

HONORING THE CIVIL AIR PATROL

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Civil Air Patrol and the contributions this civilian auxiliary makes to our great nation. The Civil Air Patrol supports America's communities with emergency response; diverse aviation and ground services; youth development; and promotion of air, space, and cyber power.

The Civil Air Patrol consists of 1,445 squadrons and approximately 58,000 volunteer youth and adult members nationwide. It is congressionally chartered and operates as a nonprofit organization. It is made up of 8 geographic regions, consisting of 52 wings throughout the 50 States, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia.

Mr. Speaker, on Saturday evening, I had the honor of speaking at the Pennsylvania Wing Civil Air Patrol's 2018 Conference in Grantville, Pennsylvania. More than 400 Civil Air Patrol members and cadets throughout the Commonwealth will gather there this weekend to celebrate this outstanding civilian auxiliary. Colonel Gary L. Fleming is the wing commander.

Mr. Speaker, this year, the Civil Air Patrol is celebrating its 70-year association with the U.S. Air Force. Congress passed a law on May 26, 1948, designating the Civil Air Patrol as the official Air Force auxiliary. The Civil Air Patrol cadet program has been in existence for more than 75 years. Cadet programs throughout the country are making incredible impacts. Cadet programs attract more than 25,000 members, ages 12 through 20.

The program educates youth in four main program areas: leadership, aerospace, fitness, and character development. It enriches the school curriculum through after-school programs. Programs offer orientation flights in powered and glider aircraft, as well as flight training scholarships. Activities and competitions are available for cadets at local, State, regional, and national levels. Opportunities for community development are available through the color guard and drill team, as well as emergency service missions.

The Civil Air Patrol makes up about 10 percent of each of the U.S. Air Force Academy's classes. The cadets who have earned the General Billy Mitchell Award enlist in the Air Force, U.S. Army, and U.S. Coast Guard at higher pay grades.

Mr. Speaker, the cadet program also offers college scholarships in several different disciplines, as well as an international air cadet exchange program.

The Civil Air Patrol cadet program truly encourages our youth to reach great heights. They have been building leaders for more than 75 years, and I am so proud of the Pennsylvania Wing

Civil Air Patrol Cadet Advisory Council for its incredible commitment to our youth. I wish them the best in advance of the annual conference later this week, and I look forward to joining them at that celebration as well.

DRAFT FARM BILL

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, this week, the House Committee on Agriculture will be marking up the most important bill that almost no one pays attention to, rolled out with very little fanfare. And actually, we can kind of understand why it has been sort of played down a little bit. The draft farm bill makes it more difficult to get SNAP benefits, while weakening the meager limits for farm subsidies and while cutting investments in conservation and innovative programs which people care deeply about.

The draft bill cuts billions from those SNAP benefits. It creates burdensome work requirements for caretakers of children over 6 and people between the ages of 50 and 59. Under this provision, people would have to find work or attend job training for at least 20 hours per week. The provisions won't do anything at all to address poverty. Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that, even for those in the general population, securing a job within 3 months is virtually unattainable.

There will be a spirited debate about whether we ought to reduce nutrition for low-income people, but there are a whole range of other items that need to have attention.

The commodities programs that channel 94 percent of the subsidies in the farm bill to people who grow six commodities. This bill will exempt most corporate farms from payment limits and make it easier for large agriculture entities to call themselves family farms and get even more subsidies. It gets rid of payment limits for marketing loan gains and loan deficiency payments and exempts partnerships, joint ventures, LLCs, and Subchapter S corporations from means testing, opening the loopholes wider.

In the area of conservation, which matters deeply to Americans across the country and makes a big difference to farmers and ranchers in Oregon, this bill gets rid of the Conservation Stewardship Program, one of the largest conservation programs in the farm bill. It cuts the conservation title by \$1 billion over 10 years and cuts funding for the working lands program by nearly \$5 billion over 10 years, and it weakens the Endangered Species Act by allowing pesticides to be approved without considering the impact on endangered species.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most important areas that needs our attention deals with local food and regional infrastructure to promote local sustain-

able agriculture. It effectively eliminates funding for farmers markets, value-added producer grants, and cost-sharing programs for organic certification by failing to reauthorize mandatory funding for these programs.

Mr. Speaker, I spent the better part of 2½ years traveling Oregon after the last farm bill asking people what they wanted. And I will tell you, people in Oregon—farmers and ranchers, people who eat, sports people, people who are involved with food production and nutrition—this is not the approach that people in our community want, nor, frankly, by all available evidence, the vast majority of farmers and ranchers.

They want to see reforms. They want to have a crop insurance program that isn't wasteful support for large commodity producers, but actually is available for people who grow food, specialty crops for nursery, and the wine industry. It ought to be helping beginning farmers and ranchers get a toehold. It ought to deal with the efforts to cut down food waste, to provide protection for animal welfare.

Mr. Speaker, the draft proposal that has been released is a missed opportunity, a missed opportunity for the committee. But I am hopeful that Congress, as this process works out, will step up and do its part to make it better, to focus on people who eat; people who care about clean air, clean water; people who want to protect animal welfare; people who want to have a vibrant, thriving local food scene; and to be able to provide food security for people who are at risk.

Mr. Speaker, we can do better. I strongly urge my colleagues to take a hard look at this proposal and think about what a farm bill would look like for their community. I think they will find this bill falls far, far short.

RECOGNIZING THE MIRACLE LEAGUE OF NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an organization in my district that strives to empower individuals with special needs as well as their families.

The Miracle League of Northampton Township fosters both social and educational growth through sports and recreation. Along with buddy programs and coaching opportunities, Miracle League offers those with special needs the ability to participate in baseball, basketball, bowling, and soccer leagues.

On May 5, this organization will be holding its first annual charity wiffle ball tournament. The Miracle League of Northampton Township Wiffle Ball Classic will take place at Miracle League Fields in Churchville, and will feature a single elimination bracket along with awards for best team name and best uniforms.

I would like to recognize president Brian Damiani and vice president Allan Corless, along with the executive directors, board members, and volunteers, for the countless hours they put in to improve the lives of those in Bucks County.

RECOGNIZING WARWICK TOWNSHIP FOR ITS RANK AS ONE OF PENNSYLVANIA'S SAFEST CITIES

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, we have no higher priority than working to ensure the safety of the communities we represent. Working with law enforcement and local officials is essential to meeting this responsibility. I am proud to recognize Warwick Township in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, for being ranked as one of our State's safest cities.

In identifying Pennsylvania's safest cities, the statistics were compiled from the FBI Uniform Crime Report. This information indicated that Warwick Township was the 15th safest city in the State of Pennsylvania. I would like to thank Judith Algeo, chairwoman of the Warwick Township Board of Supervisors, and Police Chief Mark Goldberg for their hard work in keeping our district a phenomenal place to live, work, and raise a family. I look forward to continuing our mission together.

MEMORIALIZING THE LIVES OF FRANK SKARTADOS AND JUDY KENNEDY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to memorialize two beloved elected officials from the Hudson Valley who passed away this weekend: Assemblyman Frank Skartados and Newburgh mayor, Judy Kennedy.

First, Assemblyman Frank Skartados represented a number of communities up and down the Hudson Valley. He lost a battle with cancer early Sunday morning. Even though he was struggling through his sickness, Frank still fought relentlessly for his neighbors up in Albany.

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Frank was an immigrant from Greece, grew up on a small Greek island, came to America as a teenager, learned English, paid his way through school, and built a successful business. He went on to represent the people of the Hudson Valley and the State Assembly for nearly a decade. Now, if that is not the American Dream, I don't know what is. My heart goes out to the Skartados family and to everyone else grieving his loss. We will miss Frank sorely.

I would also like to memorialize Judy Kennedy, the mayor of Newburgh, New York. Judy and I shared a love for the city of Newburgh. Judy also passed away from cancer this weekend. She fought through her sickness to serve

the people she cared so much about and the city she loved.

She was a relentless warrior for the people she represented. She brought the city of Newburgh through an economic crisis and presided over a real revitalization throughout that city. Our thoughts are with the Kennedy family as well, and, of course, the entire Newburgh community that will miss her leadership.

The public servants we lost this weekend were truly special people. They dedicated their lives to the people they served, and the best way for us to honor their legacy is to finish their work, to look out for the communities they represented, and to make sure they stay the wonderful places to live, work, and raise a family that they are.

Frank and Judy, thank you for all you have done for us. I hope everyone in the Hudson Valley joins me in saying a prayer in remembrance of their service, and, of course, we will see them; we will see them whenever we see the government doing something right. We will see them when we see the city of Newburgh continue to thrive. We will see them when we see the State government improving our environment—looking out for working families, fighting for people without a voice. That is where we will see their legacy, when we continue the work they fought so nobly and so long to advance.

Rest in peace.

CONCERNS ABOUT AMERICA'S FOOD BILL

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to raise concerns about the farm bill that we will consider in the House Agriculture Committee tomorrow.

In any legislation, there are parts of it that you support and there are areas that are problematic and there are titles that you may oppose. That is part of legislation. Some of these areas, of course, are works in progress. That is part of legislation as well. The farm bill is no exception.

There are parts of this proposal that are a continuation of good things that we have done in previous farm bills that have worked. This version of the farm bill supports programs that are critical to specialty crops in the San Joaquin Valley and across California and the Nation. Specialty crops are special. They are fresh fruits and vegetables that serve as the foundation of a healthy diet. California grows half of the Nation's specialty crops.

This bill also provides support for research and risk management tools that are necessary. That includes continuous support for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, a program that encourages farmers to be good stewards of our environment. It also has proposals that support programs that help our farmers, ranchers, and

dairy producers expand to foreign markets so we can compete.

Further, it also includes research and development of organic farming that continues to be very, very important, and it encourages a comprehensive approach to ensuring the health and security of our livestock. But we could do more in all of these areas.

There are also parts of this farm bill that, for me, are problematic. As written, the dairy provisions create an uneven playing field that protects some, while leaving others exposed, sowing a regional divide within the dairy industry.

Instead, we should raise the threshold for catastrophic coverage under the dairy safety net so we can respond more quickly for all dairy producers when milk markets plummet. The California dairy industry has hit hard times in recent years.

Lastly, there are components of this farm bill that I strongly oppose, as do countless other organizations, people in the San Joaquin Valley and across the country. One of these proposals makes changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, otherwise known as SNAP, that will devastate parts of the food program that are working well.

SNAP education and training programs are designed to help people and help recipients develop skills so ultimately they become self-reliant. I am a strong supporter of SNAP education and training programs. Although some of our SNAP education and training programs are yielding great results, we have a pilot project in Fresno County called the Fresno Bridge Academy that has expanded, and we now, as a result of the last farm bill, have 10 pilot projects around the country. In 2019, they are supposed to report back to the Congress to say what works and what doesn't work.

That is the way we should be doing this so that we can get people off of assistance, make them self-sufficient. We all agree that able-bodied people should be working. Yet, this farm bill makes enrollment in the SNAP education and training program mandatory, and in many cases, without giving them the necessary tools to get real jobs that exist.

We have been warned that such a strain on burgeoning programs may very well collapse, costing billions of dollars, and creating a new Federal bureaucracy. In addition, this proposal would systematically prevent people from getting food assistance that they badly need, including our disabled, our seniors, and our veterans. Twenty-five percent of my constituents are on SNAP and require food assistance.

This program is vital to the health of our communities, both in rural and urban areas in every State in the Nation. The farm bill is America's food bill. It is about our national security. It is very important. It should not serve some well and abandon others.

Although this proposal does include some good provisions, it fails to serve