill relating to gun control, citing that it would drive firearms underground. During this time, the San Joaquin County Agri-Center was formed. A year later, the California Division of Water Resources was set up; it abolished several State boards and commissions. The Young People's Department was approved by the board, which served as the forerunner for the Young Farmers and Ranchers Program. Shortly after, two land use policies were passed. One addressed the protection of agricultural lands from annexation and another to prevent the use of top soil for road and other construction fills.

In the 1960s, the SJFB made changes to the Cow Testing Association and created the San Joaquin County Dairy Herd Improvement. Farm Bureau records and funds were turned over to the new cooperation. The SJFB took a hard stance in 1964 by opposing the Delta Peripheral Canal, which would have cut a large swath through some of the county's

most valuable farm land. Toward the late 1960s, the County Board of Supervisors approved a resolution for the establishment of agricultural preserves for the county.

The current San Joaquin Farm Bureau Office was dedicated in 1972.

There were many changes during the 80s for the San Joaquin Farm Bureau. They reinforced the importance of the dairy industry to the county when the SJFB Board of Directors voted in sharp disagreement with the California Farm Bureau Federation when they asked for \$.29 per hundred weight drop in Class One milk. In addition, the president of Zenith announced its purchase of CalFarm Insurance. The partnership between the Farm Bureau and CalFarm began to materialize.

The Immigration Reform Act of 1986 came through a joint effort by the agricultural interests of California and Congress. The Alien Legalization for Agriculture program was formed in 1987 as a result of immigration legislation that passed in Congress. The SJFB contracted with federal officials to provide local agriculture workers the ability to gain citizenship through the amnesty program that was granted at that time. Thousands of workers were able to utilize this program to become U.S. citizens. At the end of the process, excess funds were used to help start the SJFB Foundation for Agricultural Education.

In 1988, the Environmental Affairs Committee was formed and immediately set out to work on the Endangered Species Act, San Joaquin Air Basin Air Quality, and pesticide regulation and enforcement.

The 1990s brought the advent of many “new town” proposals, self-contained urban areas that would not become incorporated cities. Only one of these new town proposals, Mountain House, was supported by the San Joaquin Farm Bureau and remains an active, growing community in the county.

Efforts were made to create a rural crime task force under the Sheriffs Department to ensure adequate personnel would be allocated to counter crimes impacting agricultural operations. The SJFB initiated policy language at the State Farm Bureau Convention to prioritize metal theft, and to require recyclers to adhere to strict guidelines when accepting metal. Their efforts led to legislation that passed the California State Legislature the following year.

The 2000s enabled the SJFB to work with the county on what is now known as the Cabral Agricultural Center which houses the Agricultural Commissioner, U.C. Cooperative Extension, and the Office of Emergency Services.

San Joaquin Farm Bureau members and staff have advanced the concept of providing an “Ag Venture” program, which helps 13,000 3rd grade students from throughout the county attend one of three “Ag Venture” days. The program gives students the opportunity to learn more about where their food comes from and the benefits of eating local crops.

They have also advanced a “Farmers Market” program that educates 4th grade students in low income schools on the benefits of eating specialty crops that come from the region. At the end of the 4 session program, students are given the opportunity to purchase fresh produce for 10 cents each to bring home fruits and vegetables.

In the past two years, the SJFB was recognized by the American Farm Bureau Federation under their “Counties Activities of Excel-

lence” program. The San Joaquin Farm Bureau’s advocacy efforts, agricultural education, and safety training programs all have contributed to their being recognized under this program. The SJFB was selected as the County of the Year in 2013 by the California Farm Bureau Federation.

The San Joaquin Farm Bureau has accomplished a number of commendable things within the community. They have also maintained a county legislative committee that has worked with the State Legislature, and an economic committee that has made progress in enforcement of State realty laws. The San Joaquin Farm Bureau has also assisted the Federal Land Bank to provide funds to farmers, and have campaigned for reapportionment of the State Legislature. In addition to this, the SJFB has maintained a cow-testing association, sponsored 4H activities, cooperated with the extension service in educational programs, and have represented livestock men in demanding dog law enforcement.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in celebrating with the San Joaquin Farm Bureau Federation for their significant contributions, not only to agriculture, but to the community, and the State of California. Congratulations on the past 100 years, and I wish you the best success in the years to come.

HONORING THE 100 YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE MID AMERICA BANK IN MISSOURI

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 28, 2014

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mid America Bank and recognize the contribution the institution has made to communities in Missouri during its 100 years of operation. Since April is Community Bank Month, it is fitting to celebrate the anniversary of one of Missouri’s finest financial institutions. On April 27, 1914, this community bank was founded as the People’s Bank of St. Thomas. It was then relocated to Meta, Missouri in 1951, where it operated as the sole location for 27 years and was renamed the Meta State Bank. In 1978, the name Mid America Bank was adopted as the bank grew and opened a second branch in Linn, Missouri. Mid America Bank has continued to expand and currently has five branches throughout the state that allow the people of Missouri access to the financial tools that provide stability and security in their daily life.

The longevity of Mid America Bank is not only a testament to its success and knowledge of the financial services industry, but also its commitment to our Missouri communities. Community banks such as Mid America Bank have a desire to help their customers improve their lives and realize their dreams, all while valuing the customer and respecting the vital role of relationship banking.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in wishing all the employees of Mid America Bank our sincerest thanks and appreciation for their service to the men, women and families of Missouri. Congratulations on 100 years and best wishes for continued success in the next 100 years.

CELEBRATING THE CAREER OF MARIA DE LA MILERA AND GRATULATING HER ON A WELL DESERVED RETIREMENT

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 28, 2014

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to celebrate the long and successful public service career of Maria De La Milera and congratulate her on a well-deserved retirement. Her commitment to our community and our nation is exemplary and we are all forever grateful for her service. With over 30 years of experience and countless accolades and accomplishments over such an expansive career, South Floridians are truly losing an invaluable member of the fabric of our community.

Maria was born in Holguin, Oriente, Cuba, the oldest of three daughters. After the brutal dictator Fidel Castro seized power, Maria came with her younger sister to the United States in the largest exodus of unaccompanied children from the regime—known as “Pedro Pan.” She then spent four years in a Los Angeles orphanage until her parents were finally able to join her in the United States.

As an adult, Maria moved to Miami and began her career helping our South Florida community through public service, working as a constituent service representative for Senator Richard Stone. She continued her career in the office of Senator Paula Hawkins, focusing primarily on immigration cases where she earned a reputation as a caring and compassionate advocate on behalf of all those needing a helping hand. Her commitment to others allowed her to positively shape the lives of many individuals.

Maria then spent a few years in the political realm as Executive Director of the Republican Party of Miami-Dade County, and then joined the government of Miami-Dade County, where she spent the last 23 years supporting our local residents. She has long been known for inspiring those around her, people who will undoubtedly carry on her legacy of professionalism and commitment. There is no greater reward than the satisfaction gained through serving others, and Maria embraced this most noble of endeavors with remarkable principle.

It is my distinct pleasure to join Maria’s family; her children Beatriz Maria, Maritza Isabel and Raul De La Milera, Jr.; her grandchildren Michael, Mathew, Madison, Mark, Laenie and Rachel; as well as friends and peers as they honor her many accomplishments and outstanding career. Maria, thank you for your exceptional public service. I wish you only the best in any challenge you choose next to accept.

ON RECOGNITION OF THE OPENING OF SAINT JOSEPH MERCY OAKLAND HOSPITAL’S SOUTH PATIENT TOWER

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 28, 2014

Mr. PETERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to recognize the opening