

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING CONGRESSMAN JOHN
LEWIS

SPEECH OF

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 22, 2020

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I join in the tributes to John Lewis with great personal appreciation for his extraordinary life and work and for the opportunity to have served alongside him as friend and colleague for more than thirty years.

My wife Lisa and I first got to know John and his late wife Lillian as new members of the House, classmates first elected in 1986. I have seen him advance to a senior position on the Ways and Means Committee, fighting especially to secure good, affordable health care for all. He has also invested great effort in protecting, and then restoring, the Voting Rights Act after the Supreme Court eliminated the crucial preclearance process.

From the start, however, John used his position to interpret and educate as well as to legislate. Most famously, he led the annual Faith and Politics pilgrimage to that bridge in Selma, the site of Bloody Sunday, where John almost lost his life, among other civil rights sites. But a day did not go by that he did not recount to colleagues or constituents or total strangers the history and meaning of the Movement. He was never too busy—I expect all of us have witnessed this—to stop whatever he was doing to greet a school group with a word of inspiration or to answer a visitor's questions.

While John's place in history is secured by his bold and visionary civil rights leadership, exemplified by his courage to press forward on that bridge, his greatness also consists of a lifetime telling and retelling the story and calling our country and all of us to our better selves. His leadership had biblical qualities, evoking both the call to justice of the Hebrew prophets and the love ethic of the Sermon on the Mount. We often say that someone was "one of a kind", but of John it was really true.

John's death leaves a huge void. His memory leaves us profoundly grateful to have shared some portion of his journey and also compels us to carry forward his vision of justice that "rolls down like waters" and the struggles it requires.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, FOREIGN
OPERATIONS, AND RELATED
PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 2021

SPEECH OF

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 23, 2020

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, let me thank Chairman SANFORD BISHOP and Chair NITA

LOWEY. I also appreciate the commitment that Ranking Members JEFF FORTENBERRY and KAY GRANGER have shown to support the hard work of our farmers and the safety of consumers. I had the honor of chairing this subcommittee a number of years ago, and I know firsthand the amount of work it takes. We face a health crisis and an economic crisis that have exposed serious disparities in our systems. This pandemic has further demonstrated how many were living on a knife's edge, and I strongly believe we must be doing more, not less.

This 2021 bill is recommending an increase of \$487 million, almost \$24 billion. It builds on the work we have done in the emergency response bills for our nation's farmers, families, frontline food workers. This pandemic has pinpointed to us where our system of supports, our social safety net, is not as strong as we believed it to be, as strong as our families, our farmers and our food workers need it to be. So, I am glad this bill is making short-term and long-term investments. Let me touch on a few areas of strength.

The bill makes strong investments to address the scourge of hunger in our country. The Census Bureau recently conducted a Household Pulse Survey to gather household information during the COVID-19 Pandemic. They found, quote, "Households with children were more likely to report permanent loss of employment and food shortages since the start of the pandemic."

Along with providing the necessary funding for the Food Stamp Program, Women, Infants and Children, and Child Nutrition Programs, the bill includes language to block implementation of rules that would threaten benefits for hundreds of thousands of people. I want to remind my colleagues that food stamp spending is a powerful anti-recession tool. It has previously been estimated that for each dollar spent from benefits, a \$1.70 is generated in economic activity.

The bill also takes action to ensure the safety of our nation's food supply, as well as the health of the workers producing that food. Workers on the frontline of our food supply chain—food processing, meat and poultry plant employees, and farmworkers—play an essential role in the availability of food. I thank the Chairman for his leadership on including language to prevent USDA from granting linespeed waivers to corporate meatpackers as well as the inclusion of language encouraging USDA to prioritize financial assistance to employers of farmworkers who can show they are complying with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines. We must push for leadership and accountability.

Recently, FDA Commissioner Hahn refused to refute the president's false claim about the severity of the virus. As has been reported by the Boston Globe, quote, "the World Health Organization has said about 20 percent of those diagnosed with COVID-19 progress to severe disease, including pneumonia and respiratory failure." But, the president said 99 percent of cases were, quote, "totally harm-

less." CNN's Dana Bash pressed Commissioner Hahn on this false claim. But, Commissioner Hahn said, quote, "I'm not going to get into who's right and who's wrong." That is the mission of the FDA, as the public's primary regulatory agency for public health. The mandate of the agency is to distinguish between right and wrong, especially as it relates to misleading claims about this virus. So, as we invest in the FDA's mission, I look forward to working with others on the subcommittee and the full committee to make sure the agency provides the most accurate information to the public.

Finally, I am proud of the \$2 billion in international food aid provided by this bill. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased hardship around the globe and I believe we have a moral obligation to lend a helping hand. The bill includes \$1.775 billion for Food for Peace grants, \$235 million for McGovern-Dole, and again provides \$1 million in funding for the International Agricultural Education Fellowship program.

I close by thanking the leadership of this committee for continuing to be taking the long term and near-term actions necessary to be protecting the public, for food security, for food safety, and worker safety. This is what the social safety net is for: To assist members of our community in their time of need. No one should fall through the cracks. No one need suffer.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, FOREIGN
OPERATIONS, AND RELATED
PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 2021

SPEECH OF

HON. DAVID N. CICILLINE

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 23, 2020

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my support for H.R. 7608, the State and Foreign Operations, Agriculture, Rural Development, Interior, Environment, Military Construction, and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2021. This year's legislation includes a number of priorities that I have advocated for which will benefit my home state of Rhode Island, protect our environment, benefit families, serve our nation's veterans, and strengthen our national security. I would like to thank Chairwoman LOWEY and Ranking Member GRANGER, as well as the Subcommittee Chairs and Ranking Members for their work on this year's House legislation.

The State and Foreign Operations division makes important strides in strengthening our national security. For the past three and a half years, the Trump Administration has made us less safe. The State Foreign Operations and Related Agencies funding bill, however, would make the country, and Rhode Islanders, safer. Along with funds for diplomacy—something that the United States should be investing in,

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

rather than making a mockery of—this bill invests in emergency appropriations for global coronavirus preparedness, response, and relief efforts. Because if we do not address the global pandemic, it will continue to come back to us.

In addition, this bill supports global reproductive health and family planning programs; and promotes equality for LGBTI people and people with disabilities. In particular, it contains my increase-decrease amendment to draw attention to the State Department's shameful attempt to turn back time and strip women and LGBTIQ individuals of their civil and human rights.

Members of the House and Senate have now sent five letters to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo expressing our strong, continued concern regarding the work of the Department of State's Commission on Unalienable Rights ("the Commission"), but we have received no reply. It is simply inexcusable that the Department of State would not respond in any way to our repeated oversight attempts, in particular as the Commission has proven time and time again that it could undermine our nation's ability to lead on critical human rights issues, including with respect to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and protections for millions of people globally in the LGBTIQ community.

As a member of the House Foreign Relations Committee I am particularly disturbed that the Secretary has chosen to create the Commission rather than honor the advice of the State Department's Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, which is vested with the authority to advise the Department on U.S. foreign policy related to human rights. I believe that the Department's strategic priorities should be guided by the Assistant Secretary, Congressionally mandated reporting on human rights, and well established and lasting human rights standards, rather than the Commission. By signaling, through the Commission's mandate and membership, a desire to place religious freedom above all other rights, the State Department is undermining commitments the United States has made abroad. Indeed, the Commission's actions create a risk that the United States will breach those legally binding obligations that do not align with the Commission's view of human rights. Further, the Commission's work could undermine priorities that the United States has encouraged other nations to adopt.

The Trump Administration has shown, time and time again, that it is unwilling to rein in the behavior of despots and dictators. We must not allow the Commission to give them permission to run roughshod over the human rights of even more people around the world.

The United States should be on the front lines of protecting human rights at home and abroad, including those guaranteeing SRHR and protections for millions of people globally in the LGBTIQ community. Looking to "natural law" as a method of undermining long established human rights protections for minority groups and elevating religious freedom over other rights is both illegal and immoral.

The Agricultural, Rural Development, and Related Agencies division provides funding for important agricultural research. It is critical for Congress to support research and educational programs to ensure the United States remains a global leader in agriculture. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of

Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA) and their Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) provide investments and grants in key areas of transformative research and development. This year's bill provides an additional \$10 million above the enacted level for USDA-NIFA and AFRI, which will provide educational institutions with grants to continue work in key areas of transformative agricultural and food research. We must ensure that these institutions have the funding needed to continue their vital work and demonstrate our commitment to addressing agricultural challenges.

This year's Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies division will include a number of key priorities which will provide significant benefit to my home state. This bill increases funding for the Operation of the National Park System (ONPS) by \$200 million from the 2020 Fiscal Year. An increase for ONPS funding will allow for continued development and maintenance of the Blackstone Valley National Historic Park, which commemorates and preserves the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution.

The bill also provides an increase for the Southern New England Estuaries Geographic Program. This critical program engages with stakeholders in my home state, and throughout Southern New England, to preserve our region's estuaries, which provide significant and economic benefit. It also helps to preserve fragile ecosystems and wildlife habitats, and helps to manage the impacts of human activity along our coastline.

I also strongly support this bill's commitment to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The increased funding for NEA and NEH will boost Rhode Island's arts economy, and support our renowned community of artists.

I was also very glad to see this year's Interior and Environment appropriation will continue to restrict the issuing of new oil and gas leases in the Outer Continental Shelf. Rhode Island's ocean economy generates more than \$2 billion annually, and supports more than 41,000 jobs in industries such as commercial fishing, tourism, and other recreational activities. Expansion of oil and gas drilling off the coast Rhode Island, and throughout New England, would devastate our local ocean economy, destroy critical marine habitats, and continue to exacerbate the effects of climate change.

Finally, in this year's Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies division, the committee took significant steps to strengthen suicide prevention programs for our nation's veterans. In particular, this bill provides \$313 million for Suicide Prevention Outreach programs. It will also ensure that \$115 million for the Veterans Crisis Line (VCL), a dedicated toll-free hotline for veterans experiencing mental health crises and thoughts of suicide, is available in FY21. This amounts to a \$4 million increase for the VCL from the 2020 level. It is estimated that each day 20 American veterans take their own life. We owe it to the brave men and women who have served our nation in uniform to ensure that they have the best mental health care and available services for them when they return home.

I thank you for the opportunity to express my support for H.R. 7608, and I urge passage by the entire House of Representatives.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2021

SPEECH OF

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 23, 2020

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7608, a bill to provide Fiscal Year 2021 funding for the Departments of Agriculture, Interior, and Veterans Affairs, among others. This package includes critical programs that help address important priorities such as helping our most vulnerable escape hunger and our veterans to receive the care and benefits they have earned.

Our country has been hit by an economic freight train and many families have been reeling for months and will continue to do so if the federal government does not step up in the fight against this deadly virus. Food insecurity was a challenge before COVID-19 but it has only gotten worse as tens of millions of Americans have lost their jobs. We have seen long lines at food banks and pantries.

The bill before us ensures that SNAP can continue to help struggling Americans. It blocks ongoing attempts by the Trump Administration to force more people to lose food aid. It supports the WIC program to ensure that we help some of our most vulnerable pregnant women, infants and children.

It also increases funding for grants to help increase access to school breakfast, a priority for me. Unfortunately, too many kids begin the school day without a healthy breakfast and participation in school breakfast lags well behind school lunch. Studies repeatedly show that students who consume nutritious breakfasts have better health outcomes, and better educational outcomes. These dollars will help support innovative and proven interventions that can help increase participation.

I appreciate Chairman BISHOP's leadership in helping to make sure that more families can keep food on the table.

Likewise, I appreciate Chairwoman MCCOLLUM's continued efforts to protect our environment and the Great Lakes. I am pleased that the committee provides a \$15 million increase for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative which has been an unmitigated success in working to help our communities address some of the biggest challenges facing these valuable waters.

This bill also increases funding to help protect water quality. I thank the Chairwoman as well as Congresswoman LORI TRAHAN who worked with me to help push for greater funding to help address combined sewer overflows, which endanger both our waters and the public's health. A great number of CSO's are in the Midwest and Northeast and communities need all the support they can to help make the investments to reduce this threat to our waterways. The bill's investment of \$57 million in regular appropriations and \$400 million in emergency funding will go a long way in helping address this problem.

The bill also includes funding for the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds, which are the main federal programs supporting investments in critical water infrastructure. Our communities are struggling to