

and women in uniform, and to serve under two able chairmen, Chairman Roe and Chairman Thornberry. Please know that although I am departing these committees, I'm not leaving in mind and spirit and will be always want and be willing to contribute to their and the House's efforts on behalf of our veterans and troops.

Thank you again for this opportunity to serve our nation in a new capacity, and please let me know what I can do to make sure the transition is a seamless one.

Sincerely,

BRAD WENSTRUP,
Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignations are accepted.

There was no objection.

ELECTING MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the House Republican Conference, I offer a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 897

Resolved, That the following named Members be, and are hereby, elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS: Mr. Ruthenford.

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE: Mr. Banks of Indiana.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY: Mrs. Lesko.

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY: Mr. Palmer, to rank immediately after Mr. Abraham; and Mrs. Lesko.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE: Mr. Gallagher.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS: Mr. Mast.

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS: Mr. Wenstrup.

Mr. WOODALL (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5698, PROTECT AND SERVE ACT OF 2018; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF S. 2372, VETERANS CEMETERY BENEFIT CORRECTION ACT; AND PRO- VIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2, AGRICULTURE AND NU- TRITION ACT OF 2018

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 891 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 891

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the

House the bill (H.R. 5698) to amend title 18, United States Code, to punish criminal offenses targeting law enforcement officers, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary; (2) the further amendment printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, if offered by the Member designated in the report, which shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, shall be considered as read, shall be separately debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question; and (3) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (S. 2372) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide outer burial receptacles for remains buried in National Parks, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. An amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of H.R. 5674 as reported by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, as modified by the amendment printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 3. At any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2) to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2023, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Agriculture. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Agriculture now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part C of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time speci-

fied in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment pursuant to this resolution, the Committee of the Whole shall rise without motion. No further consideration of the bill shall be in order except pursuant to a subsequent order of the House.

□ 1230

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 426 of the Congressional Budget and Empowerment Control Act of 1974, I make a point of order against consideration of the rule, House Resolution 891.

Section 426 of the Budget Act specifically states that the Rules Committee may not waive the point of order prescribed by section 425 of that same act.

Section 3 of House Resolution 891 states that: "All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived." Therefore, I make a point of order pursuant to section 426 of the Congressional Budget Act that this rule may not be considered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts makes a point of order that the resolution violates section 426(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

The gentleman has met the threshold burden under the rule, and the gentleman from Massachusetts and a Member opposed each will control 10 minutes of debate on the question of consideration. Following debate, the Chair will put the question of consideration as the statutory means of disposing of the point of order.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, it was a Republican bill passed in a Republican Congress, but this act was supposed to stop Congress from passing bills that forced huge new costs on State and local governments without giving them the money to pay for those costs.

Well, apparently it didn't work, because the farm bill, which is part of this rule, would impose massive new mandates on State and local governments in the Republican majority's quest to kick families off of SNAP.

For anyone unfamiliar, that is the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which helps to feed millions of struggling American families every day. But one provision in the farm bill would force States to deny SNAP benefits to families with an absent parent unless those households cooperate with child support enforcement agencies.

According to the CBO, that is the Congressional Budget Office, it is a nonpartisan group of experts that analyze this stuff. This additional burden on single-parent families would save

the Federal Government \$4 billion, but my Republican colleagues don't seem to have thought this through, because it would cost child support agencies over \$7 billion to recoup those child support payments. So they are spending \$7 billion to recoup \$4 billion.

CBO, that is the group of nonpartisan experts, says that the cost to States, who have no say in this matter, would be over \$1 billion.

Now, I don't know who wrote this provision, since it sure didn't come out of the Agriculture Committee or the hearings that we conducted, but whoever it was, they really need to work on their basic arithmetic skills.

When you spend \$7 billion to recoup \$4 billion, that is what I call a terrible idea, not legislating.

Now, another unfunded mandate would require States to offer employment and training services to SNAP recipients as part of the bill's devastating new work requirements. But according to CBO, again, these are the nonpartisan experts, the bill won't provide States with enough funds to implement those training programs.

So not only are Republicans heartlessly kicking 1 million Americans off of SNAP with these additional burdens, but they also are not providing States with enough money for training programs so that these people can find jobs and get their benefits back. I mean, you seriously can't make this stuff up.

CBO, again, the Congressional Budget Office, those nonpartisan experts, reported yet another intergovernmental mandate that would prevent communities from restricting the use of dangerous pesticides, even if they determine the restrictions are necessary to protect children's health, like stopping harmful insecticides from being sprayed near schools or hospitals.

This bill also requires that every State allow the sale of all legal agricultural products from other States, preempting States' food safety and environmental standards.

Now, you heard me right. The Republicans are preventing local communities from protecting their children from toxic chemicals and forcing States to allow products that break laws meant to protect the health and safety of their own citizens.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I thought the Republicans were supposed to be all about States' rights. The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act was a Republican bill, as I mentioned.

What about the rules of this institution? It is actually against House rules, believe it or not, to bring a bill to the floor that imposes unfunded mandates on State and local governments.

Not a problem, Mr. Speaker. The Republican-controlled Rules Committee, or as I like to call it, the "Break the Rules" Committee, waived that rule and gave this disastrous farm bill a get-out-of-jail-free card.

But it turns out that waiving the unfunded mandates rule is also against

the rules of the House. That is right. Republicans, once the party of States' rights, are rigging the rules and ignoring the law so that they can pass this disastrous bill.

So here is a moment, I think, where liberals and conservatives can come together, where all my Republican friends who oppose unfunded mandates can join with many of us on the Democratic side and actually do something. This is your chance to prove it and to stand up and to be counted.

Don't let the Rules Committee run roughshod over your values in the name of passing this lousy bill. Or maybe unfunded mandates on State and local governments are actually fine with my conservative friends just so long as they are imposed on a process that takes SNAP benefits away from millions of people.

As I find myself saying far too often these days, a bad process produces bad policy. And this farm bill is a bad policy, plain and simple. It is not thought out. It is a bunch of unfunded mandates. It is a disaster.

It is bad for the millions of working families, children, older adults, and other vulnerable Americans who will be kicked off of SNAP or see their benefits reduced. It is bad for farmers and ranchers, who are already suffering from low prices, low overhead, and market uncertainty, not to mention a new trade war, courtesy of Donald Trump. It is bad for State and local governments, who will have massive unpaid-for costs despite having no input whatsoever on the drafting of this bill.

So let's send it back to the drawing table so we can sit down in a bipartisan way, in the bipartisan tradition of the Agriculture Committee, and come up with smart, compassionate, forward-thinking legislation instead of this.

So I ask my colleagues to join with us in a bipartisan way against considering this rule, which ignores the costs this bill imposes on State and local governments, in violation of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

If you believe unfunded mandates are wrong, then you shouldn't support this rule. I mean, where are my conservative friends? Where is the Freedom Caucus, who rail about unfunded mandates? Where are you? I mean, I hope you are going to stand up and have the courage of your convictions and vote with us on this and send this bill back to committee, where we ought to do a farm bill in a bipartisan and a thoughtful way.

This process has been lousy from the beginning, and now we have a bill that has all kinds of protections, because there are all kinds of unfunded mandates on our States.

Wait till your governors begin to read the fine print in this farm bill, wait till your local agencies read the fine print in this farm bill.

So if you are for unfunded mandates, then vote against what I am suggesting here today. But if you want to put an

end to these unfunded mandates, then you need to take a stand.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I claim time in opposition to the point of order and in favor of consideration of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I don't claim to know as much about the farm bill as my friend from Massachusetts does. He has the privilege of representing his constituents both on the Rules Committee and on the Ag Committee.

I represent my constituents on the Rules Committee and on the Budget Committee. I work with CBO day in and day out, as my colleague knows.

CBO is absolutely charged with being the nonpartisan scorekeeper in all of these budgetary matters. But as the gentleman recalls, having worked for a former member of the Rules Committee himself, when Republicans passed and President Clinton signed the unfunded mandates point of order, it was designed with one goal and one goal only in mind, and that was to make sure that when Congress acts, it considers the impacts of folks back home. It considers whether or not it is shirking a responsibility in Washington and shifting that responsibility to State and local governments back home.

I will tell you with certainty, Mr. Speaker, that not a single Member on this side of the aisle has wavered in that commitment from when this bill passed in 1995 until today.

What my friend from Massachusetts references are programs that are implemented by the States in order to receive a Federal benefit. We see this happen all the time, day in and day out. You get all the transportation money that you want, but you need to alter your speed limit if you want to receive that transportation money. You can get all the transportation money you want, but you need to deal with your drinking age if you want to get that money.

What we are talking about today at its core, Mr. Speaker, is whether or not, at a time when we have the lowest unemployment rate in my lifetime, at a time when we have more jobs available to be filled in America than ever before in American history, whether it is a burden to say if you want to receive a Federal benefit, that being food stamps, that you should try to find a job first. If you can't find that job, we should get you enrolled in a job training program so that you can find the job.

At the end of the day, the farm bill aims to do two things with the SNAP program: number one, is continue to provide a safety net for families in need. But number two, to make sure it remains that net and tries to lift folks

out of poverty instead of trap them in poverty for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, this unfunded mandates point of order, I was in Congress at the time that it passed, has been a speed bump, a needed speed bump in the consideration of legislation time and time again.

Now, sadly, more often than not, we see it as a dilatory tactic on the House floor. We see it raised as something just to try to slow down the process and gum up the works.

That is not what is happening here today. I want to stipulate that that is true.

My friend from Massachusetts raises a legitimate concern, but what I would say to my colleagues is this is a task, an obligation that has been placed on the States in consideration of receiving a Federal benefit. Folks are not mandated to do anything at all, but if we are to participate in the program, if folks are to continue to work through the program, if we are to get people back to work, if we are to provide this safety net, if we are to succeed on behalf of our constituents, as we all want to do, then we are going to have a partnership between the Federal Government and the State governments to make that happen.

□ 1245

Again, I respect my friend from Massachusetts, Mr. Speaker. He is an authority on the farm bill and an authority on the SNAP program. But as far as the unfunded mandates point of order goes, I would encourage my colleagues to reject that request today and to vote in favor of proceeding with consideration of the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 3 minutes remaining.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I would encourage my colleague and anybody else to do something radical: actually read the CBO study.

Basically, what it says here is that the bill would impose intergovernmental mandates by amending SNAP eligibility requirements, placing new responsibilities on States as administrators of child support enforcement, and requiring new State activities in the SNAP program.

For large entitlement programs like SNAP and child support enforcement, UMRA defines an increase in the stringency of conditions on States and localities as an intergovernmental mandate if affected governments lack authority to offset those costs while continuing to provide required services. The bill's requirements would increase the workload of State agencies in areas where they have limited flexibility to amend their responsibilities and offset additional costs and, thus, would be intergovernmental mandates.

In other words, on a whole range of issues, this bill requires States to do so

much more, and the Federal Government does not provide the funding to meet those obligations. So if States want to provide SNAP benefits to their citizens, which I think every State continues to want to do, they are going to have to embrace all these unfunded mandates, add all these additional costs on to what they are already paying.

These are big, fat unfunded mandates. And I want to tell you, when your Governors read this bill, when you read this bill, you are going to be amazed about all these additional burdens that are going to be imposed on States and localities. If this isn't an unfunded mandate, if this wasn't what that Republican initiative was all about when it was first implemented, I have no idea what it is.

But I will tell you, even on the work training programs, this bill would provide maybe about \$30 per person for education and training. We are told that education and training programs, on average, range from \$7,000 to \$14,000 to be effective. So this is an unfunded mandate, plain and simple. If you care about unfunded mandates, you are going to support us in our initiative here today.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, again, I recognize my friend's passion. I tell you, this is not going to be the end of my friend's passion. We are going to be here for another hour, together, talking about the farm bill, and I suspect we will see even a new degree of passion because my friend from Massachusetts is incredibly committed to his point of view on the SNAP program.

What I would tell you, Mr. Speaker—and I will speak on behalf of my Governor from the great State of Georgia; I will speak on behalf of my legislators and my administrators in the great State of Georgia—folks want to be a part of lifting people out of poverty. Nobody wants to be a part of trapping people in a cycle of poverty, and there is absolutely, Mr. Speaker, a degree of complicity that this Chamber has often been involved in by saying: This is the best we can do. We can't do any better, and we are just going to resign ourselves to the fact that generational poverty will continue. I say nonsense, and this bill is a step in the right direction.

I share my friend's frustration that what should have been a bipartisan farm bill, what traditionally is a bipartisan farm bill, went off the rails somewhere in the process and folks walked away from the table. We can assign blame however we choose to do it; but in this case, Mr. Speaker, we are talking about a bill that is going to take a major step forward in lifting folks out of poverty, a major step forward in putting people back to work, a major step forward in making sure that folks who receive Federal benefits are those who

need Federal benefits, but those who have opportunities to do more and to do better for their families have partners in both their Federal and State governments to make that happen. I think that is what all my colleagues here want.

I encourage my friends to reject my friend's point of order and to vote to consider this bill today.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

The question is, Will the House now consider the resolution?

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 223, nays 181, not voting 23, as follows:

[Roll No. 184]

YEAS—223

Abraham	Fitzpatrick	Love
Aderholt	Fleischmann	Lucas
Allen	Flores	MacArthur
Amodei	Fortenberry	Marchant
Arrington	Fox	Marino
Babin	Frelinghuysen	Marshall
Bacon	Gaetz	Masie
Banks (IN)	Gallagher	Mast
Barletta	Garrett	McCarthy
Barr	Gianforte	McCaul
Barton	Gibbs	McClintock
Bergman	Gohmert	McHenry
Biggs	Goodlatte	McKinley
Bilirakis	Gosar	McMorris
Bishop (MI)	Gowdy	Rodgers
Bishop (UT)	Granger	McSally
Black	Graves (GA)	Meadows
Blackburn	Graves (LA)	Messer
Blum	Graves (MO)	Mitchell
Bost	Griffith	Moolenaar
Brady (TX)	Grothman	Mooney (WV)
Brat	Guthrie	Mullin
Brooks (AL)	Handel	Newhouse
Brooks (IN)	Harper	Noem
Buchanan	Harris	Norman
Buck	Hartzler	Nunes
Bucshon	Hensarling	Olson
Budd	Herrera Beutler	Palazzo
Burgess	Hice, Jody B.	Palmer
Byrne	Higgins (LA)	Paulsen
Calvert	Hill	Pearce
Carter (GA)	Holding	Perry
Carter (TX)	Hollingsworth	Pittenger
Chabot	Hudson	Poe (TX)
Cheney	Huizenga	Poliquin
Coffman	Hultgren	Posey
Cole	Hunter	Ratcliffe
Collins (GA)	Hurd	Renacci
Collins (NY)	Issa	Rice (SC)
Comer	Jenkins (KS)	Roby
Comstock	Jenkins (WV)	Roe (TN)
Conaway	Johnson (LA)	Rogers (AL)
Cook	Johnson (OH)	Rohrabacher
Costello (PA)	Johnson, Sam	Rokita
Cramer	Jordan	Rooney, Francis
Crawford	Joyce (OH)	Rooney, Thomas
Culberson	Katko	J.
Curbelo (FL)	Kelly (MS)	Ros-Lehtinen
Curtis	Kelly (PA)	Ross
Davidson	King (IA)	Rothfus
Davis, Rodney	King (NY)	Rouzer
Denham	Kinzing	Royce (CA)
DeSantis	Knight	Russell
DesJarlais	Kustoff (TN)	Rutherford
Diaz-Balart	LaHood	Sanford
Donovan	LaMalfa	Scalise
Duffy	Lamborn	Schweikert
Duncan (SC)	Lance	Scott, Austin
Duncan (TN)	Latta	Sensenbrenner
Dunn	Lesko	Sessions
Emmer	Lewis (MN)	Shimkus
Estes (KS)	LoBiondo	Simpson
Faso	Long	Smith (MO)
Ferguson	Loudermilk	Smith (NE)

Smith (NJ)	Turner	Westerman
Smith (TX)	Upton	Williams
Smucker	Valadao	Wilson (SC)
Stefanik	Wagner	Wittman
Stewart	Walberg	Womack
Stivers	Walden	Woodall
Taylor	Walker	Yoder
Tenney	Walorski	Yoho
Thompson (PA)	Walters, Mimi	Young (AK)
Tipton	Weber (TX)	Young (IA)
Trott	Wenstrup	Zeldin

NAYS—181

Adams	Gomez	Norcross
Aguilar	Gonzalez (TX)	O'Halleran
Amash	Gottheimer	O'Rourke
Barragan	Green, Al	Pallone
Bass	Green, Gene	Panetta
Beatty	Grijalva	Pascrell
Bera	Hanabusa	Payne
Bishop (GA)	Hastings	Pelosi
Blumenauer	Heck	Perlmutter
Blunt Rochester	Higgins (NY)	Peters
Bonamici	Himes	Peterson
Boyle, Brendan	Hoyer	Pingree
F.	Huffman	Pocan
Brady (PA)	Jackson Lee	Polis
Brownley (CA)	Jayapal	Price (NC)
Bustos	Jeffries	Quigley
Butterfield	Johnson (GA)	Raskin
Capuano	Johnson, E. B.	Rice (NY)
Carbajal	Jones	Rosen
Carson (IN)	Kaptur	Roybal-Allard
Cartwright	Keating	Ruiz
Castor (FL)	Kelly (IL)	Ruppersberger
Castro (TX)	Kennedy	Rush
Cicilline	Khanna	Ryan (OH)
Clark (MA)	Kihuen	Sánchez
Clarke (NY)	Kildee	Sarbanes
Clay	Kilmer	Schakowsky
Cleaver	Kind	Schiff
Clyburn	Krishnamoorthi	Schneider
Cohen	Kuster (NH)	Schrader
Connolly	Lamb	Scott (VA)
Cooper	Langevin	Scott, David
Correa	Larsen (WA)	Serrano
Costa	Larson (CT)	Sewell (AL)
Courtney	Lawrence	Sherman
Crist	Lawson (FL)	Sinema
Crowley	Lee	Sires
Cuellar	Levin	Smith (WA)
Cummings	Lewis (GA)	Soto
Davis (CA)	Lieu, Ted	Speier
Davis, Danny	Loebach	Suozi
DeFazio	Lofgren	Swalwell (CA)
Delaney	Lowenthal	Takano
DeLauro	Lowe	Thompson (CA)
DelBene	Lujan, Ben Ray	Thompson (MS)
Demings	Lynch	Titus
DeSaulnier	Maloney,	Tonko
Deutch	Carolyn B.	Torres
Dingell	Maloney, Sean	Tsongas
Doggett	Matsui	Vargas
Doyle, Michael	McCollum	Veasey
F.	McEachin	Vela
Ellison	McGovern	Velázquez
Eshoo	Meeks	Visclosky
Espallat	Meng	Walz
Esty (CT)	Moore	Wasserman
Evans	Moulton	Schultz
Foster	Murphy (FL)	Waters, Maxine
Frankel (FL)	Nadler	Watson Coleman
Fudge	Napolitano	Welch
Galleo	Neal	Yarmuth
Garamendi	Nolan	

NOT VOTING—23

Beyer	Labrador	Richmond
Brown (MD)	Lipinski	Rogers (KY)
Cárdenas	Luetkemeyer	Roskam
Chu, Judy	Lujan Grisham,	Shea-Porter
DeGette	M.	Shuster
Engel	McNerney	Thornberry
Gabbard	Reed	Webster (FL)
Gutiérrez	Reichert	Wilson (FL)

□ 1316

Ms. KAPTUR, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So the question of consideration was decided in the affirmative.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CRAWFORD). The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), an Ag Committee member and my fellow Rules Committee member, pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

I thank my colleagues for standing with me to consider this rule and then these three underlying measures today.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, the rule before us today, House Resolution 891, makes in order three pieces of legislation. The one that you heard discussed already today is H.R. 2, the Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018. Two other measures included in this rule are H.R. 5698, the Protect and Serve Act of 2018, and S. 2372, the VA MISSION Act of 2018.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, this week is Police Week, and police officers serving our communities every day with distinction get this 1 week a year that we all take a moment to pause and say thank you. President Trump made that point yesterday just outside the Capitol talking about these heroes who put their life on the line absolutely every day.

To quote the President, he said: “Your moms and dads were among the bravest Americans to ever live” when he was talking to the children of fallen officers. Of course, he was absolutely right.

For that reason I am particularly pleased that the rule today brings up the Protect and Serve Act of 2018. It brings it to the floor under a structured amendment process. The bill makes it a Federal crime to intentionally cause or to attempt to cause serious bodily harm to any law enforcement officer. I say that again, Mr. Speaker. It makes it a Federal crime to attempt to cause or intentionally cause serious bodily harm to any law enforcement officer.

Mr. Speaker, we are trying to speak in the absolute strongest terms when we speak on behalf of our men and women in law enforcement uniforms. In fact, just last night in the Rules Committee, my friend, Mr. MCGOVERN from Massachusetts, said there is virtually no disagreement between the parties and the Chambers on this legislation.

Another bill we can agree on, Mr. Speaker, is the VA MISSION Act. In

fact, I was with one of The American Legion chapters in our district just Monday talking about the very provisions in this bill and how they can make a substantive difference for our men and women who have served us in the Armed Forces.

This is a four corners agreement bill, Mr. Speaker, and by four corners, I mean the chairmen and the ranking members on the House side and on the Senate side have agreed on this legislation. They have worked together on this legislation, and they have put it together in a way that we can all be proudly supportive of that final product.

Let me tell you what this bill will do in specifics, Mr. Speaker.

It consolidates seven duplicative community care programs into one program that is easier for our veterans to understand and to access. It ensures that the Veterans Choice Program has enough funding to continue working for our veterans for yet another year as the committees continue to perfect that program. I am sure you hear the same constructive counsel that I do, Mr. Speaker. Good for Congress for letting us opt out so that we can get the services we need quickly. But the Veterans Choice Program still has work to do to get those agreements approved promptly and get those doctors reimbursed promptly.

The VA MISSION Act, Mr. Speaker, also creates a fair and transparent process for a comprehensive audit of the VA's physical facilities. Where are those regions of the country that are underserved? Where are those regions of the country where consolidation would better serve?

The VA can transform its aging infrastructure. This bill provides a comprehensive audit process so that we can modernize the VA for today's veterans. It expands the caregiver program, Mr. Speaker, to provide the benefits to pre-9/11 veterans so that they are in parity with those benefits of post-9/11 veterans, and it provides VA provider recruitment and retention efforts so that our veterans have access to those medical personnel that they desperately need.

These reforms aren't just supported by those four corners that I mentioned, the Republicans and Democrats who lead the Veterans' Affairs Committee in the House and who lead the committees in the Senate, but they are also supported by over 30 veterans' service organizations from across the country, Mr. Speaker, as Chairman ROE highlighted in the Rules Committee just last night.

I don't pretend that these measures do everything for everyone, Mr. Speaker. They do not. But it is another in a long step of bills making progress on behalf of the American people. Whether we are talking about our men and women in law enforcement uniforms, Mr. Speaker, or whether we are talking about our men and women who have worn our military uniforms, it is another example of how Chairman ROE

and Ranking Member WALZ and our colleagues in the Senate are taking steps forward to repay our debts.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, as we have already heard discussed, this rule would make in order H.R. 2, our Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018. It doesn't just make in order the base text, Mr. Speaker, it also makes in order 20 amendments that have been offered by both Republicans and Democrats in this Chamber who would like to try to make that bill even better. Twenty amendments have been made in order already, and when we finish debate here on the floor, my colleague from Massachusetts and I will return to the Rules Committee upstairs, and we will consider yet another round of amendments this afternoon so that we can continue to perfect this bill throughout the week.

Mr. Speaker, one rule, three bills—three bills that have the ability to make a difference for families across the country north, south, east, and west. I hope my colleagues will support this rule, get involved in that underlying debate, and support those bills on final passage as well.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) for the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Georgia just said one rule three bills, which has become kind of a habit around here where we try to bunch a whole bunch of bills together in one rule so we don't actually focus on any one issue in a way that is meaningful. It is, I think, an attempt to try to stifle debate.

We have a bill that would protect our police. We have a bill that would deal with veterans. And then we have the farm bill. Mr. Speaker, I want to focus on the farm bill, if I may.

I have served on the Agriculture Committee since 2011. Historically, it has been one of the most—if not the most—bipartisan committee in the House of Representatives. That is how farm bills are normally crafted, through compromise and through a coalition of Members from urban and rural America coming together to get something done.

That is why I have always had faith in this process—faith that minority views would be heard. Even when it wasn't easy and even when the final product wasn't perfect, the end product was traditionally bipartisan. Until today.

The process for this farm bill was a sham. In no way did it reflect the Agriculture Committee's long, bipartisan tradition. I am the ranking member of the Nutrition Subcommittee, and even I wasn't able to see a word of text until this bill was publicly released. I am not

even sure when Republicans on the subcommittee first saw the language.

Over the last 2½ years, the Agriculture Committee held 23 hearings on SNAP. Apparently, they were just for show, because not a single witness—Democrat or Republican—recommended any of the drastic cuts or draconian policy changes to SNAP included in this Republican farm bill.

When our distinguished ranking member on the committee, Mr. PETERSON, was finally asked for Democratic feedback on the nutrition title, he gave a long, thoughtful list of objections and suggested changes. His input was ignored with the majority changing barely a handful of words in this whole bill.

The Republican farm bill is filled with controversial provisions, and no one will tell us how they even got into the bill. Believe me, Mr. Speaker, I have asked. I can't get an answer. Maybe President Trump's ethically challenged White House opened its doors even wider to lobbyists and let them write key parts of this bill. Or perhaps an arch-conservative think tank was given the chance to airdrop its wish list into the bill.

But I suspect something more mundane and damaging. I think the Speaker viewed this bill as his last chance to enact sweeping cuts to safety net programs before he retires. Even the number of this bill, H.R. 2, was always reserved by the Speaker for his so-called welfare reform bill.

So I warn my colleagues on both sides of the aisle: make no mistake. This legislation is a transformation of our social safety net dressed up as a farm bill. It beats up, belittles, and demonizes poor people all across this country. It doesn't even try to put lipstick on this pig.

Mr. Speaker, last week it was reported that the Republican Conference brought in communicator Frank Luntz to try to wordsmith how Republicans can justify supporting this bill. They must be terrified. They know that just explaining the reality would appall and enrage most Americans.

Now, Mr. Luntz is the same guy who helped craft Speaker Gingrich's Contract with America. He earned PolitiFact's lie of the year in 2010 for one of his debunked claims on healthcare reform and even tried once in an interview to turn the term Orwellian into something positive. Mr. Speaker, he has his work cut out for him here because I don't even think Mr. Luntz can wordsmith something so cruel into something positive.

Now, here is how mean this bill really is. SNAP is our Nation's premier anti-hunger program, our first line of defense against hunger. People, including the most vulnerable among us—kids, the disabled, and the elderly—turn to it when there is no other option. For them, there is no plan B when they are struggling to figure out where their next meal is coming from. With this bill, Republicans are cutting

SNAP by over \$20 billion. Millions of people would see their benefits slashed, and many would be cut off from assistance entirely.

□ 1330

Why are the Republicans doing this?

To pay for hoisting their latest unproven and way underfunded State-based workforce bureaucracy experiment on the entire Nation. That is why. I say "unproven" because I don't see any evidence or studies suggesting that any of this will even work. In fact, I have a study here that points out the flaws in this proposal.

It expands work requirements for poor parents while making millionaires and billionaires eligible for subsidies even if they don't live or work on a farm.

You can't make this stuff up. There is no evidence that this approach is effective. We have no idea whether States have the manpower or infrastructure to take this on. We have no idea how much it will cost States to put a recipient through a job training program. This bill would give States just \$30 to train each person, when we know it costs thousands of dollars per person to fund robust job training programs.

Mr. Speaker, it would be laughable if this weren't so serious.

Currently, States are testing the effectiveness of job training programs as a way to help SNAP recipients move out of poverty. But we aren't expecting to get the results of these pilot programs until 2021.

Shouldn't we wait to see the results of State pilot programs? Shouldn't we wait until we know what might work and what doesn't? Why should we force our Governors and States to gamble on a sweeping, untested bureaucracy that appears doomed to failure?

Clearly, the Republicans aren't going to let a lack of facts stop them from creating this massive, new government bureaucracy that will affect millions of vulnerable Americans. This is from a party that claims to want a government so small, they could drown it in a bathtub. Apparently, they want a government just small enough to leave millions of poor and working Americans with nowhere to turn.

This isn't about helping people; this is about putting up roadblocks that make nutrition assistance difficult, if not impossible, to get.

This legislation also severs the link between SNAP and the Low Income Heating Energy Assistance Program, or LIHEAP. This connection is what has allowed disabled and working families to receive credit for out-of-pocket heating and cooling expenses without unnecessary trips to the SNAP office. But the changes in this bill would force recipients to make those unnecessary trips, and they would lead to more hassles and avoidable errors and people falling through the cracks.

I think the Republican leaders in the House are the only people on this planet who believe that creating unnecessary hassles count as some kind of laudable reform.

The Republican farm bill would also eliminate broad-based categorical eligibility. This has been a critical option that States have used to help working families with kids and seniors during tough times. More than 40 States today use this option, including 12 States with Republican Governors. Eliminating it would cause 400,000 eligible households—close to 1 million people—to lose their food benefits. The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office estimated that 265,000 students will lose access to free school lunches if this bill were to become law.

You know, when I was growing up, it was school bullies that went after kids' lunch money; it wasn't the United States Congress. This is shameful.

But let's also be clear here that eliminating broad-based categorical eligibility would throw close to 1 million people off of SNAP who work. Basically, it would deny SNAP benefits to people who earn under \$16,000 a year.

Mr. Speaker, what the hell is wrong with this place?

These people can't get through the year on that. That is not enough to feed one's self or one's family.

The Republican Congress, who rushed to raise taxes on 86 million middle class families to pay for a tax cut for large corporations and the richest 1 percent, is now trying to stop kids from getting school lunches and taking assistance away from families struggling with hunger.

This entire Congress has been one long, slow march toward making life harder for the poor, the hungry, and working Americans. I am tired of a Congress that prioritizes the rich, that looks out only for the wealthy.

The legislation we take up here today should reflect our values. But this bill doesn't reflect my values, Mr. Speaker. This is a farm bill that doesn't even make significant improvements to our agricultural programs to help farmers who are caught in the middle of the President's trade war.

It is an attack on those living in poverty. It trades in stereotypes to justify shredding our social safety net, and it is hell-bent on making hunger worse in this country. This Republican farm bill is disgusting, and the process that got us here is disgusting.

By the way, just so Members are clear, the average SNAP benefit is \$1.40 per person per meal. I say to my colleagues, you try living on that.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds to say I agree with my friend. Asking single, working-age, healthy, nondisabled men to go to work is going to make their life harder. Going to work every day is hard. But I would also say to my friend that it is going to make their life better. It is a

value that we should share, not a value that we should repudiate.

This happens to be an area of disagreement, Mr. Speaker. There are so many areas of agreement we could be focusing on.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN), the chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the rule and the good work that was done there and the VA MISSION Act, which improves access to care for our veterans, funds the Choice Program, and expands the caregivers program for pre-9/11 veterans.

I would like to thank the chairman and ranking member for their work on this important legislation. I would particularly like to applaud the inclusion of the VA Medical Scribes Pilot Act. This was legislation that I helped write with Chairman ROE to set up a pilot program for including scribes in primary care teams at the VA.

Research in the private sector has shown that allowing scribes to handle electronic health records allows the healthcare providers, the doctors, to do more of what they do best, which is to treat the patients. So we have doctors treating patients rather than spending their valuable time doing paperwork.

Chairman ROE joined me in my district last fall on a tour of the VA clinic in White City, Oregon, where we heard firsthand about the administrative challenges the VA doctors face and how that affects their ability to care for veterans. The underlying bill that we will bring to the floor will help. The entire bill will help. This will help our docs have more time to spend with their patients.

We will continue to work with the VA on their implementation of this program, but I am pleased that it was included in the underlying legislation, Mr. Speaker.

Once again, I applaud the entire Veterans Affairs Committee on their work to give veterans the access to healthcare they have earned and deserve. I urge support and passage of the underlying VA MISSION Act and approval of the rule.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Under this bill, somebody who is working and earns like \$15,800 a year up to like \$23,000 a year, who works right now, and who currently receives SNAP would lose it under this. This is how you are rewarding their work. I just find that appalling.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SCHNEIDER).

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the cruel and partisan safety net cuts masquerading as the farm bill.

The farm bill has long been a partisan cause, offering assistance and security to farmers and needy families alike in a way that both Democrats and Republicans can support. But this

extreme bill cuts more than \$23 billion from nutrition assistance programs through eligibility restrictions, kicking a projected 1 million households off the SNAP program and reducing benefits for millions more.

Let me be clear: these are vital, life-saving benefits to help Americans put food on the table during moments of need. The average family spends just 10 months on SNAP, receiving assistance just long enough to get back on their feet. At the same time, the program helps set our kids up for success. Hungry children perform worse in school, and studies have shown that children on SNAP achieve higher test scores and are more likely to graduate from high school. Children on SNAP achieve higher test scores and succeed, and they have the opportunity to do well later in life.

Mr. Speaker, the partisan approach was the wrong way on tax reform, it was the wrong way on healthcare, and it is the wrong way now. I urge my Republican colleagues to abandon this party-line legislation and instead approach the farm bill in the fair, bipartisan manner we have in the past.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I agree with my friend. I think, as a general rule, partisan approaches are the wrong way. This is certainly not what my chairman desired. It is certainly not where any of us wanted to end up. When folks walk away from the table, it is where we do in fact end up.

This is the start of the process. This is not the end of the process. I regret the way that this has sorted out for my ag friends. But we can't do nothing because folks have gotten up and walked away from the table. We have to continue to do what our constituents have asked us to do, and this is a good step in that direction.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), a distinguished member of the Rules Committee.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I want to draw attention to provisions of this bill which attack bedrock environmental laws and recklessly promote logging over clean water, recreation, and wildlife.

In a district like mine, where the holdings of the U.S. Forest Service are extensive, this bill is a critical part of helping to protect our economy, our way of life, and the way we enjoy our public lands.

Title 8 of the bill includes blatant attempts that undermine the Endangered Species Act, NEPA, and the roadless area conservation rule. This bill allows for congressional exemptions—basically, an earmark—to prevent environmental reviews and public comment periods that actually prevent communities from having a say over what happens quite literally in their backyard. I think that we need to make sure that we involve our local communities. This bill empowers Washington,

D.C., decisionmakers by taking that control away from our communities.

It weakens the Endangered Species Act by eliminating scientific expert opinion about whether projects would harm endangered species and their critical habitats, and it prioritizes logging over recreation, even going so far as shifting incentives to emphasize logging over environmental restoration in other areas that support the outdoor recreation economy, one of the biggest sources of jobs in my district and in my State.

Before the ink is even dry on the omnibus, this farm bill threatens to renege on the bipartisan wildfire budget deal with more proposals that weaken protections and mitigation on our public lands.

In my State, the 6,000-acre congressional exemption or earmark would have a detrimental impact, but it would have an even worse impact on the much smaller Eastern and Midwestern forests, where 6,000 acres would vastly exceed the annual sustainable maximum harvest.

When the Forest Service needs to do a 6,000-acre project, it already can. It needs to take input from the public nearby in our neighborhoods and in our communities about how they would be affected. Of course, it should consider how water, soil, and wildlife habitat can be protected.

For years, congressional debate over forest management has been framed by the need to address hazardous fuels for wildfires. This bill takes a step away from that and makes it clear that reform efforts weren't actually about wildfire; they are about efforts to give away our public lands to timber and other industries and silence the voice of residents.

Congress should stop trying to legislate logging projects and take control. Washington should allow our communities to have a say. The Forest Service has many tools today that include local input. All Americans deserve a say in how our public lands are managed. Endangered species should certainly not be sacrificed just so more of our forests can be logged.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from over 120 conservation groups opposed to these harmful forestry provisions in H.R. 2, and I urge my colleagues to vote "no."

MAY 11, 2018.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of our millions of members and supporters we urge you to strongly oppose the extreme and divisively partisan federal forest provisions in the Forestry Title of the Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018 (H.R. 2), also known as "the House Farm Bill."

The legislation is replete with provisions that undermine bedrock environmental laws, including the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Endangered Species Act (ESA), and Roadless Area Conservation Rule (Roadless Rule). This bill consistently prioritizes the logging industry over all other forest stakeholders. It would cause irreparable harm to our federal forests, the millions of Americans who depend on them for clean drinking water, subsistence, recre-

ation, and economic benefit, and the wildlife that call them home.

The federal forest provisions in the House Farm Bill also run contrary to the wildfire funding agreement reached only weeks ago in the Fiscal Year 2018 Omnibus. A deal was only reached after significant environmental concessions to pro-logging hardliners, even though a comprehensive wildfire funding solution had solid bi-partisan support in both chambers going into the omnibus negotiation.

Ignoring that compromise, H.R. 2 would allow logging, grazing, and many other activities on up to 6,000-acres—almost 10 square miles for each single project—without any NEPA review or disclosure of potential harms. The numerous new exemptions are double the size of the legislated NEPA exclusion just passed in the omnibus deal and they also eliminate the requirement, preserved in the omnibus agreement, to consider cumulative effects and "extraordinary circumstances" such as wilderness areas and endangered species.

This partisan bill also goes further than the omnibus deal on the ESA, allowing federal land management agencies to "self-consult" on whether their actions would harm threatened and endangered species even though such self-consultation has already been declared unlawful by the courts. Additionally, it attacks the landmark Roadless Rule, makes resource management and forest stewardship dependent on logging revenue, creating a perverse incentive, and jeopardizes fire-vulnerable communities by deprioritizing hazardous fuels reduction efforts in the Wildland Urban Interface.

The harmful federal forest proposals in this legislation solve no problem; they only add controversy to the House Farm Bill and weaken its chances of becoming law.

For all of these reasons we strongly urge you to OPPOSE the federal forest provisions in the House Farm Bill and any amendments that further undermine environmental safeguards on our federal forests.

Thank you,

Alaska Wilderness League; Allegheny Defense Project; Alpine Lakes Protection Society; Appalachian Voices; Arise for Social Justice; Bark; Beaver Valley Preservation Alliance; California Native Plant Society; Cascade Forest Conservancy; Cascadia Wildlands; Center for Biological Diversity; Center for Sierra Nevada Conservation; Cherokee Forest Voices; Christians For The Mountains; Climate Change Major Disaster Declaration Campaign; Colorado Native Plant Society; Conservation Colorado; Conservation Congress; Conservation Northwest; Darby Creek Valley Association.

Defenders of Wildlife; Dolores River Boating Advocates; Earth Island Institute's John Muir Project; Earthjustice; Endangered Species Coalition; EnviroAce, LLC; Environmental Protection Information Center; Friends of Bell Smith Springs; Friends of Grays Harbor; Friends of Lake Monroe; Friends of Plumas Wilderness; Friends of the Bitterroot; Friends of the Inyo; Georgia ForestWatch; Grand Canyon Trust; Great Old Broads for Wilderness; Great Old Broads for Wilderness—Grand Junction Broadband; Great Old Broads for Wilderness—Rio Grande Valley Broadband; Great Old Broads for Wilderness—Select Roaring Fork Broadband; Greater Hells Canyon Council.

Greenenvironment, LLC; Heartwood; High Country Conservation Advocates; Hoosier Environmental Council; Idaho Conservation League; Indiana Forest Alliance; Izaak Walton League Bush Lake Chapter; Izaak Walton League Cass County Chapter; Izaak Walton League W.J. McCabe Chapter; Kentucky Conservation Committee; Kentucky Environmental Foundation; Kentucky

Heartwood; Kentucky Resources Council, Inc.; Kettle Range Conservation Group; Klamath Forest Alliance; KS Wild; La Cueva Guardians; League of Conservation Voters; Los Padres ForestWatch; Mass Forest Rescue Campaign.

Minnesota Division Izaak Walton League of America; Montana Wilderness Association; MountainTrue; National Parks Conservation Association; Natural Resources Defense Council; Nature Abounds; Nature for All; New Mexico Sportsmen; New Mexico Wild; New Mexico Wilderness Alliance; New Mexico Wildlife Federation; New River Alliance of Climbers; North Cascades Conservation Council; Northcoast Environmental Center; Ohio Environmental Council; Olympic Forest Coalition; Olympic Park Associates; Once a Forest; Oregon Wild; Partnership for Policy Integrity.

Partnership for the National Trails System; PennFuture; Pennsylvania Council of Churches; Public Lands Media; RESTORE: The North Woods; Rocky Mountain Recreation Initiative; Rocky Mountain Wild; San Juan Citizens Alliance; San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council; Sangre de Cristo Audubon Society; Santa Fe Forest Coalition; Save Our Sky Blue Waters; Sequoia ForestKeeper; Shawnee Forest Sentinels; Sheep Mountain Alliance; Shelton Trace Association; Sierra Club; Sierra Forest Legacy; Sky Island Alliance; Southern Environmental Law Center.

Southern Illinoisans Against Fracturing Our Environment; Speak for the Trees; Tennessee Wild; The Enviro Show; The Lands Council; The Wilderness Society; Tulare County Audubon Society; Umpqua Watersheds, Inc.; Virginia Wilderness Committee; Water Stone Outdoors; West Virginia Environmental Council; West Virginia Highlands Conservancy; West Virginia Rivers Coalition; West Virginia Wilderness Coalition; Western Environmental Law Center; White Mountain Conservation League; WildEarth Guardians; Wilderness Workshop; Winter Wildlands Alliance; Zumbro Valley Audubon.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the farm economy is the biggest contributor to Georgia GDP. Georgia families wake up every day back home and go out and often, in some cases, are working land that their father worked before them and their grandfather worked before them.

We have had the Georgia Farm Bureau in town pleading with us to bring some certainty to ag policy.

There are two parts to a farm bill, for all the reasons that folks who got here long before I did can explain: why it is we do a food stamp half of a farm bill and an actual farmer half of the farm bill.

It is so often true that the SNAP program gets all the conversation, Mr. Speaker. But as you heard from my friend from Colorado, while the money is not where the farmers and those farm families are, that is certainly where the policy is.

It has been true time and time again that, in a collaborative, bipartisan, bicameral way, we have come together as a House and a Senate and moved policy forward to provide market certainty for those farmers.

You don't always appreciate the farmers in your community, Mr. Speaker, when you can go to the grocery store and grab anything you want

at absolutely any time you want. Those things don't happen by accident. They happen with a whole lot of sweat equity, a whole lot of risk-taking, and, candidly, with a whole lot of prayer going on across farm communities in this land.

□ 1345

This bill responds to some of the marketplace needs that we are finding in the 21st century. You are going to see those collaborative veins throughout this measure, Mr. Speaker. I hope my colleagues will look not just at the SNAP program, but also at the certainty that we will provide to the very hardworking farm families across this country.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia for his comments. I think, again, if the gentleman reads this bill, he and his farmers should be concerned about this bill because it does not increase support for our farm safety net and support prices. So we have a lot of farmers who are deeply concerned about that part of the bill as well.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to urge that we defeat the previous question. If we do, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up Representative LAMB's legislation, H.R. 5805, which provides the fix needed to implement the VA MISSION Act to ensure that it is not hindered by budget caps.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, to discuss that proposal, I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. LAMB).

Mr. LAMB. Mr. Speaker, the VA MISSION Act is a good bill. I support it.

For too long, our veterans could really question whether this government means it when we say that we value their service. We cannot erase those doubts in one day or in one bill, but we can take a positive step forward, and we are doing that today. Both parties are doing that together.

Together, we are finally giving all caregivers the tools they need for the heroic work that they do. We are strengthening VA at its core by attracting the best and the brightest to work there, and we are giving veterans a real choice to seek the best treatment anywhere, whether in or outside of the VA.

This is a good bill, but it is not perfect. We owe it to our veterans and to the taxpayers to explain how we will pay for this.

There is a strict cap on VA's budget, and the MISSION Act will bust that

cap, so all of the good things in the MISSION Act will trigger harsh, automatic cuts in the rest of VA's budget. This will force the VA to rob Peter to pay Paul.

This is not hypothetical. One year from now, these cuts will be triggered, and a veteran today would be right to ask if his favorite nurse will be laid off or if the old and slow computer systems at the VA will get even older and even slower. The money has to come from somewhere in the VA's budget.

But there is another way. The money we are spending today does not have to count against the budget cap. That budget cap was set before we ever made these improvements to the VA. It is a separate issue, and the cap number shouldn't hold us back. My bill, H.R. 5805, would simply count the new money as separate so that it does not bust the rest of the VA's budget.

Mr. Speaker, both sides of this House are working together to improve the VA. That is a great thing. Let's not make it any harder than it already is. Instead, let's finish the job. We have to spend what it takes to get the job done. No more, but also no less.

Our veterans are looking to us to make the VA stronger, not weaker. The workers of the VA are depending upon us to give them what they need for their mission. Automatic budget cuts will not accomplish that mission.

I ask my colleagues on both sides to help us, help our veterans, and help our workers. Vote "no" on the motion on ordering the previous question so that my bill, H.R. 5805, can be made in order.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it is my first time on the floor with our new colleague from Pennsylvania. I appreciate not just his service here, but his service to our country in general. I feel his pain.

It is a good bill, but it is not a perfect bill, and we have got ways to do it. I have been here 7 years. I come down here time and time again to find good bills, Mr. Speaker, and I am always frustrated that we can't get it there.

What I have determined, Mr. Speaker, that I will share with you and with my friend from Pennsylvania is that the reason is because you folks don't agree with me. That is what I have decided is why I can't get to those perfect bills, because try as I might, I cannot get 434 other people to agree with me on everything all the time.

I will tell my friend from Pennsylvania, Mr. Speaker, the most discouraging day I have had in this institution was after we passed the Budget Control Act and we picked four of our finest Republicans and four of our finest Democrats from the House and also four from the Senate—Republicans, Democrats—and we locked them in a room together for 3 months. We said: Look at some of these mandatory spending programs like you have talked about. Look at the discretionary programs. Across-the-board

budget cuts are nonsensical. They don't reflect American priorities at all. So get together, talk to one another, work through it, and figure out a way that we can make the books balance so we don't mortgage our children's and our grandchildren's futures but so that we also keep the commitments that we have made to families today.

They met for 3 months, and they walked out of that room having looked at hundreds of trillions of dollars in Federal spending and agreed on not one penny of change together. I cannot tell you, Mr. Speaker—well, you remember how discouraging that day was.

Moving these dollars from mandatory spending to discretionary spending is absolutely going to put additional pressures on the budget process—I see my friend from Minnesota nodding his head; he is a true champion for our veterans—but, by golly, we have got to stand up and say yes to those dollars.

I got excoriated back home for voting in favor of raising the nondefense discretionary limits, but I have to go home and tell the story of how I am meeting promises to veterans that were not going to get met otherwise. I have got to go home and tell the story about how I am meeting promises for children that weren't going to get met otherwise. And I have got to go home and tell the story of how I don't have 218 votes to do it my way, and the only way to get anything done around here is in partnership.

Candidly, Mr. Speaker, we don't have a better example than the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Mr. WALZ' leadership, Dr. ROE's leadership. Time and time again, I see these two men go and not follow their own hearts and passions but try to do what is best for everyone, try to find a way forward when folks had bet against them and said you couldn't find a way forward.

I hear the concerns of my new colleague from Pennsylvania, Mr. Speaker, and I believe he is absolutely right; we are going to run up against that conversation next year. The question is will we have the courage to stand up together and fund those priorities next year.

I am looking forward to the great outpouring of bipartisanship we are going to see in support of the VA MISSION Act today, and I will look forward to the great outpouring of support when the funding time comes to make sure we are as committed to those promises tomorrow as we are together this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ), the ranking member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Massachusetts and my friend from Georgia. We are going to see some camaraderie down here. I agree with the gentleman on this. And I thank Mr. LAMB for pointing out

clearly what needs to be done to this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the rule. This is one of those cases, and I think this is important on the rule, because, Mr. Speaker, we may know it in here, but for Americans who are watching this, the rule is how we have this debate. And this is an honest debate.

To be absolutely clear, there is no one in this Chamber who disagrees on the care for veterans. How we get there is what is different. On these amendments that Mr. LAMB was proposing to offer or other things that we would like to bring up to fix this, we should debate it here.

Dr. ROE, the chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, did this. He had an open rule. I brought up my amendment, it was debated, and I lost. That is democracy. I understand that. But it is the conversation that brings our Members in that gets us to consensus.

So, by structuring a closed rule—for the American people watching this, we already know what the score is of this game. We already know what is going to happen ahead of time. It is in this deliberative body that we should be having a detailed debate on this very proposal and then voting it down.

I think we say it because of time; we say it because of constraint; we say it because we want to control the flow of what happens here. Well, maybe the American people don't want that flow a little bit.

We should have this debate, and I will accept losing an argument. What I cannot accept is five people up in a room up on the third floor here making something out of order that is clearly in order, and whether it is accepted or not should at least be debated.

So I don't disagree with the gentleman's assessment. He is right about us trying to find common ground. There is going to be a lot of support on this piece of legislation when it comes up, but I think not having an open rule and an honest debate is selling us short from getting toward a more perfect bill—not perfect, a more perfect bill.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to vote "no" on this closed rule.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I do not have any further speakers remaining, so I am prepared to close when the gentleman from Massachusetts is, but I will reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, we aren't done, so if the gentleman would like to yield me some time, that would be great.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE).

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule and the underlying Republican farm bill, which could devastate working families, seniors, and the vulnerable who rely on food assistance.

Currently, more than 41 million Americans receive benefits through the

Federal food assistance program known as SNAP. Close to two-thirds are children, the elderly, and the disabled. However, this partisan bill would reduce SNAP benefits by \$23.3 billion, denying hundreds of thousands of American families who rely on this food support. Millions more will see their benefits reduced because Republicans are recklessly increasing the burden on recipients and changing eligibility requirements.

In December, Republicans passed a tax bill benefiting the wealthiest Americans and the most powerful corporate special interests. This Republican tax scam increases our national debt by \$2 trillion over the next 10 years, and now our Republican colleagues are hypocritically trying to pay for these huge tax cuts for the wealthy by taking away resources for Americans who need them most.

Republicans are using this formerly bipartisan process to continue to undermine the well-being of children, the elderly, and the disabled to give gifts to the wealthy. This goes against everything we stand for as a country.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose the rule and to oppose the bill.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH).

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, this farm bill is outrageous. What it is doing is breaking what has been traditionally a bipartisan commitment to including a nutrition title that helps people in all of our districts who need the food. This bill has had no process. It is a continuation of an effort to ratchet down any help that Americans need.

That healthcare bill was going to help on healthcare by taking it away from 24 million people. This nutrition bill, supposedly, is going to help people by taking \$23 billion worth of benefits away from children, veterans, the elderly, and the disabled who need that food.

Why?

Well, there is a reason. We passed a tax cut. By the way, it wasn't paid for. \$2.3 trillion added to the deficit for a tax bill where 87 percent of the benefits go to wealthy multinational corporations and individuals earning over \$890,000 a year.

Well, the bill has come due, and we have a proposal here to come up with \$23 billion to pay for it, and that is taking meals off the table of disabled people.

And, by the way, the work requirement, what is it really? Because that sounds good.

By the way, who doesn't want to work? Everybody wants to work. You need a job.

We are going to pay for this so-called work requirement by taking money away from nutrition, paying bureaucrats, and giving them the impossible job of putting people who are not able to work into jobs that don't exist. Talk about cynical; that is what this bill is.

I am from Vermont where we have lots of folks who need help, and we have lots of Vermonters who, with very little money, with enormous volunteer effort, are doing things that put meals, good meals, on the tables of those families.

Don't pass this farm bill that takes that nutrition away from our Vermonters and our American citizens.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, my friend from Minnesota mentioned folks who might be watching this debate from their offices or from their homes. I think it is a shame that we don't often get to the core of what some of our disagreements are.

As we sit here today, it is a fact that there are more job openings in America than at any other time in American history. That is a fact.

It is a fact that, as we sit here getting ready to move further into the new millennium, there are more able-bodied single men out of the workforce than ever before—that is a fact—folks who have decided not to work.

Now, there is no disagreement in this body about providing food assistance to hungry kids—none. None. The disagreement in this body is whether or not, with more job openings than ever before in American history, with more employers saying they cannot find workers, with more employers saying "we need to find new visa programs to get unskilled labor into America because we don't have enough unskilled workers to do the work here in America"—should the working families who pay the bills in this country support able-bodied, childless, healthy men?

□ 1400

That is part of the question, and I would think that is something on which we can agree. But we are not going to have that pointed conversation, Mr. Speaker, because there are more sympathetic targets to go after.

If you walk in to a USDA facility or your State facility that is administering and you apply for food stamps, Mr. Speaker, if you qualify for food stamps, you will get them. You heard my friend from Massachusetts reference categorical eligibility. That means if you qualify for a different benefit, not food stamps, we will throw in food stamps, too.

Well, now, to be fair, that idea came about in some conservative circles, as well, to say let's eliminate some of the paperwork requirements. Let's make it easier for folks to apply for a whole host of benefits. But categorical eligibility, as it exists today, Mr. Speaker, says you don't qualify for the benefit on your own, but you do if you—if you qualify for a second benefit, we will give you this one as well.

Mr. Speaker, saying that you are going to eliminate categorical eligibility is to say you are going to give food stamps to people who qualify for food stamps. You are going to give

SNAP benefits to people who qualify for SNAP benefits. If one wants to expand the pool of people who qualify for SNAP benefits, that is a debate that we can have.

But time and time again, Mr. Speaker, there are things on which we agree in this Chamber. Programs should follow the rules that programs have. People who qualify should get benefits. People who don't qualify shouldn't.

We are going to continue to have this conversation in the next couple of days, and it is going to continue to be highlighted as a source of vast disagreement among us. But if we were having this same conversation back home around the dinner table, if we were having this same conversation back home at a local park or veterans organization, we would say the very same thing: Hungry kids should have access to food, on this we agree; and healthy, childless working age men should have access to a job, on this we agree.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

Mr. Speaker, I would encourage my colleague to read the bill. Broad-based categorical eligibility gives States the flexibility to offer people who are struggling—more people, the SNAP benefit. There are many States, including mine, that basically offer SNAP to people who are at 200 percent of the poverty level. That is about \$24,000. This bill changes the criteria.

So you could be working and making anywhere from \$24,000 to like \$15,900, and, right now, you are working and that is what you make and you are eligible for SNAP. This bill says you no longer can get that benefit. These are people who work, and this bill takes this nutrition benefit away from them.

I don't know how anybody could think that that is a good thing to do. I don't know how that reward works. What that does is punish people. That punishes individuals who are doing everything they possibly can to try to make ends meet.

And a lot of people, by the way, who qualify for SNAP who aren't working, qualify maybe for a month or two because they are out of work for only a month or two. This idea that SNAP creates this culture dependency is just a myth. The majority of people on SNAP work—who are able-bodied work. I want to make that point clear.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Delaware (Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER).

Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule and the underlying bill. I originally had some things written down on paper, but based on the last comments, I just want to echo the sentiments of my colleague and also share that I served as Secretary of Labor in the State of Delaware. I served as head of State personnel.

Jobs are important to us. I had the opportunity to work on WIA, WIOA, all

of those great pieces of legislation for workforce development. And I want to talk about some myths.

There is a myth that the majority of people on SNAP aren't working or won't work in a year. That is a myth. Two-thirds of SNAP recipients are children, seniors, and people with disabilities. People don't realize that. And there are 6 million unfilled jobs. So, for me, the problem with this bill, the biggest problem is that it was a missed opportunity.

If we are truly serious about employing people who are returning from prison, people who maybe have a disability—

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Delaware.

Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER. Mr. Speaker, if we are truly serious, then we will come to the table. But when the table is set in stone, then we don't get an opportunity to really work on those things that will support the American people.

The other piece that was disappointing to me is, I came to this as a person who wanted to be on this committee because of its bipartisan nature and that the American people are waiting and watching to see us come together for them. This is a loss of confidence, and it is also a missed opportunity.

I am excited and hopeful that we will come together because the people are watching.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter that I wrote to Secretary Perdue, because there were a lot of questions and assumptions that were never answered even in our markup.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, May 11, 2018.

Hon. SONNY PERDUE,
Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of
Agriculture, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY PERDUE: I am writing to request that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) respond to my inquiries regarding H.R. 2, the Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018, which is also known as the Farm Bill. As a member of the House Committee on Agriculture, I am one of 46 Members sitting on the committee of jurisdiction for this legislation. Given the breadth of the proposed changes in the Farm Bill, I want to take this opportunity to reach out to the agency that will be responsible for implementing the provisions in the bill.

During the markup of the Farm Bill on April 18, 2018, my colleagues on both sides of the aisle were only able to direct questions to Chairman Conaway. However, I believe it is essential that we hear from the experts involved in running these programs to ensure we are advocating for policies that are evidence-based. As a result, I respectfully ask that you address the following questions and provide a timely response.

WORKFORCE PROGRAMS

My understanding is that we would need anywhere between three to five million more slots in workforce training programs across the country if all eligible SNAP participants would like to enroll in SNAP Employment

and Training (E&T) programs. The bill would provide a new federal E&T grant of \$1 billion per year to finance the newly mandated work program, which comes out to less than \$30 per person per month. Upon what evidence and or best practices has this number been arrived at? Does the USDA believe this is sufficient? If not, what does the USDA think is sufficient to implement a meaningful workforce development program and move people into work?

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) analysis says it would take a decade to set up a program for everyone to get a work slot. If state E&T costs are greater than their annual federal grant, will states bear the additional costs associated with operating the work programs? What breakdown does USDA expect in administration expenses between job training, IT, administrative costs, and other programs? What are the ramifications for states of not fully implementing their work programs?

What additional capacity would USDA require to oversee this new work program? Would states experience increased administrative costs under this proposal?

When specifically will we hear the results from the 2014 Farm Bill SNAP E&T Pilot Projects? Under current law, what are your expectations for sharing these findings and building them into USDA oversight of state E&T? If H.R. 2 were to be enacted as proposed, when will you be able to incorporate the findings from the pilot projects into the SNAP program, based on how this bill is written?

I appreciate your timely consideration and the work you do for farmers, families, and communities across the country.

Sincerely,
LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER,
Committee Member,
House Committee on Agriculture.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I agree very much with what my friend had to say. She may be a freshman, but she has got a lot of experience working in departments of labor putting people to work, and I think that is a goal that we all share.

And, again, it is a missed opportunity. Undeniably, that is true, and there is lots of blame to go around about why it is a missed opportunity. Again, my friend from Massachusetts and I, we are going to go back up to the Rules Committee this afternoon. We are going to make some more amendments in order. We are going to work harder to try to perfect this bill.

But walking away from the table has consequences. Setting lines in stone has consequences. We are not going to get the best work product in this Chamber when anybody walks away from the table. I am just going to stipulate that is true. We never ever will.

But while my friend identified that the program benefits the elderly, the disabled, and children, and she is right, and it does, and I support that, she didn't mention those able-bodied, healthy, childless men who also benefit from the program. And we do those men a disservice, not a service, when we make that benefit available in the absence of job searching.

Categorical eligibility—we talk about it today like it is a word that we are hearing for the very first time. As my colleagues who were here remember, we have already been to the table

on categorical eligibility. As my friend from Massachusetts referenced, States that have nothing to lose by giving away Federal money were gaming the system by giving away a dollar in State benefits so that folks could qualify for hundreds of dollars in Federal benefits.

Well, we came together in a bipartisan way and said: Hey, that is not right. That is not right. Folks should have skin in the game. We should be working at this together. It shouldn't be a giveaway program. It should be a helping program. We should be making a difference in people's lives.

We did that in a collaborative way. We can come back and tell the story differently today, but we remember coming together and doing that, and we can come together and do that again, Mr. Speaker. This isn't going to be our last opportunity. We are going to have another opportunity.

Nothing goes to the President's desk unless we get 10 Democrats in the United States Senate to get on board and do it. Collaboration is not the exception. It is the rule to get things to the President's desk and to pass new laws of the land.

I wish we could talk more about what those successes are, how we found those successes in the past, and how we remain committed to finding those successes again in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, may I ask how much time I have left.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 4½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Georgia has 10 minutes remaining.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities, who are very strongly opposed to this farm bill.

CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES,
Washington, DC, May 7, 2018.

Re H.R. 2, Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018 (Farm Bill).

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN AND LEADER PELOSI, The undersigned members of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) urge you to continue the longstanding bipartisan commitment to protect and strengthen the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) by rejecting proposals to restrict eligibility, reduce benefits, cap or reduce funding, or make harmful structural changes to SNAP in the Farm Bill.

CCD is the largest coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society.

In the United States, all too often food insecurity and disability go together. Families that include people with disabilities are two

to three times more likely to experience food insecurity than families that have no members with disabilities. Similarly, people experiencing food insecurity have increased likelihood of chronic illness and disability.

SNAP is vitally important for people with disabilities and their families. By increasing access to adequate, nutritious food SNAP plays a key role in reducing hunger and helping people with disabilities to maximize their health and participate in their communities.

Using an inclusive definition of "disability," in 2015 an estimated 11 million people with disabilities of all ages received SNAP, representing roughly one in four SNAP participants.

Roughly 4.4 million households with non-elderly adults with disabilities received SNAP in 2016.

Non-elderly adults with disabilities who receive SNAP have very low incomes, averaging only about \$12,000 per year in 2016.

SNAP benefits are extremely modest, averaging \$187 per month for non-elderly people with disabilities in 2016—or just \$6 per day.

Existing SNAP time limits are harsh, unfair, and harm many people with disabilities and their families by cutting off essential food assistance. Federal law currently limits SNAP eligibility for adults between the ages of 18 to 49 without dependents to just three months out of every three years—unless they can engage in work or job training activities at least half time, or qualify for an exemption. These provisions cut off food assistance at a time when people need it most and do not result in increased employment and earnings. At least 500,000 low-income individuals nationwide lost SNAP in 2016 due to this time limit.

Many people with disabilities are already hurt by SNAP time limits, despite existing exemptions for people who receive governmental or private benefits on the basis of a disability or are able to document that they are "physically or mentally unfit for employment." For example, in a study of SNAP participants subject to time limits referred to participate in work activities in Franklin County, Ohio, one-third reported a "physical or mental limitation".

Cutting off food assistance from SNAP would only make it harder for people to work and increase their economic self-sufficiency. We strongly oppose any action that would cut off or reduce SNAP benefits, narrow eligibility, or force more people to navigate harsh and unnecessary program rules, including people with disabilities and their families.

In particular, we are concerned that the Farm Bill advanced by the House Committee on Agriculture on April 18, 2018 includes a number of provisions that would harm people with disabilities and their families. Small increases in the proposed bill are insufficient to make up for significant benefit reductions.

New work requirements with highly punitive rules would cut off SNAP benefits for many people—including in families with children, adults, and seniors with disabilities. It may seem simple to assert that "people with disabilities will be exempt," but converting such a statement into an effective policy process is complicated, expensive, and fundamentally flawed. Many people with disabilities receive SNAP, but do not meet SNAP's statutory definitions of "disability" or have not been so identified. Under SNAP, states have no obligation to help people prove they are exempt, even if they have difficulty obtaining the necessary records or verification from a doctor. In addition, states are under no obligation to ensure that people with disabilities have access to the full array of services they might need

to work—such as accessible transportation, supported employment, and personal care aide services. People with disabilities often want to work, but need additional supports and services to obtain and keep jobs, in addition to facing discrimination and misconceptions about their ability to work.

Underfunded work programs would be woefully inadequate to meet training needs. Proposed new investments in SNAP employment and training programs—funded in large part by benefit cuts—amount to only about \$30 per person per month. This amount would be grossly insufficient to provide adequate employment services for people subject to proposed new work requirements, including job-seekers with disabilities.

New reporting requirements would create major hurdles to benefits. Proposed new reporting requirements related to eligibility, employment and training, and time limits would be extremely difficult for many people with disabilities to navigate and comply with. For example, ending a decades-old simplification measure and instead requiring people to share utility bills with the SNAP office—or else, see their benefits reduced—is harsh, unnecessary, and burdensome both for SNAP participants and states.

If Congress wishes to explore meaningful opportunities for SNAP participants to increase self-sufficiency through employment, we recommend awaiting the results of the Employment & Training pilot projects authorized under the 2014 Farm Bill. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) awarded pilot grants in 2015, all 10 state programs are operational, and evaluation activities will operate through 2021. Already, a number of pilot states have cited multiple barriers faced by participants, including "health issues." It will be important for USDA and the evaluators to carefully explore the experiences and outcomes of people with disabilities and their families in these pilot programs. Congress should await the final pilot evaluations before considering any changes in these areas.

We call on you to reject proposals that would weaken SNAP's effectiveness as our nation's foremost anti-hunger program by limiting access, reducing benefits, or creating administrative hurdles. We urge all Members to vote no on the Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018 as approved by the Agriculture Committee on April 18, and instead to work on a bipartisan basis to strengthen and protect SNAP as part of the Farm Bill.

Sincerely,

CCD members:

ACCSES, Allies for Independence, American Association of People with Disabilities, American Association on Health and Disability, American Diabetes Association, American Foundation for the Blind, American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR), American Psychological Association, Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD), Autism Society, Autistic Self Advocacy Network, Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, Brain Injury Association of America, Center for Public Representation, Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation, Community Legal Services of Philadelphia, Council of Administrators of Special Education, Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund, Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (DEC), Easterseals.

Epilepsy Foundation, Institute for Educational Leadership, The Jewish Federations of North America, Justice in Aging, Lutheran Services in America Disability Network, National Alliance on Mental Illness, National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities, National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE), National Association of State

Head Injury Administrators, National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, National Disability Institute, National Disability Rights Network, National Down Syndrome Congress, National Organization of Social Security Claimants' Representatives (NOSSCR), School Social Work Association of America, SourceAmerica, TASH, The Arc of the United States, United Spinal Association.

Joined by:
Lakeshore Foundation.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE).

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak out against this terrible farm bill.

Mr. Speaker, we were working together, Democrats and Republicans, to work on a farm bill. Unfortunately, the Republicans are putting all of our constituents in danger by making this bill purely a political agenda.

At the last minute, after working together and reaching consensus, the Republicans decided to include major devastating cuts to SNAP, or food stamps, instead of helping rural and urban Americans.

This bill cuts SNAP by \$23 billion, which will kick 1 million households off the program. The bill will also kick 265,000 kids out of free school meals and reduce benefits for millions of families.

In Michigan 1.3 million people rely on SNAP and it keeps 141,000 children out of poverty. This bill includes so many other programs in my district.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentlewoman from Michigan.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, my district supports urban farmers and food banks so our farmers and people can thrive. We should not put all of this in danger.

Mr. Speaker, I call on Republicans today to stop, to remove this terrible proposal for SNAP with this poisonous bill.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a statement from No Kid Hungry, Share Our Strength, an initiative strongly opposed to this bill.

[From No Kid Hungry, May 15, 2018]

CONGRESS MUST VOTE NO ON FARM BILL

WASHINGTON, DC.—This week the House of Representatives will vote on the Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018 (H.R. 2), also known as the Farm Bill. The following is a statement from Share Our Strength's Senior Vice President Lisa Davis about the harmful impact the bill would have on struggling families in America. Share Our Strength officially opposes the bill.

"This week, the House of Representatives will vote on the Farm Bill. On balance, this bill will ultimately increase poverty and hunger in the United States and Share Our Strength cannot support it.

Thirteen million children today are growing up in families that worry about hunger. Even more live in families on the brink, just

one lost job, one medical emergency, one broken water heater away from hunger. Consider:

A study by the Federal Reserve shows that nearly half of all Americans couldn't come up with \$400 for an emergency expense.

Another study from the National Center for Children in Poverty shows that nearly half of all children in the United States live "dangerously close" to the poverty line. 6 in 10 Americans will spend at least one year of their lives in poverty.

And in another survey recently conducted on behalf of No Kid Hungry, two-thirds of low-income parents said they would not be able to afford enough food for their families if they were hit with a single, unplanned expense of \$1,500.

These are families trying to do their best to survive. These are the families we all know. It's the single working mom in California, worried about whether to pay the electricity bill or pay for groceries this month. It's the grandmother trying to raise her grandkids in Appalachia. And it's the military veteran trying to find enough work hours to support his son in Central Pennsylvania.

And while this legislation includes some needed improvements to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), such as increasing asset limits and indexing them to inflation, these changes are significantly outweighed by harmful ones, such as eliminating Broad Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) and increasing administrative burdens on states and imposing penalties on adults who are unable to comply with the expanded work requirements in a given month.

We believe a good job is the best pathway out of poverty, but there is little reason to think the policies in this Farm Bill will increase employment. It imposes harsh penalties on beneficiaries who drop below the required number of hours in a month, locking them out of SNAP for a full year the first time and 3 years if it happens again. Imagine a single mom barely getting 20 hours of work a week whose child gets strep throat or the flu. Or the rural dad whose car breaks down. Or the 55-year-old house cleaner whose back goes out.

This is all counterintuitive. Adding hurdles and punitive restrictions won't help people find jobs or get back on their feet. But it will increase hunger and hardship for many families.

In addition, the Congressional Budget Office also reports that this legislation will lead to more than 265,000 kids losing free school meals during the school year, a double whammy for poor, working families. Research demonstrates the deep connections between hunger and health, particularly for children. When kids don't get the fuel they need to nourish their developing minds and bodies, they are more likely to get sick and do poorly in school, and they are much less likely to access a future free from poverty.

We urge members of the House of Representatives to take a stand for children and families and oppose this legislation."

ABOUT NO KID HUNGRY

No child should go hungry in America, but 1 in 5 kids will face hunger this year. Using proven, practical solutions, No Kid Hungry is ending childhood hunger today by ensuring that kids start the day with a nutritious breakfast, are able to get the nutrition they need during the summertime, and families learn the skills they need to shop and cook on a budget. When we all work together, we can make sure kids get the healthy food they need. No Kid Hungry is a campaign of national anti-hunger organization Share Our Strength.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from a co-

alition of over 60 child advocacy organizations opposed to the bill.

MAY 9, 2018.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: As child advocates in the areas of hunger and nutrition, poverty, health, welfare, housing, and education, we are writing to express our opposition to the Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018 (H.R. 2), which will harm the millions of children who rely on federal nutrition programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) for access to consistent, healthy food. In the interests of our nation's babies, children and youth we strongly urge you to vote NO on H.R. 2.

SNAP is a proven anti-hunger and anti-poverty program for children, which also lowers the odds of household and child food insecurity, and of children's anemia, poor health, hospitalization for failure to thrive, and developmental delays. Research has also found that receiving SNAP in early childhood improved high school graduation rates, adult earnings, and adult health. Today, nearly 20 million children participate in SNAP, representing 44 percent of the program's recipients and receiving nearly half of every SNAP dollar. In addition, school breakfast and lunch programs provide many of these same children a nutritious morning and lunchtime meal each day. Because children experience both poverty and food insecurity at higher rates than the general population, federal nutrition programs such as SNAP and school meals are critical supports that help them develop, learn, and succeed. To that end, we are very concerned about the impact H.R. 2 would have on our nation's children. In fact, several provisions in the Nutrition Title of H.R. 2 directly threaten access to vital nutrition programs for the countless children and youth that we represent:

Drastic Program Eligibility Changes: H.R. 2 Makes several harmful changes to state options that simplify SNAP eligibility requirements to improve access to SNAP for poor and low-income families with children. These changes would:

Expose Low-Income Children to a SNAP "Benefit Cliff": H.R. 2 eliminates Broad Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE), which gives states additional flexibility and efficiency in granting SNAP eligibility. This change will reinstate a benefit cliff in a majority of states, jeopardizing food assistance for 400,000 households who are scraping by on earnings just above 130 percent of the Federal poverty line.

Undermine the Ability of Poor and Low-Income Families with Children to Build Savings: Similarly, the virtual elimination by H.R. 2 of Categorical Eligibility will mean many states will have to introduce a counterproductive and costly process of asset testing for SNAP eligibility. As a result, H.R. 2 would cause many families to lose eligibility solely because of red tape, and force other families choose between meeting their basic need for food and building up the savings and resources that would help them achieve economic mobility.

Threaten Poor and Low-Income Children's Access to School Meals: Under current law, children who receive SNAP are directly certified for free school meal programs. These meals help combat childhood hunger, while playing an important role in improving academic achievement and test scores and reducing absenteeism, tardiness, and discipline referrals. By forcing families off of SNAP due to changes in categorical eligibility, H.R. 2 would break this vital link between SNAP receipt and school meals for low-income and poor children. As a result, some 265,000 children stand to lose access to free school meals.

Undermine SNAP benefits for Poor and Low-Income Children Whose Families Rely on the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP): LIHEAP is a program that helps low-income households afford their monthly utility bills. Under current law, some states allow households to use LIHEAP benefits greater than \$20/month as proof of significant energy expenses, creating a streamlined method for families to access a modest increase in their SNAP benefit. However, H.R. 2 removes this option for households that do not have an elderly member, effectively requiring poor and low-income families with children to provide substantial documentation of energy bills on a frequent basis for caseworkers to determine their utility allowance, which could discourage them from seeking the larger benefit or decrease its size.

Harsh Work Requirements: Under current law, existing SNAP work requirements aimed at childless adults already have unintended and harmful consequences for children (for instance, those who rely on pooled resources from extended family and Non-Custodial Parents) and youth (such as those aging out of foster care.) Yet in spite of limited supporting evidence, H.R. 2 intensifies and expands work requirements, reduces state flexibilities for exemptions, and requires states to implement costly training and employment programs that will take funds from food benefits to support a bureaucracy that will not provide quality services to people. The consequences of these changes could be devastating for countless children and youth, including:

The 13.4 million school-aged children on SNAP: H.R. 2 takes the unprecedented step of expanding work requirements to adults with school-aged children. This provision risks the wellbeing of children whose parents or guardians are: 1) acting as a caretaker for a loved one such as a child with a disability; 2) have physical or mental health disabilities that don't qualify as a disability under the legal definition; 3) face substantial barriers to work, including substance abuse issues or domestic violence; 4) working but struggling to meet the 20 hour per week threshold or the burdensome documentation requirements; and 5) have difficulty obtaining childcare or transportation. For these parents or guardians, losing SNAP translates to a benefit cut for their whole household, meaning there will be less food on the table for their children. Some parents and guardians may also erroneously believe that their inability to meet these new work requirements makes their children ineligible for SNAP as well, and as a result opt out of applying for or renewing benefits for the entire family.

In addition, children in very vulnerable families may be impacted by the new requirements, such as:

Children in the Care of Grandparents: Today, more than 2.5 million children are being raised by their grandparents or other relatives, in part because families are dealing with parental alcohol and substance abuse issues, which are growing rapidly due to the opioid epidemic. And already, these families face barriers to accessing the full array of benefits and services they need. H.R. 2 would further threaten the ability of grandparents and other older relatives to care for children because it expands work requirements for adults up to age 60 who are caring for children over six years of age.

Children in Families with a History of Family Violence: H.R. 2 requires parents fleeing family violence with their children to meet the new work requirements unless they receive a state exemption. In addition, H.R. 2 requires parents to cooperate with state Child Support Enforcement (CSE) efforts in

order receive SNAP benefits—a drastic change from current law, under which 45 states, DC, and the Virgin Islands have declined to link the two. Yet H.R. 2 effectively eliminates existing state flexibility around CSE cooperation, meaning parents who would like to apply for SNAP but are afraid of CSE requirements which would link them to their abusers are forced to choose between safety and feeding their children.

Children in Military and Veteran Families: Many veteran and military families need help feeding themselves and their children. Today, households that include a veteran with a disability are nearly twice as likely to lack access to adequate food as households that do not include someone with a disability, and sadly, food insecurity rates are nearly double among post-9/11 veterans. Furthermore, currently-serving military families often experience food insecurity because of financial emergencies, low pay, and crisis levels of chronic unemployment or underemployment of military spouses in a society where most families need dual incomes to live. By subjecting these parents, including those suffering from PTSD, to the new work requirements, H.R. 2 penalizes families in need who have already sacrificed so much for our nation.

Youth aging out of foster care and unaccompanied, homeless youth: Youth aging out of foster care often face various challenges, including homelessness, difficulty affording education, and finding employment. Unaccompanied homeless youth and young adults (who lack safe stable housing and who are not in the care of a parent or guardian) experience similar difficulties, especially when they reach age 18. Existing SNAP work requirements already create a substantial barrier for these young people from accessing food assistance, because they technically meet the definition of a childless adult. Under the harsh requirements in H.R. 2, these vulnerable young adults will face even larger obstacles to food assistance.

The Farm Bill represents an important opportunity for policy solutions that will strengthen and improve nutrition programs for our nation's children. Instead, H.R. 2 is slated to reduce spending on SNAP benefits by more than \$20 billion over 10 years and will disproportionately hurt children through its harmful provisions. We urge you to protect our nation's children and vote NO on H.R. 2.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Signed,

1,000 Days, African American Health Alliance, Afterschool Alliance, American Academy of Pediatrics, Arizona Council of Human Service Providers, Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs, Campaign for Youth Justice, Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), Child Care Aware of America, Child Labor Coalition, Child Welfare League of America, Children's Defense Fund, Children's Leadership Council, Children's Advocacy Institute, Coalition on Human Needs, Covenant House International, Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (DEC), Every Child Matters, Families USA, Family Focused Treatment Association.

Family Focused Treatment Association, First Five Years Fund, First Focus Campaign for Children, Food Research & Action Center, Forum for Youth Investment, Generations United, Healthy Teen Network, Jumpstart, Lutheran Services in America, Methodist Children's Home Society, MomsRising, National Alliance of Children's Trust & Prevention Funds, National Association for Family Child Care, National Association for the Education of Young Children, National Association of Counsel for Children, National Center on Adoption and Perma-

nency, National Consumers League, National Council of Jewish Women, National Diaper Bank Network, National Health Law Program.

National Human Services Assembly, National Indian Child Welfare Association, National Migrant Seasonal Head Start Association, National Network for Youth, National PTA, National Urban League, National WIC Association, National Women's Law Center, Oral Health America, Parents as Teachers, Partnership for America's Children, PolicyLink, Prosperity Now, Public Advocacy for Kids, Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities Coalition.

RESULTS, Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law, SchoolHouse Connection, Share Our Strength, Social Advocates for Youth San Diego, SparkAction, StandUp For Kids, The Criminalization of Poverty Project at the Institute for Policy Studies, The National Association for Bilingual Education, The W. Haywood Burns Institute, UnidosUS, Western Regional Advocacy Project, Youth Villages, YWCA USA.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from the National Education Association strongly opposed to this bill.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION,

Washington, DC, May 15, 2018.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the three million members of the National Education Association and the 50 million students they serve, we strongly urge you to VOTE NO on the Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018 (H.R. 2) and oppose any amendments that further weaken the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. This bill makes unnecessary changes to eligibility requirements that could reduce the number of students certified for free school meals. The bill also imposes additional work requirements for adults that will make it harder for some people to get or keep critical nutrition benefits. Votes associated with this issue may be included in NEA's Report Card for the 115th Congress.

The Farm Bill, as this reauthorization is commonly known, provides funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which is our nation's largest anti-hunger program. By providing monthly benefits to eligible low-income people to purchase food, SNAP plays a critical role in reducing hunger, malnutrition, and poverty, and improving family security, child and adult health, and employment. SNAP reaches key vulnerable populations—78 percent of SNAP households include a child, an elderly person, or a person with disabilities; 84 percent of all SNAP benefits go to such households. SNAP lifted 3.6 million Americans out of poverty in 2016, according to the Census Bureau's Supplemental Poverty Measure. By providing much needed economic support, SNAP allows families to have sufficient nutrition during times of unemployment, fluctuating incomes, and low-wage work.

Children living in households that receive SNAP benefits are eligible to receive free school meals. The healthy meals that low-income children receive at school fight hunger, improve academic performance, and help reduce absenteeism, tardiness, and discipline referrals. According to the Food Research and Action Center, linking children in SNAP households to school meals is so important that Congress required all school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program to directly certify their students for free school meals.

H.R. 2 undermines the important link between SNAP and free school meals in the 28 states that have chosen a broad based categorical eligibility option under current

rules that expands SNAP eligibility to assist working families that still struggle to make ends meet. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), this could impact as many as 265,000 students nationwide. While students could apply for school meals via a burdensome paper process, there is no guarantee that they will still be eligible for the program or recertified in a timely manner. This would cost their families even more when they have just lost SNAP benefits. Further, this puts an enormous administrative burden on schools to revert to a costly paper-based system.

Direct Certification for SNAP also provides the foundation for the Community Eligibility Provision, a hugely successful option that allows over 20,000 high-poverty schools to offer free breakfast and lunch to their students. The provision eliminates the need for schools to collect and process school meal applications, which allows schools to focus on providing healthy and appealing meals instead of processing paperwork. Schools are eligible to implement community eligibility if at least 40 percent of their students are certified to receive free school meals without submitting an application.

Reducing the number of students who are directly certified by changing the rules for broad-based categorical eligibility means that fewer schools will be eligible to implement community eligibility, and many schools that are eligible will find that it is no longer financially viable, because fewer of their meals would be reimbursed at the free rate. This would increase unnecessary paperwork for schools and inhibit student success.

The proposed changes in H.R. 2 to broad-based categorical eligibility will result in working families losing much needed food benefits. It also means that their children could lose free school meals, amplifying the negative impact of the cut. It will mean more children go hungry at home as well as at school.

The bill further imposes aggressive new work requirements, which are unnecessary, unworkable and likely to do more harm than good. It would require SNAP participants ages 18 through 59 who are not disabled or raising a child under 6 to prove—every month—that they're working at least 20 hours a week, participating at least 20 hours a week in a work program, or a combination of the two. These new requirements would force states to develop large new bureaucracies that would need to track millions of SNAP recipients, but likely would do little to boost employment, particularly given that the new funding provided in the bill for job training and work slots would amount to just \$30 per month for those recipients who need a work slot to retain SNAP benefits, according to the CBPP. Further, the requirements would leave low-income people with barriers to employment—such as limited job skills or family members with illness—without earnings nor food assistance.

We also have particular concern about amendments filed for Rules Committee consideration that would undermine the nutrition guidelines for school meals programs. These guidelines are currently being implemented in schools, and have already led to increased fruit and vegetable consumption by students. Good nutrition is particularly important for students from low-income families, who may eat as many as half of their calories every day at school. Additionally, USDA has only recently published an interim rule for school meals that provides additional flexibility on the guidelines for schools. These amendments would only add uncertainty to this process and threaten the nutritional quality of the meals offered to students.

We urge you to oppose any amendments that could threaten mandatory safety net

programs beyond SNAP, such as Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

The bill further includes \$65 million in loans and grants administered by the Department of Agriculture to support Association Health Plans (AHP) offered through organizations that will eliminate coverage of essential health benefits (categories of care). These plans may appear to be a less expensive option than current small group market plans that include comprehensive coverage and consumer protections. However, in light of recently proposed rules, AHPs will soon not be required to cover services such as prescription drugs, mental health and maternity care leading to insufficient and inadequate care for children and adults.

We strongly urge you to Vote No on the Farm Bill, any amendments aimed at weakening the healthy guidelines for school meals, and any amendments that make it even more difficult for SNAP participants to receive critical nutrition benefits.

Sincerely,

MARC EGAN,

*Director of Government Relations,
National Education Association.*

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL).

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, and I rise in opposition to the rule. SNAP is a lifeline for 40 million low-income Americans and millions of working families. It is the most effective antihunger program in the country.

It is a proven pathway out of poverty for America's most vulnerable families, and yet, instead of protecting successful programs like SNAP, this cruel bill would take over \$23 billion in benefits away from children, seniors, veterans, individuals with disabilities, and working families struggling to make ends meet.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle argue that the requirements in this farm bill would help people find work. But if they are really interested in promoting jobs that allow people to care for themselves and their families, I would invite them to consider legislation to raise the minimum wage, ensure fair work scheduling, provide paid family and medical leave and paid sick days, and address basic living standards.

Instead, we are considering a callous farm bill that cuts benefits for those who need it most in order to pay for massive handouts to corporations in the top 1 percent. I urge my colleagues to vote against this rule.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, may I ask how much time I have left.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to serve on the Agriculture Committee. I am the ranking member in the Nutrition Subcommittee, and I sat through 23 hearings. I heard Republican witnesses and Democratic witnesses, and all of

them said the same thing: the SNAP program is important; don't mess around with it.

I didn't hear anybody—anybody hint at embracing what is in this farm bill under the nutrition title, a title, by the way, which I, as the ranking member of the Nutrition Subcommittee, didn't even see until it was made public.

My friend from Georgia talks about bipartisanship. I mean, give me a break. I mean, you can say it all you want, but the bottom line is that it doesn't exist in the Agriculture Committee. The process was offensive, and even more offensive is what the end product is going to do to vulnerable people in this country.

You know, this is not a debate about able-bodied adults who aren't working. You know, that is a very complicated population. I actually asked for a hearing on that population, and I was denied that right. You ought to know who this population is. It is a complicated population.

Many of these able-bodied adults without dependents who are not working or who are not in the job training programs are our veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan having difficulty reintegrating in the community; they are young people graduating out of foster care; they are people with undiagnosed mental illnesses. If we did a hearing, you would know who this population is. This is more than a press release.

I am sick and tired of people being stereotyped all the time. And by the way, you punish people who are working. You know, by eliminating broad-based categorical eligibility, there are people right now who are working, who make, you know, between \$50,800 a year and maybe \$24,000 a year, they work, and they get this benefit to put food on the table.

□ 1415

And yet you are making changes that will deny them that benefit. They are working. You say you want to reward work. Well, what are you thinking when you take this nutrition benefit away from these people, who are doing everything right. When you take this SNAP benefit away from adults, you are taking it away from their children as well. And you heard over and over and over again that when people lose their SNAP benefit, their kids lose access to a free breakfast and lunch at school. This is awful.

Send this bill back to committee. Vote "no" on this rule.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I told you when we started this debate, Mr. Speaker, you were going to hear some passion from my friend from Massachusetts because he is, in fact, passionate. He is a public servant, and he serves his constituency well.

But I want to read to you from Politico, one of our Washington, D.C., newspapers, that follows what goes on here

in politics. I don't sit on the Agriculture Committee, as my friend from Massachusetts does, but Politico reported this, as talks around the farm bill broke down in March:

Bipartisan negotiations over the farm bill stopped—

There were bipartisan negotiations. Those negotiations stopped, Mr. Speaker.

Thursday afternoon, after House Agriculture Committee ranking member Collin Peterson—

The ranking Democrat.

—faced pressure from fellow Democrats, who complained that discussions about changes to the food stamp program were being kept secret.

My friend from Massachusetts mentioned that. I have that same frustration on committees that I serve, Mr. Speaker. Very often, the chairman of the committee, who is a Republican, and the ranking member, who is a Democrat, and their subcommittee chairmen very often they get together and have negotiations before rank-and-file Members get involved. It happens, and I am frustrated about it, and my friend from Massachusetts is frustrated about it.

The development—

Politico goes on to say.

—is a considerable blow to the sweeping bill, which was seen by many as one of the only real chances for bipartisanship in this Congress. Congress is supposed to reauthorize the farm bill every 5 years, but political wrangling has threatened its fate. Current law expires September 30.

Peterson's decision—

COLLIN PETERSON is the ranking Democrat.

—to pause talks comes after House Democrats demanded that he stop negotiations until the text of the bill is made to everyone.

The Democratic Members have made clear that they unanimously oppose the farm bill's SNAP language as it has been described to them or reported in the press.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if when you hear things you don't like, or see things you don't like, you leave the negotiating table, I promise you we are going to get a worse result every single time.

I go up to this Rules Committee, right up here on the third floor, and we debate and talk and debate and talk and debate and talk hour upon hour upon hour, late into the evening, often into the next morning. I hear things I don't like. I hear people say things I know are not true. But I don't pick up my toys and go home. I stay at the table, I debate the issues, and I work through the issues. If it was easy, someone would have done it before this Congress got here. All that is left is hard.

My friend from Massachusetts is absolutely right, Mr. Speaker. He is absolutely right. He is absolutely right. If we are to reform the social safety net, we are going to have to expand benefits, not restrict them. He is absolutely right. But if we can't stay at the table to have that conversation, we are never

going to bring people together to get that done.

You can't blame people who follow their self-interest. If the rule says you don't have to work, you don't have to work. If the rule says if you work too much, you will lose your benefits, then you don't work too much. That is crazy to encourage people to stay home.

You ought to be encouraging people to seek that next promotion, take on those extra hours, work that overtime. That has always been who we are and what we have done, and we have not taken on that challenge in welfare reform. I believe we can. I believe we can.

I need my colleagues to support this rule today. I need them to support the rule so we can bring up not just the farm bill, so that we can bring up the VA MISSION Act, a bipartisan, bicameral bill that will go to the President's desk and change the lives of veterans.

I need my colleagues to support this rule, not just so we can bring up the farm bill, not just so we can bring up the VA MISSION Act, but so that we can make the harming or threatening the harm of a law enforcement officer a Federal crime, to give the men and women who wear blue across this country the protections they deserve.

This is a bipartisan bill, Mr. Speaker, that is going to make a difference for our constituents back home. These are going to be issues that get folks exercise, Mr. Speaker. The most difficult issues we take on always do.

But if we pass this rule and take up this legislation, we will be one step closer, not just to succeeding for our veterans, not just to succeeding for our law enforcement officers, not just to succeeding on behalf of our farmers, but one step closer to taking on what is a collaborative challenge of how to return the incentives to work to the American people, while keeping the social safety net strong for all of the families that depend on it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Georgia just mischaracterized the very partisan process that occurred in the Agriculture Committee in which Democrats were totally shut out.

I want to know: What are the remedies that we have at this point in the debate to be able to correct the record so we can correct the misrepresentations?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has not stated a parliamentary inquiry. That is a matter for debate.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to reclaim the time that I have yielded back. I would be happy to yield a portion of it to my friend.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, could I inquire how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia has 5 minutes remaining.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), my friend.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman that nobody walked away from the table; only after we were totally shut out of the process.

As I mentioned in my opening statement—if the gentleman were paying attention—the ranking member, Mr. PETERSON, actually tried to offer suggestions and was totally shut out.

I am the ranking member of the Nutrition Subcommittee. You mentioned the ranking members usually get informed as to what is going on. I didn't see it until it was made public.

This was the most offensive process I have ever witnessed.

And, by the way, the product in this ag bill—which I don't think the gentleman has read, based on some of the things he has said—but this final product does not represent any of the hearings we had.

So this process in the Agriculture Committee, which has been, historically, probably the most bipartisan committee in the Congress, was basically thrown into chaos as a result of the behavior of the majority.

I just say to the gentleman: You can try to spin this all you want, but the bottom line is that this has never happened before. And COLLIN PETERSON—I just want to say—is probably the most bipartisan Member of this House. If you can't strike a bipartisan deal with COLLIN PETERSON, you can't strike a bipartisan deal with anybody.

But that is not what this was about. This was about advancing an agenda, quite frankly, that is going to hurt millions of vulnerable people in this country, and I find it offensive.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for granting my unanimous consent request to reclaim my time. I do believe that we advantage all of our causes, rather than disadvantage them, by promoting debate.

But I want to take issue, Mr. Speaker. I didn't mischaracterize anything. I read the media reporting. I will be the first—when you want to have the fake news conversation—there is too much fake news in this country—I will be happy to join you and have that debate with you. But I didn't mischaracterize a thing.

I agree with what my friend had to say about COLLIN PETERSON from Minnesota. He is a fabulous Member, who works as hard as he can on behalf of his constituents to get work done. Nothing in the article I read said COLLIN PETERSON walked away from the table. Everything in the article I read said he

was pressured by his Democratic colleagues to walk away from the table.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WOODALL. I will not yield again to my friend. I am going to close.

I take umbrage at the fact that we would have an opportunity to use each other's time, and you would use it to continue to say I mischaracterized, that we would have an opportunity to have a discussion, and you would continue to use it to say that folks just aren't as well informed as you are about those issues.

We have opportunities in this Chamber to make things better, and we have opportunities to make things worse. And I will say to my friend, Mr. Speaker, if we take advantage of our opportunities to make things better, I believe that we will. If we take advantage of our opportunities to make things worse, I am absolutely certain that we will.

I choose the latter. I choose the latter. A vote in support of this rule is a vote for the latter.

I am sorry, I am choosing the former. I am choosing the former. My colleagues out there are saying: Hey, I know WOODALL; that is not right. He is not choosing to make things worse.

I choose the former, Mr. Speaker. I choose the former. A vote for this rule is a vote for the former.

Mr. Speaker, I apologize to the Chair for my confusion.

The material previously referred to by Mr. MCGOVERN is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 891 OFFERED BY
MR. MCGOVERN

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 4. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5805) to designate certain amounts authorized to be appropriated for the provision by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs of hospital care and medical services in non-Department of Veterans Affairs facilities pursuant to contracts as changes in concepts and definitions for certain budgetary purposes, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided among and controlled by the respective chairs and ranking minority members of the Committees on Veterans' Affairs and the Budget. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule

XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 5. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 5805.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

The Republican majority may say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: "Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment."

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: "Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on ordering the previous question will be followed by 5-minute votes on:

Adoption of the resolution, if ordered; and

The motion to suspend the rules on S. 35.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 230, nays 184, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 185]

YEAS—230

Abraham	Ferguson	Loudermilk
Aderholt	Fitzpatrick	Love
Allen	Fleischmann	Lucas
Amash	Flores	Luetkemeyer
Amodel	Fortenberry	MacArthur
Arrington	Foxo	Marchant
Babin	Frelinghuysen	Marino
Bacon	Gaetz	Marshall
Banks (IN)	Gallagher	Massie
Barletta	Garrett	Mast
Barr	Gianforte	McCarthy
Barton	Gibbs	McCaul
Bergman	Gohmert	McClintock
Biggs	Goodlatte	McHenry
Bilirakis	Gosar	McKinley
Bishop (MI)	Gowdy	McMorris
Bishop (UT)	Granger	Rodgers
Black	Graves (GA)	McSally
Blackburn	Graves (LA)	Meadows
Blum	Graves (MO)	Messer
Bost	Griffith	Mitchell
Brady (TX)	Grothman	Moolenaar
Brat	Guthrie	Mooney (WV)
Brooks (AL)	Handel	Mullin
Brooks (IN)	Harper	Newhouse
Buchanan	Harris	Noem
Buck	Hartzler	Norman
Bucshon	Hensarling	Nunes
Budd	Herrera Beutler	Olson
Burgess	Hice, Jody B.	Palazzo
Byrne	Higgins (LA)	Palmer
Calvert	Hill	Paulsen
Carter (GA)	Holding	Pearce
Carter (TX)	Hollingsworth	Perry
Chabot	Hudson	Pittenger
Cheney	Huizenga	Poe (TX)
Coffman	Hultgren	Poliquin
Cole	Hunter	Posey
Collins (GA)	Hurd	Ratcliffe
Collins (NY)	Issa	Reed
Comer	Jenkins (KS)	Reichert
Comstock	Jenkins (WV)	Renacci
Conaway	Johnson (LA)	Rice (SC)
Cook	Johnson (OH)	Roby
Costello (PA)	Johnson, Sam	Roe (TN)
Cramer	Jordan	Rogers (AL)
Crawford	Joyce (OH)	Rohrabacher
Culberson	Katko	Rokita
Curbelo (FL)	Kelly (MS)	Rooney, Francis
Curtis	Kelly (PA)	Rooney, Thomas
Davidson	King (IA)	J.
Davis, Rodney	King (NY)	Ros-Lehtinen
Denham	Kinzinger	Roskam
DeSantis	Knight	Ross
DesJarlais	Kustoff (TN)	Rothfus
Diaz-Balart	LaHood	Rouzer
Donovan	LaMalfa	Royce (CA)
Duffy	Lamborn	Russell
Duncan (SC)	Lance	Rutherford
Duncan (TN)	Latta	Sanford
Dunn	Lesko	Scalise
Emmer	Lewis (MN)	Schweikert
Estes (KS)	LoBiondo	Scott, Austin
Faso	Long	Sensenbrenner

Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney

Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)

Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NAYS—184

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan
F.
Brady (PA)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael
F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Españillat
Esty (CT)
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gallego
Garamendi

NOT VOTING—13

Beyer
Brown (MD)
Cicilline
DeGette
Gabbard

□ 1449

Mr. SUOZZI changed his vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So the previous question was ordered.
The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted “nay” on rollcall No. 185.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 229, noes 185, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 186]

AYES—229

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amodei
Arlington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Curtis
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Estes (KS)
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxy
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gianforte
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte

AYES—229

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