

the right track so that we might be where we are today.

As I continuously reflect on my own experience, the daughter of poor immigrants from Mexico, first generation and low income and a child that the original ESEA was meant to serve, I ask my colleagues, let's work together and pass a bill that really helps our children.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, as a subcommittee chair of the Committee on Agriculture, I am committed to safe and affordable food.

In recent years, there has been increased interest in where our food comes from and how it is grown. In my view, this movement is long overdue, as far too many Americans are removed from the family farm for several generations.

Agriculture is the backbone of rural America, and its success is critical for local economies and to deliver a product every American needs on a daily basis.

With a growing world demand for food and less Americans engaged in farming, science and innovation have become essential components of agriculture and remain paramount to meet increased demands.

Aside from tractors, combines, and physical technology, innovation also extends to biotechnology. Biotech ensures that America will always have the safest, most abundant, and affordable food supply.

As world populations continue to increase, producing more food on less land will be an ongoing challenge, but one that can be addressed through advances in biotechnology.

With this in mind, there has been an ongoing debate and much attention to what have been dubbed GMOs, or genetically modified organisms, seeds or crops.

Despite the alarmist claims of some, GM products, GM seeds, have provided great benefits to farmers, ranchers, food producers, and consumers.

For instance, some varieties of GM seeds have been engineered to host genetic traits that resist certain types of insects, molds or diseases that destroy crops or, in other cases, GM seeds allow for longer growing seasons or greater crop yields.

GM crops have had an enormously positive impact on farmers, ranchers, and food producers. GM seeds have also had a positive environmental impact because they have reduced the need for large-scale sprays or open-range distribution of pesticides or insecticides.

While some continue to question the safety of consuming GM seeds, the overwhelming consensus among the various credible scientific organiza-

tions, such as the National Academy of Sciences, the World Health Organization, and the American Medical Association, remains.

Quite simply, there is no sound scientific evidence that such crops or foods are harmful to human health or the environment.

In fact, a January 2015 study from the Pew Research Center found that 88 percent of surveyed scientists believe that GM seeds or crops are perfectly safe for human consumption.

However, one of the real challenges that has developed regarding GM foods is the lack of a fair and consistent regulatory structure.

Recently several States have made attempts to mandate all GM foods are labeled as genetically modified organisms. As a result, a patchwork of different State laws have begun to emerge over the labeling requirements of GM foods.

Now, this is already causing confusion as to how such labeling standards would directly apply to farmers, ranchers, food processors and, yes, also regulators.

This patchwork of State laws could also create some constitutional questions, should such laws affect interstate commerce and trade.

Nearly 80 percent of the food produced in the United States contains some kind of GM product, and the implications of a State-by-State labeling requirement would be vast.

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This week, Mr. Speaker, the House will consider H.R. 1599, the Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act of 2015, in an effort to address this confusion. Because there are so many myths surrounding this debate, let's start with what the bill does.

This legislation is squarely centered on State labeling efforts. While the bill does preclude States from enacting their own GM labeling laws, it also creates a Federal framework for pre-market review and labeling of GM foods; or, in other words, the legislation requires the FDA to conduct a review of any and all new plant or seed varieties before such products are commercially available.

The bill would also require standards for defining whether a product is of the "GM" or "natural." The legislation does not prohibit States from outright banning GM crops or writing new relevant laws, but what the bill will do is give farmers, ranchers, and food producers much-needed certainty by establishing a unified and clear regulatory process.

Mr. Speaker, as a cosponsor of H.R. 1599, I rise in support of the legislation, and I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on it.

CALLING FOR THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT TO INVESTIGATE THE DEATH OF SANDRA BLAND

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I stand in the well of the United States House of Representatives today to call to the attention of the Nation the death of Ms. Sandra Bland, something that has been widely published. Videos have been shown. People can draw their own conclusions. But I stand here today because I want to announce that I join the many requesting that the Justice Department impose a thorough investigation—a thorough investigation.

Mr. Speaker, there are some who contend that the Justice Department should not look into this death. I differ. The district attorney, himself, in Waller County—this is where she died—the district attorney, himself, is looking into this and has said the death will be treated as a murder investigation.

A person who is stopped for a minor traffic violation should not end up dead. I think we should all agree that the basic premise is that, if you are stopped for a minor traffic violation, even if you are taken into custody, you should not be found dead in your jail cell.

It is said that she died from self-inflicted asphyxiation, a very polite way to say that she committed suicide. Under these questionable circumstances, the district attorney investigated. It is said that the FBI is looking into it. It is said that local constabulary will look into it in the State of Texas.

Why not have the Justice Department look into it? This is what the Justice Department is for, to look into these questionable circumstances of which too many have occurred as of late and, quite frankly, over a substantial period of time in our country. So this is a questionable case, and I believe this is a case ripe for the Justice Department to investigate.

I want to let the family know—and by the way, I don't know them. I didn't know Ms. Bland. I have no association with them. This is not about her ethnicity, and it is not about her gender. But I want the family to know that I am in sympathy with them, and I feel a certain amount of pain. I cannot feel their pain, but I feel a certain amount of pain because I believe that, if I had a daughter and if my daughter were arrested for a minor traffic violation or as a result of an initial stop for a minor traffic violation and my daughter was found dead in a jail cell some time thereafter with an allegation of suicide, I would want that case investigated, and I believe most people of goodwill would want to see an investigation.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am addressing those who contend that there should be no Justice Department investigation. I have great sympathy for this family—I want you to know that—and I believe there ought to be such an investigation. If this case isn't ripe for a Justice Department investigation, I am not sure that we can conjure up in our

minds a case that is more ripe under these circumstances.

Finally this, Mr. Speaker, I think we have to ponder the question: Have we accorded the constabulary the right to do wrong such that wrongdoing can be justified because it has been codified in the law that you have the right to do certain things?

I think we have to ponder this question because what happened in this case is highly questionable and highly suspect. I say this as a student of jurisprudence, a member of the bar, and a former judge of a court that held probable cause hearings. I have seen my share. But I know that in this case, the Justice Department should investigate.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue to pray for this family and pray for justice to be done.

THE NUCLEAR DEAL WITH IRAN AND OUR NATIONAL SECURITY

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor this morning to talk for a few minutes about the primary issue that my constituents are talking about right now, and that is the issue of national security, homeland security, and how what is happening in the world is affecting our communities right where we live and work and where our children go to school. Isn't that what everyone wants to know: that we are going to be safe, that our children are going to be safe, and that future generations are going to be safe here in the United States?

Mr. Speaker, as we look at these issues of illegal immigration, as we look at ISIS and the threats that are carried out, such as what happened in Chattanooga, and as we look at the Iran deal, we know this affects where we live and where we work.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I want to spend just a few minutes talking about the Iran nuclear deal.

One of the members, retired, of a military organization, MOAA, came up to me Saturday as I was talking to them. He said: MARSHA, this is a bad, bad deal. It is a bad, bad deal.

I have got to agree with him. It is. Of course, he speaks from the perspective of having worn the uniform and served, having had a full military career. It is interesting. They know a bad deal when they see one, and in this Iran nuclear deal that is proposed, they see the tenets of a very bad deal.

Let's look at a few of these components that will not serve us and future generations, our national security, or our homeland security well.

As you review this deal, you see that Iran retains the ability to enrich uranium. That does not stop. It is going to continue on. We can already see how a nuclear Iran would create an arms race in an area which is already volatile. Any capability to enrich uranium may

cause a nuclear arms race to happen and further destabilize the Middle East.

You see, Mr. Speaker, we are not prohibiting them from doing anything. All we are doing is basically setting a date certain 10, 15, or 20 years down the road. Now, think about your children and grandchildren 10, 15 or 20 years down the road. If Iran has a nuclear weapon, what are they going to say at that point in time? How is it going to affect them?

Think about the region. A Saudi official has said: "Politically, it would be completely unacceptable to have Iran with a nuclear capability and not the kingdom." I am quoting a Saudi official's remarks.

Any deal must have full transparency, and we need to know that there can be and will be because there must be anytime, anywhere inspections. It is my fear that a deal with Iran is not going to accomplish this.

The Wall Street Journal reported yesterday—and, Mr. Speaker, I will submit this for the RECORD—"Iran Inspections in 24 Days? Not Even Close." It was a Wall Street Journal article, and I commend it to my colleagues to read as they review this and think about how they are going to vote on this deal.

The Wall Street Journal stated: "The Obama administration assures Americans that the Iran deal grants access within 24 days to undeclared but suspected Iranian nuclear sites."

When you look at the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, it reveals that actually it is going to be closer to months. They can end up holding inspectors at bay for months.

Again, from the Journal I am reading and quoting: "So from the moment the IAEA first tips its hand about what it wants to inspect, likely three or more months may pass."

Now, Mr. Speaker, I ask you, does this sound like the type of deal that you would want to make with a country whose people recently were out chanting "death to America" and burning our flag to celebrate the Muslim holy day with the Supreme Leader in attendance at that rally? Does this sound like the type of deal that should be approved by our Secretary of State and supported by our President? Why? Why would they want to do this? Why would there be a deal that sets a date certain and kind of lays out that path? Simply put, there is no way—no way—that we can trust Iran to allow inspectors unfettered access to both civilian and military sites to verify that they are not pushing a nuclear weapon. So we would be left wondering if—if—they are going to hold up their end of this so-called nuclear deal.

Mr. Speaker, a senior commander in the Revolutionary Guard has recently said that inspectors will not be allowed on military sites. General Hossein Salami said: "We will respond with hot lead . . . We will not roll out the red carpet for the enemy."

In addition, Mr. Speaker, it is extremely concerning that Iran is asking for sanctions on weapons sales and ballistic missile technology transfers to be lifted. It is a bad, bad deal, as my constituent said. I commend further study to my colleagues.

[From the Wall Street Journal, July 21, 2015]

IRAN INSPECTIONS IN 24 DAYS? NOT EVEN CLOSE

(By Hillel Fradkin and Lewis Libby)

The Obama administration assures Americans that the Iran deal grants access within 24 days to undeclared but suspected Iranian nuclear sites. But that's hardly how a recalcitrant Iran is likely to interpret the deal. A close examination of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action released by the Obama administration reveals that its terms permit Iran to hold inspectors at bay for months, likely three or more.

Paragraphs 74 to 78 govern the International Atomic Energy Agency's access to suspect sites. First, the IAEA tells Iran "the basis" of its concerns about a particular location, requesting clarification. At this point Iran will know where the IAEA is headed. Iran then provides the IAEA with "explanations" to resolve IAEA concerns. This stage has no time limit.

Opportunities for delay abound. Iran will presumably want to know what prompted the IAEA's concern. The suspect site identified by the IAEA is likely to be remote, and Iran will no doubt say that it must gather skilled people and equipment to responsibly allay IAEA concerns. Iran may offer explanations in stages, seeking IAEA clarifications before "completing" its response. That could take a while.

Only if Iran's "explanations" do not resolve the IAEA's concerns" may the IAEA then "request access" to the suspect site. Oddly, the agreement doesn't specify who judges whether the explanations resolve concerns. If Iran claims that it has a say in the matter, the process may stall here. Assuming Iran grants that the IAEA can be the judge, might Iran claim that the "great Satan" improperly influenced IAEA conclusions? Let's assume that Tehran won't do that.

Now the IAEA must provide written reasons for the request and "make available relevant information." Let's assume that even though the IAEA may resist revealing the secret sources or technical means that prompted its suspicions, Iran acknowledges that a proper request has been supplied.

Only then do the supposed 24 days begin to run. First, Iran may propose, and the IAEA must consider, alternative means of resolving concerns. This may take 14 days. Absent satisfactory "arrangements," a new period begins.

During this period Iran, "in consultation with" the Joint Commission, will "resolve" the IAEA concerns "through necessary means agreed between Iran and the IAEA." The Joint Commission includes China, France, Germany, Russia, the U.K., the U.S., the European Union and, of course, Iran. Not exactly a wieldy bunch.

The Iranians will likely claim that "consultation" with the Joint Commission doesn't bind Tehran, just as the U.S. president isn't bound by consultations with Congress. The agreement says the consultation process will not exceed seven days, but Iran can point out that the nuclear deal doesn't specify when Iran and the IAEA must reach agreement and "resolve" IAEA concerns.

In the absence of Iran-IAEA agreement, a majority of the Joint Commission has seven days to "advise" on the "necessary means" to resolve the matter. Iran may fairly argue that the commission's right to "advise" is