

Finally, the bill fails to fund a congressionally authorized, broadly supported Local and Regional Procurement program. Following upon a successful pilot, the 2014 farm bill authorized \$80 million per year for the Local and Regional Procurement program.

That means we can buy food closer to the area in crisis, reducing transit time by more than 10 weeks, reducing the cost per food aid recipient by 20 to 30 percent. This was considered an important reform that won, again, broad bipartisan support.

This amendment contains a modest shift in funding that will have a major impact, \$10 million, while reducing funds for the administration of marketing and promotion programs that benefit major corporations. We can save lives. It is an easy choice.

Mr. Chairman, our food aid takes too long to arrive and costs too much to get there. A former top aid official told our committee that:

In fast onset famines, such as Somalia in 1991–1992, and wars involving mass population displacement, such as in Darfur in 2003 and 2004, I watched people die waiting for food arrive.

Obviously, he strongly backs this reform.

Lastly, I recently traveled to the Philippines and witnessed firsthand the impact that LRP can have. Devastated by a powerful typhoon and left with virtually nothing, the people of Tacloban did not have the luxury of time to wait for U.S. food aid to arrive from warehouses in Sri Lanka.

In fact, it took more than 3 weeks for those shipments to arrive, but with local and regional procurement, we were able to start helping people right away, and we saved lives.

I would say, in Syria, where the delivery of U.S. food is nearly impossible, the combination of vouchers with local and regional purchase is the only viable option.

It is time to make a change. This requires \$10 million. Vote “yes,” please, on the Royce amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, my colleague from California (Mr. ROYCE) has been working at this issue for a very long time, and he has considerable knowledge and certainly a compassion and a deep understanding of these issues. There is far more to this than was explained in your presentation.

There is an ongoing debate about how the United States ought to be assisting in the disasters and famines around the world. That debate came to a head last year in which it was decided that we ought to continue with the longstanding appeal for a Food for Peace program, with some modifications.

My concern here with this particular amendment is that it may open the

door for a continuation of that debate and ultimately lead to the demise of the P.L. 480 program, which has extraordinary political support as a result of the combination of American farmers, the merchant marine industry, as well as many NGOs around the Nation.

I recognize that, in many places, it is necessary to have local purchases of food, and the chairman actually cited a couple of those examples. It turned out that the local purchase of food was accomplished through an existing program that USAID presently has, and that program is the international disaster assistance program, where money is available for the local purchase of food.

The bottom line is that this \$10 million really doesn't add anything that isn't already available in the current appropriation—in the current bill, so I would say let's not go down this road right now. Let's not open up this door to what may very well be a very extensive debate that we have already had, so I would softly oppose the amendment.

I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee on the other side of the aisle.

Mr. FINCHER. I thank the gentleman from California for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment. This amendment would essentially duplicate an existing program already in place at the U.S. Agency for International Development under the international development assistance account.

□ 1600

USAID already allows for local and regional purchases so there is no need for the same program at the USDA.

More importantly, this amendment would use taxpayer dollars to purchase commodities from foreign countries rather than right here at home. Unlike other foreign aid programs, the Food for Peace program is American-made through and through. It was designed to take American commodities on American ships overseas to feed those in need.

The Food for Peace program supports American agriculture, exports, and jobs while increasing goodwill overseas and helping those in need. The USDA estimates that for every \$1 billion in U.S. agricultural exports, 8,400 American jobs are created. We need to be focused on creating jobs here at home and growing our economy so the United States is able to be abundantly generous to countries that can't grow enough food to feed their growing populations.

This amendment gives away American tax dollars to our foreign competitors and puts American jobs at risk. I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment and support American farmers, workers, and taxpayers.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield my remaining 1 minute to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of Mr. ROYCE's amendment. I want to work with him on an offset that I think might be a little more desirable.

But the notion here somehow that we are going to undercut the reforms that were achieved in the farm bill that require food, on average, to take 74 days longer, when you use U.S.-sourced commodities, when it is going to be, on average, 25 percent more expensive, and to talk about our “foreign competitors,” when we are talking about being able to purchase locally from people who are on the edge of impoverishment, rather than flooding American commodities that are more expensive late in the game and undercutting local production, I think is a sad step forward.

I appreciate the gentleman's leadership and strongly urge support of this as we work for a better offset.

Mr. ROYCE. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. ROYCE. In closing, I would just say that I am open to working with the chairman and ranking member to find an appropriate offset in conference. However, it is essential to adopt this amendment now so that this matter can be set, we can put a marker down, and get this in place. I thank the gentleman for the support for the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. VALADAO) having assumed the chair, Mr. JOLLY, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4800) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 4 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1651

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2015

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING). Pursuant to House Resolution 616 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 4800.

Will the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) kindly take the chair.

□ 1652

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 4800) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2015, and for other purposes, with Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, a request for a recorded vote on amendment No. 7, printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), had been postponed, and the bill had been read through page 16, line 19.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

Fees may be collected for the cost of standardization activities, as established by regulation pursuant to law (31 U.S.C. 9701).

LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

Not to exceed \$60,709,000 (from fees collected) shall be obligated during the current fiscal year for administrative expenses: *Provided*, That if crop size is understated or other uncontrollable events occur, the agency may exceed this limitation by up to 10 percent with notification to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress.

FUNDS FOR STRENGTHENING MARKETS, INCOME, AND SUPPLY (SECTION 32)

(INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

Funds available under section 32 of the Act of August 24, 1935 (7 U.S.C. 612c), shall be used only for commodity program expenses as authorized therein, and other related operating expenses, except for: (1) transfers to the Department of Commerce as authorized by the Fish and Wildlife Act of August 8, 1956; (2) transfers otherwise provided in this Act; and (3) not more than \$20,056,000 for formulation and administration of marketing agreements and orders pursuant to the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937 and the Agricultural Act of 1961.

PAYMENTS TO STATES AND POSSESSIONS

For payments to departments of agriculture, bureaus and departments of markets, and similar agencies for marketing activities under section 204(b) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1623(b)), \$1,235,000.

GRAIN INSPECTION, PACKERS AND STOCKYARDS ADMINISTRATION

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses of the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Adminis-

tration, \$43,722,000: *Provided*, That this appropriation shall be available pursuant to law (7 U.S.C. 2250) for the alteration and repair of buildings and improvements, but the cost of altering any one building during the fiscal year shall not exceed 10 percent of the current replacement value of the building.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GARDNER

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk, and I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BROUN) be listed as a cosponsor of my amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. An amendment may not be cosponsored.

The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 18, line 5, after the dollar amount, insert "(reduced by \$3,461,000)".

Page 42, line 18, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$3,461,000)".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 616, the gentleman from Colorado and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the amendment which provides an additional \$3.4 million for telemedicine and distance learning services in rural areas.

The Distance Learning and Telemedicine program was reduced from FY14-enacted levels, and my amendment restores some of the funding to improve access to health care and education for rural areas.

Rural areas are typically areas where they have local primary care physicians who perform routine checkups and primary care. But what if a patient requires a specialist or has a more complicated medical condition?

My hometown of Yuma, Colorado, is more than 2 hours from a number of specialized medical services, complex trauma centers, or oncology centers. The doctors in our area and in other rural areas do the best job they can with the resources that they have, but most lack the specialization to treat more complicated cases.

We can improve patient outcomes, quality of life, lower costs, and improve care by utilizing technology that is already available. This amendment provides additional resources for our rural communities to do just that. Increases in funding for telemedicine will give patients access to health care anywhere at any time.

Additionally, this amendment would provide funding to support distance learning services. These funds will go toward providing better educational opportunities to students in rural areas. There is no reason children should be at a disadvantage simply because of their location.

This amendment reduces the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration by \$3.4 million back to the FY14-enacted levels. GIPSA's responsibility is to oversee the marketing of livestock, poultry, meats, grains, and other agriculture products. This agency has more than ample re-

sources to do its work, and it is only reducing funds to the FY14-enacted levels.

This amendment will provide so much more to the people in our rural communities, and I urge a "yes" vote. I reserve the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. Does anyone wish to speak in opposition to the amendment?

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman for his support, and I thank the chairman of the subcommittee for his support and encourage passage of this bill to help rural Colorado and rural America produce and provide greater telemedicine opportunities for the country.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER).

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

LIMITATION ON INSPECTION AND WEIGHING SERVICES EXPENSES

Not to exceed \$50,000,000 (from fees collected) shall be obligated during the current fiscal year for inspection and weighing services: *Provided*, That if grain export activities require additional supervision and oversight, or other uncontrollable factors occur, this limitation may be exceeded by up to 10 percent with notification to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress.

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOOD SAFETY

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Under Secretary for Food Safety, \$816,000.

FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE

For necessary expenses to carry out services authorized by the Federal Meat Inspection Act, the Poultry Products Inspection Act, and the Egg Products Inspection Act, including not to exceed \$50,000 for representation allowances and for expenses pursuant to section 8 of the Act approved August 3, 1956 (7 U.S.C. 1766), \$1,005,189,000; and in addition, \$1,000,000 may be credited to this account from fees collected for the cost of laboratory accreditation as authorized by section 1327 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 138f): *Provided*, That funds provided for the Public Health Data Communication Infrastructure system shall remain available until expended: *Provided further*, That no fewer than 148 full-time equivalent positions shall be employed during fiscal year 2015 for purposes dedicated solely to inspections and enforcement related to the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act: *Provided further*, That this appropriation shall be available pursuant to law (7 U.S.C. 2250) for the alteration and repair of buildings and improvements, but the cost of altering any one building during the fiscal year shall not exceed 10 percent of the current replacement value of the building.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GRAYSON

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Page 19, line 8, after the dollar amount, insert "(increased by \$5,500,000)".

Page 20, line 10, after the dollar amount, insert "(decreased by \$5,500,000)".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 616, the gentleman