

highest poverty because we are not willing to accept the fact that sometimes an American needs help—even a veteran, even a soldier.

Today, I honor the 50th anniversary of the war on poverty, Mr. Speaker, and I ask us not to give up the fight because the American people are looking to us to win the war.

TURN OUT THE LIGHTS, THE PARTY'S OVER

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is a new year. As the clock struck midnight, Americans throughout the fruited plain celebrated the end of 2013 and the start of a new year.

January 1—out with the old and in with the new—light bulb, so sayeth Uncle Sam. That is right: “turn out the lights, the party’s over” for the incandescent light bulb.

I went to H-E-B last week in Texas and the shelves were bare. Only curly fluorescent light bulbs to be found. That is because the government has now banned 75-, 100-, 60-, and 40-watt light bulbs.

Edison’s light bulb has gone from the endangered species list to near extinction. Some incandescent light bulbs will be allowed, but only if they meet new government standards. What was once the symbol for American innovation is now banned by the almighty government. Isn’t that ironic?

Why? Because it is not energy efficient, so sayeth the government. The government certainly doesn’t want Americans to have a choice with what light bulbs they purchase because the government knows best.

The new fluorescent curly light bulbs, also called CFLs, contain mercury and also are more expensive. Mr. Speaker, I thought mercury was bad for us.

Anyway, nothing gets easier when you use these light bulbs. Do you need to dispose of one of these curly light bulbs? Don’t even think about throwing it in the trash without reading the instructions in the box. Don’t throw them in the wastebasket. You are supposed to take them to a local recycling center. Yeah, right.

If a person decides to take the risk and throw the light bulb out at home, listen closely, because, of course, it is more complicated. The light bulb should be sealed in two plastic bags and then placed in the trash outdoors so as not to pollute landfills if it breaks.

There are more regulations. If a CFL is dropped, well, disaster strikes, in my opinion. You can’t just pick up the pieces and throw them away. The EPA has generously told us in more detailed instructions what we do if one is broken: “Have people and pets leave the room, and don’t let anyone walk through the area.”

So, Mr. Speaker, if I accidentally drop this light bulb here on the House

floor and it breaks, does that mean we have to evacuate the House floor? According to the EPA, at least we should do that.

I give you more: “Open a window”—don’t have any in here—“and leave the room for 15 minutes or more. Shut off the central heating and air-conditioning system. Carefully scoop up glass fragments and powder using stiff paper or cardboard and place them in a glass jar with a metal lid.” Mr. Speaker, I hope you have some of those old mason jars around here.

There is more. The EPA says: “Use sticky tape, such as duct tape, to pick up any remaining small glass fragments and powder. Wipe the area clean with a damp paper towel or disposable wet wipes and place them in the glass jar or plastic bag. Do not use a vacuum or broom.” Next thing you know, we are going to need a HAZMAT crew to come in to someone’s home if they accidentally drop a light bulb.

There is a lot more: “These light bulbs may cause interference to radios, televisions, wireless telephones and remote controls.” Okay, I will be sure to turn off the lights tonight when I watch “Duck Dynasty.” I don’t want to miss it because I have these curly light bulbs.

I forgot to mention—guess where these little spiral light bulbs are made. China. Now isn’t that lovely?

The power of choice has been taken away from the American people, even the choice of a light bulb, because government is controlling our lives and it knows better. The Federal Government should not have the authority to force Americans to buy anything, whether it is health care, a box of donuts, or even CFL light bulbs.

As Willie Nelson has said: “Turn out the lights, the party’s over. They say that all good things must end. Turn out the lights, the party’s over” for at least Thomas Edison’s light bulb.

May it rest in peace, Mr. Speaker.
And that’s just the way it is.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WAR ON POVERTY

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, today we mark the 50th anniversary of the war on poverty—a dedicated legislative and policy effort by President Lyndon Johnson to reduce and eventually eliminate poverty in America. Yet, despite the many successes of the war on poverty—and there have been many successes over the past 50 years—there are those in this country and in this House who would destroy the programs that help people in need, those who have replaced the war on poverty with a new war on poor people.

Unfortunately, that is what is happening right now with the farm bill. I am honored to serve on the Agriculture Committee and as a member of the

farm bill conference committee. I want—and America needs—a strong, comprehensive, and forward-thinking bill. I represent farmers and farms, conservationists, and agriculture research institutions, and like every other Member of Congress, I represent people who rely on the nutrition programs in the farm bill to put food on their tables.

That has been my primary focus as a conferee—to support and fight for the hungry in America. I believe the nutrition title—where SNAP, formerly known as food stamps, is authorized—is the most important part of the farm bill. This program provides food to 47 million food-insecure Americans—people who don’t know where their next meal is coming from. Food insecurity, Mr. Speaker, is another way to say hunger. These people are hungry and they get food because they are on SNAP.

We have been told that the House may vote on a farm bill conference report as early as next week. According to some reports, the bill would cut \$8 billion from SNAP. Unlike the cut that took effect on November 1, where all 47 million SNAP beneficiaries saw their benefits cut by an average of \$30 a month for a family of three, this \$8 billion cut is more targeted. That doesn’t mean it is any less harmful.

This cut would change the way SNAP benefits are affected when a beneficiary gets a LIHEAP benefit. Many have described the application of this SNAP/LIHEAP connection—sometimes called “Heat and Eat”—as a loophole, but calling this a loophole avoids the real issue at hand.

The truth is that changing the way that Heat and Eat works—closing this so-called loophole—will reduce an already meager benefit for millions of Americans, a benefit that didn’t last a full month even before the November 1 across-the-board cuts took effect.

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Even worse, closing this so-called “loophole” would disproportionately affect poor seniors and the disabled—precisely the kinds of Americans we should be looking out for during difficult economic times. There has to be a better way.

SNAP has been cut twice to pay for other programs—first, to offset programs that help teachers, firefighters and other social services, and a second time to offset improvements in the Child Nutrition Act. Now, these are good programs that deserve to be funded, although not at the expense of the hungry. I am all for compromise when all sides negotiate in good faith, but why does compromise in Washington always mean helping those who are well off at the expense of the poor?

Remember, Mr. Speaker, this cut will reduce the SNAP benefit by about \$90 a month for “heat and eat” households. Three million poor families would see their food assistance cut by an average of \$90 a month. And would these billions of dollars in cuts go back to helping other needy people? No. In a farm

bill that continues to subsidize big agribusiness and special interests and that further subsidizes a crop insurance program that is rife with fraud, waste and abuse, it is just one more cut to a program that helps our most vulnerable neighbors.

Mr. Speaker, the November 1 cuts were devastating for 47 million hungry people. Just ask any food bank director in the country. Adding another \$8 billion cut to another 3 million families will cause even more damage. If my friends insist on changing the LIHEAP provision, then they should at least have the decency to reinvest those savings into SNAP.

Both Democrats and Republicans are talking a lot these days about the issue of income inequality. That is a good thing. So why on Earth would we pass a farm bill that makes the rich get richer and the poor get poorer? We can and must do better.

It is a scandal that in the richest country in the history of the world we have a hunger problem. Members of Congress rush to the microphones to promote tax cuts and ease resolutions on Wall Street. All the while, there are people in this country—men, women and kids—who do not have enough to eat. I will oppose any farm bill that makes hunger worse in America, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

In conclusion, let me say to my colleagues: there are some things worth fighting for. Ending hunger—making sure our fellow citizens have enough to eat—is absolutely worth fighting for.

UKRAINE

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, for the last few years, Ukraine has been working towards the signing of an association agreement with the European Union to increase economic and political ties with the bloc and to solidify democratic values and principles. The association agreement was to have been signed on November 28 through 29 at an Eastern Partnership Summit meeting in Vilnius.

On November 21, the Cabinet of Ministers in Ukraine unilaterally suspended negotiations with the European Union due to excessive pressure from Russia. Outraged by this, Ukrainians began to protest by creating European squares, or Euromaidans, across the country, including the capital of Kiev. In the early morning of November 30, the Ukrainian Government sent special forces to clear the Euromaidan in Kiev by using physical force and tear gas, resulting in many protesters and journalists with traumatic injuries and several still who are unaccounted for.

In response to the unprecedented use of force against peaceful protesters in Ukraine's history, several high-ranking deputies and officials in the governing party defected from the Party of Regions. Since then, protests have contin-

ued with a reported 1 million Ukrainians taking to the streets on December 1. Every Sunday since has brought at least 50,000 to the Euromaidan.

In the early morning of December 11, special forces, using chain saws and metal batons, broke through many makeshift barricades made of park benches and other available materials in order to encircle thousands of peaceful protesters on the Euromaidan in Kiev. In a 9-hour standoff with security forces, peaceful protesters on the Euromaidan stood their ground, singing the national anthem and praying every hour with local churches that were ringing their bells in support of the protesters.

In 2013, violence was used against more than 100 journalists in Ukraine, with almost half of the incidents occurring in December. On December 25, a well-known and respected Ukrainian journalist and civic activist, Tetyana Chornovol, was brutally beaten on her way home. Protest leaders tie her beating to her anti-regime reporting. Her severely bruised face is now used as a symbol of government repression.

The United States calls on the Ukrainian Government to respect Ukrainians' freedom of speech, their right to free assembly; and it calls on them to refrain from using force against peaceful protesters.

SUPERFUND SITES

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, when I saw that the legislative agenda for this week was going to deal with the beleaguered Superfund program, I was encouraged; but when I saw what my Republican colleagues actually proposed, I was saddened and disappointed.

Across America, we are plagued by a variety of severely polluted hotspots known as "Superfund sites." Many are the legacy of past reckless or clueless business behaviors; Government, itself, shares responsibility as well. Local governments failed to properly zone and regulate businesses with toxic by-products. Sometimes government created problems with the way it operated sewer systems, solid waste management, and military operations.

The Superfund law, created in 1980, with a Superfund tax on the petrochemical industry, which caused the problem, would provide cleanup funding. It was reasonable at that time, but it has been frozen in place for almost 20 years. In 1995, the excise tax expired. Neither the program nor the problems have gone away, and having fewer and fewer resources has not helped. Sadly, the proposals the House will be considering this week would actually reduce the overall amount of funding that is available, undercut standards, and slow cleanup.

The Federal Government has created some of these problems, mostly caused

by military operations, which is the largest single source of Superfund sites in the country, but there are also situations like the TVA and its coal ash disaster.

Instead of enhancing the Federal commitment and capacity, this legislative exercise is an illustration of part of the problem. It is an attempt to look like we are doing something, but it has no chance of being enacted into law; and if it did, it would actually make the problem worse.

It is time for us to renew and refine the Federal commitment, not to complicate and undercut it. We should take a performance-based approach to zero in on what will actually accelerate cleanup in a demonstrable fashion and be able to move away from what has too often been a pro forma response.

The Federal Government should, indeed, clean up after itself and not leave the problem behind. The military should place Superfund cleanup as a higher priority in its budgeting. We have seen recent studies about pollution around military bases, like Camp Lejeune, that has had a severe impact on military families and their neighbors, linking contamination to a series of birth defects like spina bifida and to childhood cancers, including leukemia.

We should renew the Superfund tax, which I will be introducing in legislation this month. The Federal budget allocations should commit to cleanup, not passing the buck. We have settled into a program of sue, stall, and study as the inevitable result of a failure to work together to clean up, to protect the public, and to save money in the long run. I hope we will reject the Republican proposal this week and, instead, make a renewed commitment to find ways to make it work better.

TRANSITIONAL ASSISTANCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on December 26, 2013, President Obama signed into law the 2014 National Defense Authorization Act, which sets policy and funding levels for the U.S. Department of Defense.

In large part, the bill went through regular committee order on the House side, with the consideration of amendments from both Republicans and Democrats. A somewhat similar series of actions was taken by the Senate. Despite a small amount of political theater, both Chambers not only found common ground in and passed this important measure, but in placing good policy before politics, Members overcame differences and acted in the best interests of the country—in this case, to the benefit of our men and women in uniform. Mr. Speaker, this is how the institution is supposed to work.

The measure offers our servicemembers resources to safely fulfill their