

His entrepreneurial spirit led him to Ivy Entrepreneurs business school where he rose to new heights, becoming the CEO and founder of the H.O.W. Inc. Foundation, Helping Others Win.

Antrone's achievements are vast, but perhaps most notable is his pioneering accomplishment as the first physically challenged man to become an independent provider.

Antrone's story is a beacon of hope for those living with physical challenges. His story is a powerful reminder that our circumstances do not define us, our spirit and determination do. To Antrone I say: Onward. We are so proud of you.

#### REMEMBERING MARK WOODS

(Mr. LAWLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAWLER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to remember the life of a true American hero, Mark Woods, who dedicated his life to public service in the military, in law enforcement, and in his local community.

A two-term U.S. Army combat veteran and a retired NYPD detective who served on the Joint Terrorism Task Force, Mark lived a life of service from the start.

His passion for supporting fellow veterans through his role as director of the Joseph P. Dwyer peer-to-peer veteran service program at BRIDGES and as a veteran service officer in Rockland County was revered by all in our region.

Mark was rightly recognized as Rockland County's 2024 Veteran of the Year thanks to his unparalleled efforts advocating for veterans and getting them the support and services they need and deserve.

Beyond his work for the veteran community, Mark was a councilman in the town of Clarkstown and a dedicated family man. We extend our deepest sympathies to his family, especially his wife, Jeanne, his son and daughter, who should know that Mark's legacy will continue to inspire and guide all of us.

On a more personal note, Mark was great friend, who I was honored to swear in as councilman in January, and I will miss him dearly. He was a humble and decent man whose work was rooted in service to the people of Rockland County.

May God rest his soul on behalf of a grateful Nation.

#### PAY THEM BACK

(Ms. SALINAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SALINAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the daughter of a Vietnam veteran and the Representative for Oregon's Sixth District, home to nearly 40,000 veterans.

These brave Oregonians served our country, and now I have the great honor of serving them in Congress. They are hardworking people, some of whom carry with them scars both visible and invisible of their service.

Returning to civilian life can be challenging. Mental health problems are all too common, and many veterans struggle to find stable jobs in housing. They put country first and their own comfort second.

As Members of Congress, the least we can do is to show them we care.

That is why I was shocked to see House Republicans proposing \$30 billion in cuts to SNAP in their farm bill proposal.

Cutting SNAP was never on the table for Democrats, yet my Republican colleagues have chosen to move forward with this reckless plan and take away up to 2 days' worth of food every month from hungry veterans, kids, and seniors.

Why must my Republican colleagues deprive veterans of food when they fall on hard times? Why the unnecessary cruelty?

Instead, we need to protect SNAP and ensure that those who have sacrificed so much for our freedom will have healthy, nutritious food on the table. It is our job—no, our duty and responsibility to pay them back.

#### RECOGNIZING ROY SPRINGFIELD

(Mrs. SPARTZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SPARTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sergeant Roy Springfield of Anderson, Indiana, who served in the U.S. Army for 3 years as a member of the elite Special Forces. Roy enlisted in the Army in 1961, where he completed his tour of duty in Vietnam and Laos.

While evacuating a Special Forces base in Laos under intense enemy attack, Sergeant Springfield managed to grab an American flag and keep it from falling into enemy hands. He has retained and treasured this flag for more than six decades.

After his time in the Army, Roy went on to serve his community for 27 years as a police officer with the Anderson Police Department. In 1973, he also started the Police Athletic League in Anderson for disadvantaged youth.

In recognition of his brave service to our Nation, it was my honor to present Sergeant Roy Springfield with a National Defense Service Medal and the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal on January 26, 2024. I am extremely grateful for Roy's bravery and am humbled to express our appreciation on behalf of the American people in Indiana's Fifth Congressional District.

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#### SNAP BENEFITS ARE NEEDED BY 42 MILLION AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. HAYES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to submit extraneous material in the RECORD on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Connecticut?

There was no objection.

Mrs. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues who have joined me for this extremely special SNAP Special Order hour.

Hunger continues to be a pervasive issue in America. According to the USDA, in 2023, over 42 million people rely on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, also known as SNAP, and 41 percent of those households have children.

SNAP benefits are modest, averaging only about \$6.20 per person per day or about \$2 per person per meal.

The benefits of SNAP are highly targeted to focus on those with the greatest needs. Ninety-two percent of SNAP benefits go to households with income below the poverty line and 54 percent go to households at or below half of the poverty line.

Additionally, every dollar spent on SNAP benefits generates as much as \$1.54 to the local economy. House Republicans are putting forward a farm bill which would end the USDA's authority to increase the Thrifty Food Plan. The Thrifty Food Plan is used to determine the amount of benefits a SNAP recipient receives.

USDA calculates the Thrifty Food Plan using a mathematical model based on the cost of food, the nutrients in the food, nutrition guidance, and what Americans are actually eating. The Thrifty Food Plan goes further than a simple adjustment for inflation to better ensure that people have access to food.

The 2018 bipartisan farm bill directed USDA to regularly reevaluate the Thrifty Food Plan and SNAP benefit adjustments as food prices, dietary guidance, and other scientific standards shifted over time. The farm bill put forth by House Republicans will result in roughly \$30 billion in benefit cuts, according to the Congressional Budget Office. That would impact every SNAP household in future years, including children, older adults, and people with disabilities.

It would mean that the cost of the Thrifty Food Plan would be frozen no matter what the science says about the cost of a healthy, normal diet.

In the last 50 years, the Thrifty Food Plan has only been updated three times: in 1983, 1989, and 2006, but these updates did not increase SNAP benefits.

As a result of the 2021 update, the benefit amounts were increased and the purchasing power of the plan to 21 percent. This led to a \$1.40 per person per day increase in SNAP's average benefits, or about 70 cents per meal.

This is not a lot of money to begin with; however, this update lifted over 2 million SNAP participants out of poverty or above the poverty line, including over 1 million children.

According to the Urban Institute, the 2021 Thrifty Food Plan reduced poverty for Black and Hispanic people, suggesting that reevaluation was addressing longstanding systemic racial issues. Additionally, a 2023 Data for Progress poll found that 66 percent have a favorable view of SNAP, including 83 percent of Democrats, 62 percent of Independents, and 52 percent of Republicans. All Americans benefit from this anti-hunger program. A majority of Americans support increasing funding for SNAP, not cutting it.

The total cut to SNAP and related nutrition programs under the House Republican proposal is roughly \$30 billion. The average per person SNAP benefit would be roughly \$7 less per month between 2027 and 2031 and jump to \$15 less per month in 2032 and 2033.

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, this cut would affect nearly 6 million older adults, 4 million people with disabilities, and nearly 17 million children, including 5 million children under the age of 5.

Hunger is a policy choice and SNAP is our most effective anti-hunger program, and we must protect the Thrifty Food Plan in the farm bill.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD four letters in opposition to the House Republican farm bill from the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association, AFL-CIO, and ASFCME. All letters disapprove of the nearly \$30 billion cut to SNAP.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS,  
May 22, 2024.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC.

REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the 1.7 million members of the AFT, I write in opposition to the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2024 (Farm Bill).

Simply put, this bill will only increase hunger and food insecurity for many Americans by cutting \$30 billion in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits over 10 years. This will have a devastating effect on the children, families, older Americans, college students and individuals with disabilities who rely on the program. SNAP is the nutritional safety net that families and individuals depend on to thrive. The AFT represents school food service workers and educators who know firsthand that SNAP is the guardrail, along with school meals, that ensures our most vulnerable students are receiving the food assistance needed to learn and excel in school. This proposal will be the largest cut to SNAP in 30 years. According to the Center

on Budget and Policy Priorities, the Summer EBT (electronic benefit transfer) program, which provides families with school-age children a grocery benefit over the summer when students cannot receive their school meals, will also receive a cut of \$500 million in this bill.

SNAP benefits are already limited, with the average benefit totaling approximately \$6.20 per person, per day. And this is after the 2021 re-evaluation (the first adjustment in nearly 50 years), which provided SNAP recipients with an additional \$1.40 per person, per day. According to the Urban Institute, this increase helped reduce poverty by 4.7 percent, impacting approximately 2.3 million Americans. Yet, in addition to the cuts, this is the adjustment the House Farm Bill wants to prevent from occurring again.

The Farm Bill is also proposing to eliminate the federal protections for merit staffing and privatize the workforce that conducts the essential work for the SNAP program. Merit staff are government workers who ensure the program is working effectively with transparency by providing eligibility screenings, application assistance and verification guidance. As a union of public employees, including those who process SNAP applications, the AFT opposes the proposal to outsource jobs and strip merit staffing that has protected public investment for more than 75 years. Not only will this eliminate public accountability for public investment, but it will also set the precedent to remove the merit staffing provisions in other critical federal programs.

Although the Farm Bill includes programs for rural communities that have bipartisan support, the funding for those programs is paid for with funding taken from SNAP. If a child is hungry, any positive gains of having additional funding for schools, broadband and other services in rural communities are nullified. This is not a time to borrow from Peter to pay Paul.

Many individuals and families are struggling to buy sufficient, healthy meals. Instead of focusing on real bipartisan solutions for families, children, workers and rural communities, the House Farm Bill is attempting to roll back nutrition and labor protections. I urge you to oppose the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2024 in committee.

Sincerely,

RANDI WEINGARTEN,  
President, AFT.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION,  
Washington, DC, May 20, 2024.  
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,  
House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the 3 million members of the National Education Association, who teach and support nearly 50 million students in public schools across America, we urge you to vote NO on the Farm, Food, and National Security Act 2024, the reauthorization legislation for the farm bill. Votes related to this issue may be included in the NEA Report Card for the 118th Congress.

We oppose the bill because of proposed changes to the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP)—that will weaken the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and erode benefits for participants.

NEA members are teachers and education support professionals in 14,000 communities throughout urban, suburban, and rural America. These educators know firsthand that hungry students cannot focus on learning. We urge you to strengthen SNAP so that it will improve low-income families' health and well-being and help prepare students for learning.

Approximately two-thirds of SNAP households include a child, an older person, or an individual with a disability, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP). Many working-age SNAP recipients hold multiple low-paying jobs with unreliable hours and paltry benefits, or no benefits at all. For them, any unexpected expense, health crisis, or other emergency could mean choosing between buying groceries and paying a bill. Among these recipients are approximately 10 percent of education support professionals and approximately 16 percent of school food service professionals—workers who are dedicated to nurturing students and providing them with healthy meals, but struggle to feed their own families. Like these hardworking education support professionals, 70 percent of adult SNAP recipients hold at least one job, according to a Government Accountability Office report.

Because SNAP is the first line of defense against childhood hunger, the NEA strongly opposes the bill's proposal to cut the program by approximately \$30 billion over 10 years, through limiting the U.S. Department of Agriculture's authority to adjust the TFP. This proposal—which would impact as many as 17 million children in a typical month, according to the CBPP—would undercut the TFP's ability to accurately reflect the cost of a healthy diet, eroding benefits and narrowing families' access to fresh fruits and vegetables amid rising prices.

This change would further impact programs that are tied to the Thrifty Food Plan. NEA is particularly concerned about the impact on the new Summer EBT Program, which provides grocery benefits to children in low-income families during the summer when schools are closed. The summer program would be cut by more than \$500 million over the 2027–2033 period due to the TFP change, the CBPP estimates.

While the bill contains some provisions that NEA supports, such as lifting the drug felony ban, improvements to the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, and extending the Secure Rural Schools program, these are insufficient to make up for such a large and long-term cut to SNAP.

Instead of undermining SNAP, we ask you to be guided by NEA's priorities for reauthorization, which include strengthening the program by removing the shelter deduction cap and time limits on eligibility, enacting a standard deduction for medical expenses, and aligning SNAP's eligibility standards with the Affordable Care Act to allow lawfully present immigrants and permanent residents to participate in SNAP.

NEA also supports efforts to ensure that the work to cultivate, process, and secure the food supply chain is respected. NEA seeks a farm bill that ensures workers are paid a living wage, employers maintain safe working conditions, and employers support workers' right to organize in order to have a say in the conditions of their employment. This bill ignores these needs. In fact, the bill undermines labor. NEA further opposes the bill's privatization provision because it would permit the outsourcing of SNAP eligibility determinations, affecting the merit staff employees who administer SNAP.

SNAP is our nation's largest anti-hunger program. For many families, it means the difference between eating and going without. All students deserve important nutritional support to learn. Robust SNAP benefits not only provide struggling families with a crucial safety net; they are also instrumental in creating the conditions for academic engagement and achievement.

We must urge you to vote NO on the Farm, Food, and National Security Act 2024 as currently written. We also ask that you support amendments that would strengthen the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and

oppose all amendments that would weaken the program.

Sincerely,

MARC EGAN,  
*Director of Government Relations,  
National Education Association.*

AFL-CIO  
May 20, 2024.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the 12.5 million workers and 60 affiliate unions represented by the AFL-CIO, I urge you to oppose the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2024 when it comes to a vote in the House Agriculture Committee, and to reject any amendments that further harm our nation's food programs.

This partisan bill proposes changes to the Thrifty Food Program, resulting in close to \$30 billion in cuts to SNAP and other food benefits over the next decade, worsening food insecurity and hunger for over 42 million Americans. According to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, these cuts will affect 17 million children, 5 million children under age five, 6 million seniors, and 4 million people with disabilities. Among other things, according to this analysis, the bill will result in \$500 million less funding for the Summer EBT program, depriving families of food benefits during the summer recess when school lunches are unavailable. Enacting this bill without dramatic changes would push more people below the poverty line and increase child hunger.

Additionally, we strongly oppose provisions like those in H.R. 5094, which strip the USDA of its oversight authority and eliminate federal protections for merit staffing within SNAP, potentially setting a dangerous precedent for other federal programs. Merit staff are essential for conducting SNAP eligibility screenings and maintaining program integrity. Privatization, as evident in failed experiments in Texas and Indiana, wastes taxpayer dollars and harms program beneficiaries.

Our unions represent workers across the entire food supply chain—from meat-cutting floors and school cafeterias to grocery store checkouts and agricultural fields. These workers are essential to our economy and community well-being. It is imperative that the Farm Bill supports good jobs and includes the voices of food workers in agricultural policy decisions.

We urge Congress to back agricultural policies that foster well-paying jobs, including the bipartisan Senate Farm Bill, the Rural Prosperity and Food Security Act of 2024, which seeks to protect and expand SNAP benefits, improving access for marginalized groups and offering a more effective approach to combating hunger and supporting workers.

Food safety, nutrition, and agricultural policies are vital to all Americans, especially our union members. We urge you to vote against this partisan Farm Bill and any further damaging amendments, and instead, work towards a more inclusive and effective solution.

Sincerely,

JODY CALEMINE,  
*Director, Government Affairs.*

AFSCME,  
May 21, 2024.

Hon. GLENN "GT" THOMPSON,  
*Chair*

Hon. DAVID SCOTT,  
*Ranking Member,*

*Committee on Agriculture, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIR THOMPSON AND RANKING MEMBER SCOTT: On behalf of the 1.4 million members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees

(AFSCME), we strongly oppose the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2024 pending before the committee because it would deeply cut future SNAP benefits by nearly \$30 billion over the next decade, take away good union jobs and harm program integrity.

Tens of thousands of AFSCME members under merit-based personnel systems are proud to administer SNAP benefits because SNAP is the cornerstone of the nation's nutrition and food security safety net, helping to put food on the table for 41.2 million low-income participants each month. Cuts to SNAP would harm families, young children, college students, seniors, veterans, active-duty military families and people with disabilities in all U.S. states and territories. SNAP is a lifeline for low-wage workers, child care providers and school employees, including school food service workers and classroom assistants.

AFSCME strongly opposes Sections 4105 and 4111, and any other SNAP provisions which undermine, erode or eliminate the current federal requirements for SNAP to be administered by workers under a merit-based personnel system.

Merit-based personnel systems at the federal, state and local levels require hiring, advancement, demotion and discipline be based on merit and competence.

Federal law requires that merit staff public employees conduct the essential work of SNAP to screen for eligibility and determine benefit levels, including providing application assistance, answering client questions about missing information, pursuing missing information, providing verification guidance and to thoroughly explore and certify whether an individual meets the state's criteria for participation in Employment and Training (E&T).

Merit staffing ensures that all important SNAP determinations are unbiased, high quality, free from political influence and without fear of arbitrary management action or retaliation.

Merit staffing protects program integrity and ensures that SNAP beneficiaries receive the help they need from a professional workforce, that recipient data remains private, and determinations are based on qualifications rather than profit or other motives.

Section 4111 is based upon H.R. 5094, which we oppose, and despite its misleading title, this provision would not provide "flexibility" but would dismantle longstanding federal merit-staffing requirements that protect program integrity. States and counties currently have significant flexibility to administer SNAP. Experiments with the outsourcing of merit-staffed work in Texas and Indiana, in particular, have proven to be a waste of taxpayer dollars and a programmatic nightmare, as well as a drain on good, local jobs that pay better than private for-profit companies who rarely provide essential benefits, including health care and retirement.

Outsourcing has resulted in none of the promises of improved performance, efficiency or cost savings. In fact, it has harmed struggling families, seniors and the disabled, and compromised the integrity of the program itself.

Section 4105 is an additional attack on merit staffing, unwarranted by current merit staff performance, and inefficient. This provision would allow a state to hire for profit contractors to screen SNAP beneficiaries for E&T referral after merit staff have already reviewed an applicant for benefit determination. Merit staff responsibilities are designed to be "one stop," designating one staff point of contact to screen and refer potential beneficiaries to needed programs. Dividing screening and referral responsibilities cre-

ates duplicative work for the multiple screeners and additional points of contact and likely duplicative document submissions for people in need of assistance who are already navigating a complex system. This duplication would likely delay referrals for employment and training, create needless backlogs, and compromise the quality of services.

Both proposed privatization provisions (Sections 4105 and 4111) do not allow the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to stop states from privatizing important work, nor would USDA have authority to oversee the actions of for-profit contractors. This lack of oversight and accountability would threaten access to essential SNAP benefits as a direct result of the actions of private companies whose past performance has been proven to result in increased backlogs, costs and error rates. Furthermore, the reference to collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) in Section 4111 is misleading and ineffective, providing no real protection to union workforces, and absolutely no protection to workers in states where there are no public sector CBAs.

AFSCME is relying on you to vote "no" on this partisan farm bill and any harmful amendments that compromise the SNAP program. We are counting on you to protect SNAP from deep benefit cuts and maintain current SNAP public sector merit-staffed employment requirements, which allow the program to continue to serve our nation's most vulnerable individuals and families.

Sincerely,

EDWIN S. JAYNE,  
*Director of Federal Government Affairs.*

Mrs. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. BROWN).

Ms. BROWN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative HAYES for organizing this Special Order hour on SNAP.

Today, I rise because tomorrow the House Agriculture Committee will vote on the GOP's partisan farm bill. If passed, it will force severe cuts to the SNAP program that would risk benefits for years to come.

SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as the Food Stamp program, is a vital resource to families and individuals who have fallen on hard times. In Ohio's 11th Congressional District, almost one in four households rely on SNAP benefits to put food on the table.

These are our friends, our family, neighbors, and my constituents. It shouldn't be controversial to want members of your community fed.

On the House Agriculture Committee, I am committed to making that known, but this farm bill will see the largest cut to SNAP benefits in over 30 years, taking nearly \$30 billion in food out of the mouths of people who really need it.

Being poor isn't a condemnation of morals, but Republicans have shown they want to treat it that way, which is why I urge my Republican colleagues to reconsider their extreme proposal and to join Democrats as we continue to put people over politics.

Mrs. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. WILD).

Ms. WILD. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to the gentlewoman from Connecticut for convening us this evening

to discuss an issue that affects every corner of our Nation: food insecurity.

In blue, red, and purple districts alike, too many families struggle to afford the food that they need to keep themselves and their families healthy and fed. Throughout my time in Congress, I have used my voice and my vote to support nutrition programs because I am determined to ensure that in our Nation, the richest in the history of the world, no one goes hungry.

As part of this effort, I have prioritized key nutrition programs. In 2018, my very first vote was to reauthorize the farm bill, which funds many critical nutrition assistance programs that people in our community rely on. These programs include the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, known as SNAP; Meals on Wheels; The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children; nutrition assistance, school breakfast programs, and summer meal programs.

Now, extreme Members of the House have put forward a farm bill that includes devastating cuts for SNAP participants that so many in our community rely on to feed their families. Their proposed bill would cut nearly \$30 billion in SNAP benefits that families rely on to put food on the table every night.

In 2023, one in eight households, roughly 44.2 million Americans, experienced food insecurity or lack of access to an affordable, nutritious diet. In my district, Pennsylvania's Seventh, the Greater Lehigh Valley area, nearly 40,000 households, or 13 percent of the households in our community, rely on SNAP to feed themselves and their families.

In the richest Nation in the world, no one should go to bed hungry because they can't afford to eat, and no one should have to worry about having enough food for their kids because politicians decided to play games with the necessary benefits that they rely on every single day.

This is a moral imperative of the highest priority. Children's physical and cognitive development depends on proper nutrition. Quite simply, adequate food sets them up for success in school and throughout life.

We cannot, we must not abandon families in our communities that struggle with food insecurity. This should not be a partisan issue and it is deeply disappointing to me that Members on the other side of the aisle would put forth a bill that so severely cuts SNAP benefits.

I will always stand up to efforts to strip benefits away from the most vulnerable members of our society, children. I hope to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle on a bipartisan path forward that protects critical nutrition programs, including SNAP, in the upcoming farm bill reauthorization.

Mrs. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ms. WILD for those powerful words.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, let me thank my colleague, Congresswoman HAYES, for bringing us together today to talk about something so important.

We do live in the richest country in the world at the richest moment in history, and the very idea that we would tolerate and even think about adding to hunger in America is beyond belief.

It is a moral issue, but how could we even think about cutting the opportunity for our children, for our families, for older Americans, for people with disabilities, for people who simply can't afford to put food on the table. This is not because we have a shortage of the food that is available. It is not because there is not the funding to make sure that we take care of those in need.

This is the beginning, pretty soon, of the hunger season because many schools that have provided school lunch programs and school breakfast programs may not be available in the summer months, and yet these children and families need to eat.

How can anyone think about cutting the SNAP program, 60 million people in the United States, half of whom are children? No. It is just not tolerable.

I beg that we are going to make sure that everyone in the United States of America who is hungry will have food on the table.

Mrs. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. VARGAS).

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, I sincerely thank the gentlewoman from Connecticut for bringing us together tonight to defend the SNAP program.

In America, no child should go to bed hungry. No family should have to worry about where their next meal is coming from. SNAP is the most important and effective tool we have to stave off hunger in our country. It is our first line of defense, and yet House Republicans have proposed the largest cut to the program in decades. This is cruel, plain and simple.

These proposed cuts stand to harm more than 40,000 families in my district in California and over 40 million families nationwide who benefit from this program. Almost 80 percent of the people who benefit from SNAP are children, seniors, people with disabilities, and veterans.

SNAP also boosts our local economies. Every dollar spent on SNAP benefits generates roughly \$1.50 in economic activity. For too many people in our country, making ends meet is a daily battle. Programs like SNAP are vital tools for ending hunger and helping those who are most in need. They provide Americans with the help they need to find the footing in tough times and to make life better for themselves and their children. We should be expanding these programs, not cutting them.

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Mrs. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I would add that \$18 billion of the cuts would affect households with children, which, in a typical month, would include nearly 17 million children.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BARRAGÁN).

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans are coming after the food benefits of disabled veterans who receive food assistance or SNAP, part-time college students and single moms on SNAP. House Republicans' farm bill would make the largest cuts to SNAP and food assistance programs in 30 years.

Many American families are on the brink. They rely on SNAP to put food on the table. Eighty-six percent of all SNAP benefits go to households that have children or households with older Americans or individuals with disabilities.

As chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, I am also concerned about the harm SNAP cuts will bring to communities of color, including Latinos. Forty percent of Latino adults report not having enough food to eat, more than any other ethnic or racial group. Over 5 million Latinos in the United States receive SNAP to put food on the table.

Right now, a single person will receive at most \$9 in SNAP assistance for food per day. To those in need, \$9 can determine whether they can eat that day.

Three square meals a day should not be a partisan debate. Without SNAP, hungry Americans will be forced to choose between food to eat and necessities like electricity, running water, or medication. It is a cruel and inhumane choice we should not force on the American people.

House Democrats will continue to fight to preserve and expand access to SNAP so that no family goes hungry.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my Republican colleagues to put people over politics and join House Democrats to protect SNAP. We must stand together for compassion, dignity, and the well-being of all Americans.

Mrs. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I would add for the record that \$9 billion of the cuts would affect households with preschool-aged children or children under 5, which, in a typical month, would include about 5 million young children.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. TLAIB).

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, I thank my wonderful, amazing, dedicated, committed colleague from Connecticut, who is today, as we say in Detroit, speaking truth to power when it comes to our most vulnerable in the United States.

We have heard over and over again that we are the richest country in the world. Even though we live in the richest country, millions of children live in poverty, lacking access to necessities like food, housing, and healthcare. It is shameful.

More than 44 million people in our country face hunger, including over 15 percent in one of the largest counties in my district, Wayne County. SNAP is an essential food assistance program that has been a key tool in combating hunger in our most vulnerable communities.

Now, my Republican colleagues want to cut this essential program that so many of our families rely on to feed their children. It is shameful. The GOP farm bill would make the largest cut to SNAP in nearly 30 years. The bill threatens \$27 billion in SNAP benefits for low-income families. It is utterly shameful.

We must stand together strongly in support of expanding the social safety net and increasing funding programs for SNAP and other child nutrition programs. They are essential in creating healthy, thriving communities.

It is time to protect programs to combat hunger, not make extremist cuts. Working families in our country should not have to worry about where their next meal is coming from.

In this body, we see over and over again that we seem to find money for endless wars like this, but we can't seem to find the same resources to end child hunger in our country.

The first African-American woman ever to serve in our Congress was Shirley Chisholm. She used to say children can't learn if they are hungry.

Children should and must have access to SNAP benefits to experience long-term positive outcomes like better health, improved learning, and higher success as adults.

I don't think people realize the trauma of what the most vulnerable people among us go through in going to sleep hungry. Access to nutritious meals is essential for every child's health and development. We know this.

Why make these extremist cuts? We must continue to invest in universal school meals and so much more.

I am proud to cosponsor the Universal School Meals Program Act and proud to say to all my folks in the 12th Congressional District that I am not going to back down. I am not going to back down until we fully fund SNAP benefits.

Mr. Speaker, it is the least we can do in this Congress. It is not just our children. It is our disabled neighbors, our seasoned residents, our veterans, and working-class folks who are working hours and hours a day but still can't put food on the table. We must do better.

Mr. Speaker, I again thank my colleague from Connecticut for bringing us together today to discuss the importance of protecting SNAP.

Mrs. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, \$5 billion of the cuts will affect households with older adults, which, in a typical month, would include more than 6 million individuals age 60 or older whose benefits would be cut.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JACKSON).

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise because it is imperative that this body move with all deliberate speed to pass a farm bill that is both responsible and enriching for the American people.

The farm bill is one of the most fundamental pieces of legislation that we enact as a government, not simply because of the dollars we dedicate, but more so because of the number of people who are supported by the passing of this indispensable law.

Unlike most of the bills we pass, the farm bill is not a dry and depersonalized legislative act. There are names and faces attached to food. There are real people in dire situations associated and connected to the success of this bill.

Unlike most of the appropriations we allocate in this body, the farm bill is a moral document that reminds us that we owe each other as human beings.

It brings us back to the fundamental things. It reminds us that the politics of the future mean nothing in the stomach of a child who is hungry.

To be sure, this bill compels us to move forward. This bill moves us beyond politics of blame so that we might embrace a more excellent way. In fact, I would go so far as to say that the farm bill is one of the few manifestations of the social contract this government makes with the American people. The SNAP program alone is a moral accomplishment that we have to reach for.

Over 300,000 people make up my district in Illinois. Almost 73,000 of those households receive SNAP benefits. Almost 40 percent of these households have a child in them, and almost 45 percent of those children have some sort of disability.

In fact, I would go so far as to say that the bill is one of the few manifestations of the social contract of this government that the American people deserve. The SNAP program alone is our moral achievement, and I say this because all of us know that 86 percent of the SNAP benefits go to the households of women and children.

Mr. Speaker, we have to move with speed. Ask not what you can do for your country but what your country can do for you. Let me tell you, there is a mutuality in this contract. We also have to understand that the state has to support the people, not simply the people supporting the state. The farm bill helps those who are in need when their backs are against the wall.

Does this bill achieve that? No, Mr. Speaker. Taking food off of children's plates is not the best of the American ideal. We say our prayers, and we pray for the food we are about to receive. We do not pray for the food that has now been removed from our table by our government.

We must, indeed, fight for the rights of all those women and children and disabled families that need our help.

This is important because the time when we ignore cities and emerging

farming centers is over. In the district that I represent, we celebrate community gardens and urban farms because inasmuch as I believe that access to healthy food is a right that all human beings should enjoy, it is also a responsibility that each of us must take into our own hands. Each of us must do whatever we can to ensure that our families have the sustenance and nutrition they require for flourishing and the possibility of a great life.

We need a farm bill that is responsible. Taking food out of the mouths of the most desperate and those of the least, the lost, and the left behind cannot stand. I will be opposing this farm bill until it is more responsive and we leave SNAP alone and ensure that every family is well fed in America.

I thank Mrs. HAYES for picking up this fight.

Mrs. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate everything Representative JACKSON said, and I thank him for his words.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON), the chairman of the Task Force on Agriculture and Nutrition in the 21st Century.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I am one of those Members who represent a significant agricultural district which actually has its economy based on agriculture. I also represent the district that former Congressman Jamie Whitten represented. Ultimately, he framed the farm bill such that it did not pit rural America against urban America.

This bill pits rural America against urban America, and that is not the purpose of a farm bill. Let's talk a little bit about it.

Mr. Speaker, you can't penalize the needy for the greedy. What I am saying in that respect is, so many people in this country are in need of nutrition benefits. That is why we have a farm bill. A substantial majority of the farm bill is devoted to nutrition, and rightfully so.

Let's talk a little bit about where I am with it. This is my fourth farm bill. I have gone through all of it. I have seen everything that has been had with it, but the important part is that I serve as the chair of the Task Force on Agriculture and Nutrition in the 21st Century, appointed by Leader Jeffries.

We went all over the country. We heard from people saying, look, there are important things for the farm bill, but it is all about compromise and working together.

What did we hear people say? The first thing they said: Food is medicine. If you are worried about healthcare in this country, if people don't have nutrition, that is a problem.

Today, the cost of food is steadily rising, which means Americans cannot afford to purchase healthy and nutritious meals.

In going around the country, there were a number of things that we heard from east, west, north, and south. People said that we must eliminate the hot

food ban for SNAP recipients. SNAP recipients should have the benefit of hot meals. We must address the hunger among college students. We should protect SNAP against harmful cuts to eligibility requirements.

Talking about eligibility requirements, most people don't know that if you are on Social Security and Medicare, that counts against seniors' eligibility for SNAP benefits. By doing that, veterans are also penalized in the qualification for SNAP benefits.

We also have those individuals who have made a mistake. They have come out, but they are ineligible for SNAP benefits. We always talk about second-chance people, so why shouldn't formerly incarcerated people be eligible for food stamps?

Those are the things that we heard.

More importantly, this \$30 billion cut is totally unreasonable. It makes no sense, and again, it penalizes people by putting politics over people. I hope when this issue is taken up tomorrow, Democrats will stand firm in their opposition against it.

If Republicans are genuinely interested in making this work, we can do that, but from the nutritional standpoint, don't penalize people who need help. The demonstration of their help is already here.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to, after this issue is defeated, coming back together, pulling people together, working through all the logistics, and not being cute about how we fund certain programs and defund other programs.

Mrs. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I want to amplify the point that we have to have a farm bill that works for everyone. I often hear people say that we need a farm bill that represents farmers. I would challenge that. We need a farm bill that represents everyone.

Members often ask me whether I represent a farming community. My response is that we all represent communities where people eat, and that has to be a part of the conversation, as well.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. PRESSLEY).

Ms. PRESSLEY. Mr. Speaker, before we began this Special Order hour, I approached Congresswoman HAYES to thank her for her leadership in pulling this together. She said: You are welcome, but I am so sorry we have to do this at all.

I am also sorry, as are we all. It is such a shame.

I thank Congresswoman HAYES for her leadership and partnership in our fight to eradicate hunger and for convening us this evening.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in solidarity with the over 50,000 SNAP beneficiaries in Massachusetts' Seventh Congressional District, as well as the 41-plus million across our country.

□ 1830

Parents who choose to go hungry because there isn't enough to feed both themselves and their children, they

would rather make that sacrifice than threaten the cognitive development and nutrition that their children need to thrive and, certainly, to support their readiness to learn.

I rise in solidarity with those families who, given the high cost of housing and food, are struggling because incomes are not keeping pace.

Mr. Speaker, food insecurity is on the rise, but it doesn't have to be. Congress should not advance a farm bill that cuts \$30 billion in SNAP funding.

Now, to be clear, we are not here due to a deficit of resources for SNAP. We are here due to a deficit of empathy, a deficit of empathy for those who are food insecure, a lack of empathy for our most vulnerable and marginalized neighbors.

This Republican cut to our Nation's largest nutrition program will disproportionately harm our seniors, veterans, children, adults with disabilities, and working families.

In my home State of Massachusetts, this cut will impact one in six residents, over 1 million people, people who depend on SNAP to put healthy food on the table.

That alarming statistic is worse for Black and Latino families who are twice as likely to face food insecurity.

For decades, SNAP has been a critical tool in reducing hunger for low-income people, lifting millions out of poverty, and improving health and well-being.

To make it plain, food is medicine. Food is life. We should not tolerate the suffering of our neighbors as they live in anxiety and fear, wondering where their next meal will come from.

Republicans need to stop playing with people's lives. Hunger is a humanitarian crisis, a moral failing, and a policy choice.

I urge my colleagues to choose compassion and care over cruelty and callousness and support full funding of SNAP.

Mrs. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative PRESSLEY for her remarks. I add that children in some of our most vulnerable communities don't have lobbyists, but they do have Members of Congress, and it is our job to make sure that we are actively working to improve their lives.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. OMAR).

Ms. OMAR. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative HAYES for her tireless efforts, and, yes, she is right. Children, the poor, the elderly, and the down-trodden do not have lobbyists, but they have us.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to Chairman THOMPSON's partisan farm bill. Hunger is rising at an alarming rate among U.S. households. In Minnesota alone, over 500,000 people are facing hunger, including over 180,000 children.

SNAP serves as the first line of defense against hunger for children, for the elderly, for veterans, and for those who have disabilities.

Yet, last week, Republicans unveiled the largest cuts to SNAP in nearly 30 years. This extreme proposal would slash SNAP funding, which provides food benefits for low-income families by approximately \$30 billion over the next decade, impacting every participant.

Instead of proposing this unacceptable policy, we should be passing my universal school meals program. We should be fully funding SNAP. We should be fully funding WIC.

Enacting this bill without dramatic changes would push more people below the poverty line and exacerbate hunger. I urge my colleagues to reject this proposal and prioritize our constituents over making political points.

Mrs. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I would add that in 2023, 1.2 million veterans participated in the SNAP program. I really don't understand why in this Congress whenever we have to make tough policy choices, these are the people that are always targeted.

Last year during the debt ceiling negotiations, the program that was targeted and cut was SNAP and nutrition programs.

In September when we went back for the appropriations budget, the program and the hard lines that were targeted were, once again, feeding and nutrition programs. When will this end?

I yield to the gentlewoman from Vermont (Ms. BALINT).

Ms. BALINT. Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the gentlewoman from Connecticut, has been a champion on this issue, and I am so glad she has convened us here tonight.

Over 41 million Americans depend on nutrition assistance to feed themselves and their families, and SNAP benefits reach millions of rural Americans every day.

No State, no community, and no Congressional District in our Nation is immune to hunger and food insecurity.

Paradoxically, in rural areas that grow most of our Nation's food, many households face real struggles with hunger. It is not just in metropolitan areas.

We know poverty is the root cause of hunger, and it is often acute in rural communities, like in my home State of Vermont, with 15 percent of households in rural areas facing food insecurity.

Millions of working families, veterans, people with disabilities, seniors, and children in rural communities cannot always afford enough food to keep themselves and their families healthy.

Simply put, too many Americans are going hungry every day, but we have a vital program that actually helps to address this problem, the SNAP program. It provides monthly benefits to low-income families and individuals to help them to buy food.

The Republicans' attack, and it is just the latest attack on this essential program, would slash the program by \$30 billion over the next decade.

If enacted, the bill would make the largest cuts to SNAP benefits in 30



years at a time when we have gross wealth inequality in this country. Slashing anti-hunger programs that we know work is stupid, it is inhumane, and it is also shortsighted.

Even if you don't think we have a moral responsibility to feed the children of this Nation and make sure they don't go hungry every night, even if you don't think it is a moral imperative, which I do, but if you don't, there are real consequences for individual Americans and for our healthcare system.

When Americans don't have enough food, this greatly impacts the health of those who go hungry. Food insecurity can lead to Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and obesity.

The gentlewoman from Connecticut and I are both former teachers. We know children who go hungry struggle in school. They have health problems. Americans who are food insecure are more likely to struggle with psychological and behavioral health issues.

This year's farm bill should be providing more benefits to Americans. We should be expanding and protecting SNAP benefits.

Instead, what are we doing? Once again, demonizing the poor. It is time that House Republicans drop their partisan extremism and work alongside Democrats to pass a truly bipartisan farm bill and actually help feed the American people.

Mrs. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative BALINT for her remarks. As my colleague stated, she and I are both former educators, and I really wish that before Members of Congress cast their vote on these cuts to programs like SNAP that they were forced to sit in a classroom on a Tuesday morning after a long weekend and count the number of kids who have their heads down on their desk.

I wish that Members were forced to sit in a classroom on any given day as a kid said they had a headache third period, and you realize it is because they haven't had breakfast.

I wish that Members of Congress were forced to stand with you at the after-school program when a kid hung behind and asked if they could take something home for their little brother who has been home all day, and they know they haven't eaten.

I wish every Member of Congress and everyone in this Chamber were forced to do that before these proposals were put into a bill like the farm bill and before Members voted on these things.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. STEVENS).

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good colleague, the gentlewoman from Connecticut, for yielding time, and I reflect on this farm bill from the standpoint that at this period in time, Americans are paying more of their earned income for food than they have in the last 30 years.

Our President's FTC chair has notified us that grocery stores, big grocers, some food manufacturers, but mostly the grocers are price gouging.

If you are middle class, if you are poor, if you are trying to save for college for your kid, or if you are trying to save up for an unexpected occurrence, food is squeezing the middle class and working families of this country.

We have a responsibility to pass a farm bill that addresses the needs of the hungry and addresses the needs of our middle class.

We have to get real because what we do is we say, oh, you know what? We are going to cap you at this income level. If you are a single mom, and you are raising your kid, and you are \$500 over that income level, you don't get the SNAP benefits.

I am sick of this type of governance. I am sick of this type of means testing. We did this in the pandemic. It wasn't hard.

Steve Mnuchin was able to give everybody a capped unemployment level, but when it comes to food, you have a Democratic Caucus over here fighting over and over and over again.

We have free and reduced lunch in our schools. Thanks to the Governor of Michigan for actually getting that done. We would like to see that in the United States of America.

This is real stuff, and kids are going to school hungry, and kids are ashamed when they are carrying in those meal cards, and parents are worried.

Do you know what we have? We have over a trillion dollars of credit card debt because people can't go to the grocery store.

They can't take their kids out to eat because it costs \$50 for a family of four. You can't get lunch for under \$15.

What are we litigating here? We are just filling the pockets of the grocers and the big business and the this and the that when we don't actually have a real North Star here in this Chamber.

Just one last fact: The maximum benefits of SNAP right now fell 19 percent short of covering basic meal costs.

One study revealed that in 98 percent of counties, SNAP benefits did not cover the cost of a modestly priced meal, so we are not even meeting the bare minimum, my friends. We are not even doing the bare minimum.

The House Democrats are going to continue to stand up to this wrong-minded package that will not be serving the American people.

Mrs. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I can't help but reflect on the irony of us hearing every day about inflation and the rising cost of food and basic things that people need while also proposing cuts to the most vulnerable people on an anti-hunger, antipoverty program.

I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. KENNEDY), the newest member of our Democratic Caucus.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I will start by thanking Congresswoman HAYES for leading this effort.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 62,000 households in New York's 26th Congressional District that rely on the SNAP program, I rise to urge my col-

leagues to oppose the changes in the Thrifty Food Plan in the farm bill.

In New York State alone, these cuts would result in the loss of \$2 billion in SNAP benefits over 10 years and the loss of over \$3.5 billion in total local economic activity.

□ 1845

At a time when overall food insecurity in New York State has increased from 11.4 percent to 13.5 percent and child food insecurity increased from 15.4 percent to 18.8 percent, the absolute last thing we should be doing is cutting SNAP benefits.

These changes to the Thrifty Food Program will negatively impact benefit levels for Summer EBT and funding for food banks. This is simply unacceptable.

Instead, Congress should pass legislation to expand access to SNAP. That is why I cosponsored the Enhanced Access to SNAP Act, which would eliminate work-for-food requirements and expand benefits for millions of college students.

In my district, our primary food bank, FeedMore Western New York, has seen the need for food assistance in the community triple since the pandemic. The number of people served today has already exceeded 10-year growth projections.

As a Nation, we have an obligation to eradicate hunger. This bill will do just the opposite. I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation as written.

Mrs. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ), a leader on the Rules Committee.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative HAYES so very much for organizing and for giving me this time, because I am here on behalf of my good friend and the ranking member of the Rules Committee, JIM MCGOVERN, who Republicans silenced today for simply telling the truth about a criminal trial.

Imagine that, on this House floor, we cannot state a fact about a trial. Here is another fact about the former President that represents a policy choice Democrats oppose. President Trump supported cutting SNAP by nearly 30 percent within 10 years.

Mr. MCGOVERN stands for the opposite. He stands up every week on this House floor with his poster "end hunger now." If Republicans hadn't silenced him, he would have spoken tonight against the farm bill because of its impact on farmers. If Republicans hadn't silenced him, he would have spoken up for families who do not have enough food to eat.

Similar to me, Mr. MCGOVERN represents a district that includes thousands of farms and farmers who benefit from SNAP because they sell their produce to the program, but also farmers need to use SNAP because they don't make enough money. We are starving the people who are raising the food for us.

In my district, one in five New Mexicans receive SNAP benefits, the highest of any State. This Republican majority silenced him, so I am here to read the remarks that the Republican majority might not want to hear from Mr. MCGOVERN. These are his remarks:

Mr. Speaker, Republicans are advancing a bill that cuts SNAP, our Nation's first line of defense against hunger, by an astounding \$30 billion.

He would have probably raised his hands and said: You can't make this up.

MAGA Republicans included a provision in their extremely partisan farm bill that will prevent SNAP benefits from ever being increased, even if a scientific review says they should be.

The last reevaluation, in 2021, which was the first update in 50 years, gave families an extra—wait for it—\$1.40 per person per day to purchase food. That extra help has meant families can access more nutritious food. It has meant fewer skipped meals. It has meant better food security.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to oppose this MAGA Republican farm bill which would cut future benefits and increase hunger for kids, seniors, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable adults.

Those are JIM MCGOVERN's remarks. While House Republicans silenced him today, they will never silence the truth that he speaks. We must end hunger now. We must answer the call: "When I was hungry you gave me to eat; when I was thirsty you gave me to drink."

I thank Representative JAHANA HAYES for her advocacy in bringing us together to heed this call.

Mrs. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. GOLDMAN).

Mr. GOLDMAN of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Connecticut very much for yielding.

I rise today, alongside so many of my colleagues, to make one thing very clear. Republicans' proposed funding cuts to SNAP are unconscionable and will send millions into poverty and food insecurity.

SNAP is an essential lifeline that working families across America rely on to put food on the table. In New York City alone, where I come from, more than 1.7 million people rely on SNAP benefits to help them feed their families. Nationwide, there are more than 41 million SNAP recipients.

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 92 percent of SNAP benefits go to households with income below the poverty line and a shocking 54 percent go to households at or below half of the poverty line.

It begs the question: What do my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have against working families doing their best to succeed? Do you not care if our children go without food?

It is just simply unacceptable. Food is a basic necessity. In the wealthiest country in the world, it should not even be a question whether our govern-

ment is going to make sure that everyone, especially innocent children, have basic necessities.

Our budgets show where our priorities lie. Let's reverse these draconian cuts to SNAP, let's not cut taxes on the wealthy, and let's put our families and our children first.

Mrs. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to thank all of my colleagues who participated in tonight's SNAP Special Order.

I will close by saying that these cuts will affect Summer EBT, which is how most families feed their children over the summer, by \$500 million in this farm bill.

I am not really sure if there is a full appreciation of who is affected by these cuts. I have been very transparent about my story and the fact that I grew up in a household that received food stamps. As a young college student and a single mom, I was working two jobs, attending community college, and still qualified for benefits.

I promise you that my story is the same as a constituent in the district of every single Member of Congress who just wants a shot, who just wants a chance at raising their children with dignity, who just wants a chance at moving their family from poverty into being contributors to society.

Every single one of you has someone in your district just like me, hundreds of families going through the same thing, working families that will be affected by the \$11 billion in cuts that would affect their households and their earnings.

I urge my Republican colleagues to rethink these proposals, to come back to the table and let us work on a bipartisan farm bill that helps everybody in America. Of all the things that we can say that we have done, I don't want taking food out of the mouths of children to be one of them.

Tomorrow, we will go into a markup on this farm bill, and we will review it title by title. There are 12 titles. The Thrifty Food Plan, which is what many of us have spoken about tonight, which is a mathematical system by which benefits are evaluated and based upon, was moved from title IV, which is the nutrition title, to title XII, miscellaneous and others.

Nutrition is not miscellaneous. It is something that should be a priority in this country. It is something that we have the ability to do. Once again, it is a policy choice.

I held out until I saw the text because I prayed about it and I hoped and I wished that the cuts were not as bad as I had read about in the papers and heard talk about, but they are. Mr. Speaker, \$30 billion in cuts are devastating to a program that is the most effective antihunger program that we have.

I urge my colleagues to really consider their votes on this farm bill and the impact that it will have on children and families.

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

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I know what it is like to grow up hungry.

I know the feeling, as a young girl, opening the refrigerator, only to see the water jug.

I know what it's like growing up on government-provided commodity food—cheese, peanut butter, oatmeal.

This Farm Bill proposal cuts more than \$30 Billion from SNAP for what?

I want my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to explain why.

I want them to explain to the single mom at the grocery store whose hours are being cut because the store isn't making enough revenue or to the farmer trying to keep the farm afloat for the next generation, who relies on the grocery store to make payments.

Most importantly, I want them to be able to explain this to the children in my district.

Texas ranks second worst in the nation for hunger, and if these cuts do become a reality, Texas will receive \$2.3 billion less in SNAP benefits.

Let me repeat that: \$2.3 billion.

In my district, SNAP serves over 57,000 households.

These cuts would have a devastating impact on children, seniors, and individuals with disabilities.

It's a shame that House Republicans are weakening our ability to feed the most vulnerable members of our communities.

Instead of attacking SNAP, we must improve and protect it.

I know that the dysfunction of this Congress can mess with our sense of reality. So let me remind you:

The Farm Bill has long been a way to connect Republicans and Democrats, rural and urban, to serve all Americans. It reminds us that small places can do big things.

So, it is very sad that Republicans are holding out on farmers, families, and our neighbors. I mean, why are we balancing budgets on the bellies of hungry children?

We must put people over politics. We must put kids over cruelty. We must feed our kids and our communities.

I oppose any cuts to SNAP. I oppose these harmful choices made by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

#### FINANCIAL FREEDOM IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MOORE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, today and this week, House Republicans are advocating for the American people and protecting them from bureaucratic overreach. We are pushing legislation that will protect Americans' right to financial privacy and