

Yet not a day goes by where I do not draw from the innovations and examples set by our businesses, our individuals, and institutions in our Seventh Congressional District.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say that we are a model for the Nation, whether it is through ideas brought to reality, partnerships formed across diverse interests, or new mechanisms developed to maximize the leverage of any financial instruments.

But there is a lot to do. Later this year, Congress will consider its annual budget and appropriations bills for fiscal year 2019, including, I hope, a potential infrastructure bill.

Democratic Ranking Member DEFAZIO spoke earlier about the critical need for the Federal Government to fund a bold infrastructure plan so that our businesses and our communities across the country can succeed.

That will put people back to work. It will put money into our roads, our bridges, our infrastructure needs, our water systems, our schools across our country, and our transit.

Mr. Speaker, that is what I am committed to fighting for here in Congress.

OPPOSING THE FARM BILL

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I come before the House today to talk about the Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018. We call it the farm bill.

It is supposed to be about supporting farmers, strengthening communities, making sure that we have nutritious food, looking out for our environment, and generally feeding America and even sometimes the world.

Instead, this bill would allow companies to spray pesticides into our waterways, which are endangered all over this country. It will allow all sorts of environmental challenges and will diminish the quality of life for people. They won't even allow a provision to have a Clean Water Act permit to spray pesticides.

The bill is also an attack on local control. I thought local control was a hallmark of what it meant to be conservative. Apparently not, because this bill preempts local governments from taking steps to protect their communities from pesticides. I think a local community is in a better position to understand the health needs of its people than the Federal Government is.

The bill would also make deep cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP, a program that used to be called food stamps. There are no actual stamps anymore; this benefit is provided on a card that people use. The 5-year authorization of the farm bill would cut \$23 billion from SNAP—\$23 billion.

The proposal also adds work requirements. Now, some people think: Oh, yeah, what is wrong with making people work for a living? I work for a living.

Well, the truth is, people who use the food stamp program often work for a living too. They just happen to have a tough patch in their lives where they need their neighbors—that is us—to step up and help make sure that they can have food on the table.

The idea that people who have economic hardship don't want to work is simply wrong. This body gives money out to rich people all the time and doesn't ask for any work requirements. We don't ask for many requirements at all, but we do it. It is all part of this shaming and blaming the poor.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that this new work requirement, plus other restrictions proposed by the farm bill, as proposed, would end up denying or reducing nutritional aid to about 2 million people, mostly families with children.

By the way, 70 percent of poor kids in America eligible for food stamps live in a household with somebody who works, but the Federal minimum wage is \$7.25. On \$7.25, that works out to about \$15,000 a year. You could work full-time and be eligible for food stamps.

People who don't work because of whatever difficult patch they hit in their life should not be shamed into not accepting food assistance. If they are not healthy and they are not well-fed, how are they going to get back in the workforce?

Under this proposal, most adults between 18 and 59 will be required to work part-time or enroll in 20 hours a week of workforce training to receive assistance. It would impose stricter eligibility guidelines for low-income families who qualify for SNAP through other welfare programs.

Many SNAP recipients face legitimate barriers to enrolling in these programs, such as unreliable transportation. One of my colleagues already talked about the difficulty with transportation in getting to a better paying job in this economy. Low housing security. A lot of people are homeless. It is very difficult to stay employed if you are homeless. And shifting childcare and medical schedules.

SNAP helps 42 million people in nearly 21 million households. In 2016, SNAP lifted 3.6 million people out of poverty. They were in poverty; now they weren't because of SNAP. It is a good program.

In my own State of Minnesota, more than 69 percent of SNAP participants are families with children. Almost 30 percent are families with members who are elderly or people with disabilities. More than 54 percent are working families.

People who use food stamp benefits work hard every day. They work harder than many of us who earn a lot more than them.

SNAP kept 111,000 people out of poverty in Minnesota, including almost 60,000 children, per year from 2009 to 2012.

Let me wrap up by saying that the farm bill, as currently proposed, I can-

not vote for. I will have to urge a "no" vote, and I hope that we learn something important about people who struggle hard in this economy.

OPPOSE THE FARM BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GALLEG0) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GALLEG0. Mr. Speaker, I was a free lunch kid growing up. I was the young man that brought his ID card to the lunch lady and she looked on the back for the yellow sticker and I received free breakfasts and free lunches.

I know what it is like to come from a home with a lot of love but not a lot of money. I can tell you for a fact that kids with backgrounds like me cannot succeed in the classroom if they are worried about the next meal.

That is why this GOP farm bill is so reprehensible. Republicans are proposing SNAP cuts that will kick a quarter-of-a-million students off of the free lunch program.

That is right, Mr. Speaker. They have just given massive tax cuts to millionaires and billionaires, but now, to save money, they are trying to pass a bill that could cause poor kids across this country to go hungry.

This legislation is a direct attack on my constituents. It is a direct attack on the poor. One in four families in my district alone counts on SNAP to put food on the table.

They deserve better. Our country deserves better. I urge my colleagues to oppose this shameful legislation.

□ 1100

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE'S WORK ON CLIMATE CHANGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the work being done by the Department of Defense regarding the threat of climate change, and to reinforce congressional intent on this important issue.

Last year's National Defense Authorization Act expressed the sense of Congress that climate change is a direct threat to national security. We have studied a number of readiness factors when it comes to our Armed Forces, but for too long, we have not given this major, multifaceted threat the attention that it deserves.

Current and former military leaders and members of the intelligence community agree that climate change poses a security challenge that has the potential to affect our tactical and strategic readiness.

Secretary Mattis was correct when he stated: "... the effects of a changing climate—such as increased maritime access to the Arctic, rising sea levels, desertification, among others—impact our security situation."

Naval bases, such as Norfolk or Key West, are already at risk for flooding. In fact, Norfolk frequently deals with nuisance flooding, and that risk will only increase as storm surges increase in magnitude and tides continue to rise. Inland bases will experience other weather volatility, such as extreme heat and wildfires, all of which can impact their ability to train, and ultimately impacts readiness.

The displays of dominance in the Arctic will grow, where new sealanes will connect continents more directly than ever before. The changing global climate, Mr. Speaker, will also lead to greater instability in the form of economic migration, increased competition over resources, and possibly more failed states, which we know to be breeding grounds for extremism and terrorism.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that a changing climate will alter our joint battle space. So when the U.S. Congress instructs the Department of Defense to take these threats seriously and evaluate the risk posed to our national security by climate change, we need exactly that. Our intent is clear, and there can be no room for misinterpretation.

Last week, The Washington Post reported that during revision of the Department's January 2018 Screening Level Vulnerability Assessment Survey report, Department of Defense officials omitted information pertinent to how our military installations report their vulnerability to sea level rise, how climate change is affecting the operating environment in the Arctic, and the potential risk to the Department's ability to conduct training and testing activities that have important impacts on our readiness.

While I appreciate the need to update reports when it is appropriate and necessary, it is unacceptable to attempt to bend congressional intent for political convenience. The Department of Defense must answer tough questions as to what motivated these changes, if not a skewed political narrative. In fact, the issue of climate change and its impact on national security has become more bipartisan over the last several years.

In fact, last year, in the National Defense Authorization Act, Congress instructed each service within the Department of Defense to assess the top 10 military installations likely to be affected by climate change over the next 20 years. We also instructed combatant commanders to incorporate the effects of a changing climate into their strategic battle plans.

Forty-six Republicans joined with Democrats to support this language on the floor of the House, and I expect that when this report is delivered to Congress later this year, it will make candid assessments in line with the clear language we supported in that floor vote and that was signed into law by the President.

Mr. Speaker, we must ensure that the Department remains resilient and

is prepared to address the effects of climate change on threat assessments, resources, and readiness, as well as to conduct operations both today and in the future. Congressional oversight plays an undeniable role in that process.

Mr. Speaker, the dangers of climate change on our national defense are real, and we support the researchers on the front lines of these critical threat assessments. Together, we can continue to craft a sane and sober strategy to defend the United States from a variety of threats, including climate change.

That is the expressed intent of Congress for the upcoming climate report, and is a necessity as we prepare for our Nation's future.

CONGRESS SHOULD NOT LET PEOPLE GO HUNGRY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, my Republican colleagues have a point. It is really terrible that some people take advantage of free food and drink to continue their slothful lifestyles. I agree. This conduct must stop.

Of course, Members of Congress can attend lunches and receptions with free food and drink every single day, sleep on the taxpayer's dime in their offices, and have the taxpayers do their laundry, too.

The House has been in session for a measly 50 days this year, and I have compiled at least 54 receptions, which is just the tip of the iceberg of free food and drink available to Members.

But even estimating a modest \$10 for a glass of wine and a plate of appetizers, that means that a Member who attends a reception every night the House is in session, has received a benefit of over \$500 just since the beginning of this year.

That is about the same amount of money as the maximum monthly food stamp benefit for a family of three, except Congress Members are nibbling on pork sliders, and French Brie, and pate, while these poor families are expected to feed each family member three meals a day for 30 days. That breaks down to about \$5.60 for each meal, or about \$1.87 per person per meal.

Now, I am sure none of my colleagues would think that they are better than working people who struggle to keep a roof over their heads and food on their tables. And I am sure all of us are happy to be subject to the same rules that we vote on in this Chamber. So here is my modest proposal: The congressional electronic benefits transfer card, or congressional food stamp card. We will put a little cash in it—say \$1.87 per reception—and Members can figure out how to make their monthly reception budget stretch to fit their wining-and-dining needs.

Maybe we will have Members carrying their single glass of wine from

one reception to another, or maybe they will blow their whole allotment on one plate of shrimp, or maybe—just maybe—we will see more Members of Congress showing empathy for the most vulnerable in our society.

Now, to be clear, there is nothing wrong with private organizations spending their own money on outreach to Members of Congress. I have certainly attended my share of receptions, as has everyone else here. But what is truly repellent in this debate, is the rank hypocrisy.

Here we sit, we get paid \$174,000 a year to work 4 days a week here at the U.S. Capitol, and we are considering a bill that would take food assistance away from millions of Americans. Members of Congress can literally walk down the hall for free appetizers any time of the day or the week.

Yet, Republicans are proposing to deny 265,000 children school meals. Congress can't pass an infrastructure bill or DACA, but we can debate a bureaucratic and ineffective work requirement for people struggling with hunger.

Perhaps if my colleagues ran out of funds on their congressional food stamp card and got a bit peckish, they would remember that in one of the richest countries in the world, we should not let people go hungry. Period.

How can we be debating on whether to starve children whose parents are struggling with low-paying or unstable jobs? You know what should be an unstable job? Giving corporations \$2 trillion in tax cuts while slashing basic food assistance to 20 million children, 5 million seniors, and 1 million veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote against this disgusting bill. And for those who don't, I will pray that you regret every bite of free shrimp cocktail and every sip of free wine.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 9 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida) at noon.

PRAYER

Monsignor John Zenz, Holy Name Parish, Birmingham, Michigan, offered the following prayer:

Be true to Your name, O Lord, and may we also be true to Your name, O Lord.

You give life to all things and make them holy. Keep us true to Your gift of life.