

It is clear that even in States with government-regulated dispensaries at the ready, people still choose to buy their marijuana on the black market, mainly, as we all know, because of their age.

We have also seen the potency of marijuana increase drastically. Mr. Speaker, this is the part of this issue that concerns me as a 41-year law enforcement officer. The percentage of THC, the main psychoactive component in cannabis, has increased by more than 200 percent from 1995 to 2015—more than 200 percent.

Even more concerning, a May study in the journal of Psychological Medicine found that schizophrenia cases in men ages 21 to 30 may have been preventable by up to 30 percent without the persistent use of marijuana.

We think we have a mental health issue in this country now. Wait until we have had all these 21- to 25-year-old or 18- to 25-year-old young developing brains on high levels of THC for extended periods of time, and we begin to see the increase in schizophrenia, paranoia, and other psychotic breaks.

Florida's Amendment 3 increases crime and illegal distribution of marijuana. It doesn't reduce it.

It monopolizes the industry, creates blanket legal immunity for big marijuana corporations, does not legalize home growth, and promotes marijuana use that is linked to psychotic disorders.

Mr. Speaker, for all these reasons, I am adamantly opposed to Florida's Amendment 3 in November.

I also want to mention Amendment 4, as I discussed earlier, because Floridians are being asked to vote on Amendment 4, and this one really is just a travesty. If passed, this amendment would prevent any law from prohibiting, penalizing, delaying, or restricting abortion before viability, or when necessary to protect the patient's health, placing the decision in the hands of the healthcare provider.

Here is what is amazing about this: Under current Florida State law, in order to receive an abortion, it must occur before the baby reaches 6 weeks of gestation. However, there are exceptions built into the State law, including rape, incest, and human trafficking, that allow for the procedure up to 15 weeks of pregnancy.

It also allows physicians—physicians, and I say that specifically—to terminate a pregnancy if necessary to save the life, not just for health reasons, but to save the life of the mother or to prevent a serious risk of substantial and irreversible physical impairment. Two physicians are required to approve such a procedure.

Let's get this straight. First, Amendment 4 does not define what "viability," "healthcare provider," or "patient's health" means. As you see in the left bottom here, it does not define any of that.

Under current Florida statutes, "viability" has been defined as the state of

fetal development when the life of a fetus is sustainable outside the womb through standard medical measures, but there is no universal consensus.

As science continues to advance, the age of viability of a fetus has become earlier. In the 1960s, infants weighing less than 1 kilogram, equivalent to about 27 weeks, were considered non-viable. In the 1970s, when *Roe v. Wade* was established, viability was estimated to be between 24 to 28 weeks. Today, it is closer to 23 to 24 weeks, with some hospitals even successfully delivering and caring for babies at 22 weeks.

Not only does Amendment 4 not define "viability," it doesn't define "healthcare provider," leaving it up to interpretation. This means anyone can decide a woman should get an abortion, and I mean really anyone.

"Patient's health" is left up to the interpretation of these so-called healthcare providers, whoever they are. It is not to save the life. It could be for any reason.

Under current Florida State law, abortions are not allowed past 6 weeks. With this amendment, there is really no limit to when an abortion can be performed. It says abortions are legal "before viability or when necessary to protect the patient's health."

A so-called healthcare provider could decide it is best for the patient's health to terminate that pregnancy at 9 months, as late as they want, and with total disregard for the viability of the baby.

Mr. Speaker, they are talking about taking limbs off of babies when they are aborted at 9 months, ripping them apart in the womb when they can feel pain. We know they feel that pain.

□ 1245

It is unconscionable that that is going on in America. They want it to go on. It is actually already happening. In Wisconsin, there are eight documented cases. This is essentially approving a rubber stamp for late-term abortions going even further than *Roe v. Wade*. This is extreme.

With *Roe v. Wade*, in the first trimester, zero to 12 weeks, there was almost no regulation.

In the second, 13 to 27 weeks, there were regulations to protect women's health when necessary.

In the third trimester, 28 to 40 weeks, it allowed States to ban abortions so long as exceptions were made to protect the life and health of the mother, as defined by a physician, I might add.

Amendment 4 would allow abortions without restrictions up to viability, which is currently believed to be 23 weeks, a time that is well into the second trimester. Even under *Roe v. Wade* it would have only been allowed at that time to protect the woman's health or life.

With amendment 4 in Florida, what they are trying to do is that abortion could occur for whatever reason one decides whenever they decide.

As you can see in the lower left here, Mr. Speaker, this removes parental approval, parental consent. Currently, minors have to get parental consent to get a tattoo, to have their ears pierced, or any other medical procedure. That is not Florida law.

This amendment, however, would only require notification but not permission. That means parents can be notified immediately before or even after their 14-year-old daughter has had an abortion by one of these healthcare providers at any time in her pregnancy. There is no parental consent required.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if you watch the television ads that are being run in the State of Florida right now, you would not think that to be the case. This constitutional amendment No. 4 is the most deceptive amendment I have ever seen. It is not what it seems, and it has no place being voted on in the ballot box.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, this is amendment 4. This is amendment 4 printed out. It is just this little piece at the top. It is less than one-quarter of a page to take the life of a baby at 9 months old, where we are going to rip its limbs off to abort it. It is less than one-quarter of a page.

This is a tax referendum, and it is eight pages. We are more clear about how we are going to cut taxes than we are about how we are going to execute a baby in the womb. Mr. Speaker, tell me that is not deceptive.

The ads that they run are so misleading. They create such falsehoods. A referendum on taxable values of a home is far more fleshed out and defined than one concerning the life of a child. It is ridiculous.

This is bad legislation. This is a bad way to legislate. In our Constitution, it is a bait and switch trying to fool Floridians into changing our constitution to include abortion without any restrictions.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Floridians to vote "no" on this amendment.

Referendums are shortcuts to hard answers. Let's leave the hard answers to the State legislature where they belong. That is why we are a democratic republic. Let them do their job. Do not allow those with special interest money to decide what the law is going to be in Florida.

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

#### FARM BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EZELL). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, America is facing a farm and food crisis. As we are here speaking today in the Nation's Capitol, there are farmers and ranchers who are

struggling. They are struggling with so many burdens and so many natural disasters. They are struggling in an economy with inflation.

Mr. Speaker, let me say that again: America is facing a farm and food crisis.

Now, as the chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture, I have had the honor to travel across this country to hear from the farmers, ranchers, producers, consumers, and everyone in between across our great agricultural value chain.

My colleagues and I have taken what we heard on the road to craft a bipartisan and highly effective farm bill. No matter where we traveled, one thing was clear: America's farm economy is in crisis, and with no farms, there is no food.

The last time we passed a farm bill was in 2018, and a lot in our world has changed since then.

As I stand before you today, Mr. Speaker, farmers across the Nation are grappling with immense challenges. For the first time in years, we are witnessing a downturn spiral in net farm income with projections for 2024 showing a staggering \$54 billion decline. That is the largest 2-year loss in net cash farm income in history, and that is across just eight of the commodities. If you add into that the specialty crops, it is a farm and food crisis.

These are not just numbers on a spreadsheet. They are the livelihoods of American farmers, the backbone of our rural communities, and the source of food, fiber, and fuel for our Nation and the world.

Why is this happening?

Simply put, farm production costs have skyrocketed. Input prices remain near record highs, yet the prices farmers receive for their crops have plummeted. The prices of corn, soybeans, cotton, and wheat have seen an average drop of 21 percent, all while operating expenses continue to soar.

The U.S. trade deficit will reach a record-breaking \$30.5 billion in 2024, but according to the USDA, that record will be broken next year with the 2025 agricultural trade deficit expected to reach \$42.5 billion, all contributing to this Nation's farm and food crisis.

Many producers are barely breaking even, if they are lucky. Others are sinking deeper into debt, with the United States Department of Agriculture forecasting farm-sector debt to hit a record \$54 billion by year's end, the highest inflation-adjusted level in more than 60 years.

While these numbers are daunting, they reflect only part of the story. Since the last farm bill was passed in 2018, America's producers have faced powerful headwinds from extreme weather, rising foreign subsidies, trade barriers, global conflict, and supply chain disruptions. From the trade war with China to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, our agricultural sector has taken hit after hit.

Despite these challenges, Federal support for production agriculture in

2024 is projected to be at its lowest level since 1982. Let me say that again: 1982.

Imagine the impact this downturn has on our rural communities who already struggle with declining populations and a shrinking tax base. Imagine what it means for national food security and inevitably national security when the very people who grow our food are unable to sustain their operations.

Current economic conditions have resulted in farmers and ranchers eating through their available liquidity and working capital. In the September Beige Book, the Federal Reserve bank reported declining conditions for the agricultural sector in their respective regions. Various banks reported that credit providers see building financial stresses within the ag sector. Without financial certainty, lenders will be facing a credit crunch, and it will become increasingly difficult to get producers to cash flow.

The time for Congress to step up and pass a new farm bill is now. An extension of current policy is not acceptable. Our current farm safety net, while it was crafted in 2018 and while it was great for 2018, is simply outdated. While supplemental assistance kept many farms afloat, it is clear our existing programs have not kept up with inflation or the realities on the ground.

In fact, in our July hearing before the House Agriculture Committee on the state of the farm economy, producers and lenders told us that even if we deliver an improved farm safety net, additional assistance may be necessary to account for the losses experienced over the last year while Congress has failed to act.

I stand ready to work with my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee and leadership to deliver near-term assistance to bridge the gap to a highly effective 5-year farm bill.

A strong farm bill isn't just about agriculture, it is about our food supply, our rural communities, and our national security. If we fail to act before the year's end, if we settle for just extending the current law, we will be condemning thousands of farm families through an uncertain and potentially devastating future.

When you lose farms, you lose food, and when you lose food, you have food insecurity which leads to national insecurity.

Thankfully, the House has a bipartisan solution to the crisis in our farm economy. The bipartisan Farm, Food, and National Security Act was crafted by farmers for farmers. It is the product of intensive input, feedback, negotiations, and the realities of where our agricultural industry is and the tools it needs to succeed.

I want to walk through how this critical piece of legislation will benefit our rural communities, our food security, and our national security.

The commodity title aids farmers in managing risk and provides assistance

following precipitous declines in commodity prices. Through the reauthorization and enhancement of commodity, marketing loan, sugar, dairy, and disaster programs, producers are provided some certainty in times of unpredictability.

Our bipartisan farm bill increases support for the price loss coverage and the agriculture risk coverage programs to account for persistent inflation and rising costs of production, the volatility within the agricultural markets. We have not invested in this area significantly or had any increase for decades.

This provides authority to expand base acres to include producers who currently are not able to participate in our ARC or PLC. That is extremely important when you look at new, young, and beginning farmers, the future farmers. The future farmers are going to provide us our food security. They will provide food and fiber, building material, and energy resources. They need to be able to have that tool of base acres.

It modernizes marketing loans and the sugar policy. The sugar policy has always been divisive on this floor, picking sides between those who produce our sugar, the cane and the sugar beets producers of this Nation, and those who utilize it, those who use it to make our food, the bakers and the confectioners with great companies across both of those spectrums; they are great family-owned businesses.

Mr. Speaker, both sides of this farm bill are holding hands. We have worked hard to get them in a room and to work out modest reforms that both sides can agree upon. This will be the first farm bill that I know of where we don't have sugar wars and where they have come together. I appreciate the folks who came to the table to work those out.

It bolsters dairy programs to continue providing vital assistance. That is the number one commodity, and in my home State of Pennsylvania, agriculture is the number one industry.

We have included in this farm bill improvements in the dairy margin coverage. We have increased the amount of pounds that can be insured which is really important when you look at the consolidation of dairy farms over the years. Over the past decade, we have lost one-third of our dairy farms in this Nation. We don't ever want to be dependent on another country for our food supply, and that includes dairy.

In this farm bill we increased the amount of pounds from 5 million to 6 million pounds that can be insured under the dairy margin coverage.

□ 1300

We modernized the cost factors, which basically predated 2018 in terms of that insurance program. It is not a handout. These are public-private partnerships where the farmers step up. They purchase coverage. They decide how much coverage they want to purchase. We have engaged the private sector to create these programs.

Yes, the government does make them more affordable so that our farmers are able to keep farming, so that we are able to have continued food security, that we can have continued national security as a nation.

We enhanced the standing disaster programs and expanded eligibility for assistance.

Mr. Speaker, when you look around this country and, just in the past year, the amount of flood, the amount of drought, hurricanes, and wildfires that have impacted our farmers and that acreage in so many devastating ways, to be able to enhance standing disaster programs so that they are more reliable, more timely, that they help keep our farmers farming, that is the direction we need to go in. The language within the Farm, Food, and National Security Act accomplishes that.

The conservation title provides farmers, ranchers, and growers with financial and technical assistance to address a variety of natural resource concerns, such as soil health and erosion, water quality and quantity, and the wildlife habitat.

The 2024 farm bill continues to support our proven system of voluntary, incentive-based, and locally led conservation through various improvements.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know whether you know this, but, in terms of endangered and threatened species, there has been more endangered threats and species delisted through the efforts of these locally led, voluntary, incentive-based conservation programs that are in this farm bill than, quite frankly, what U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or anyone else has done through more punitive measures. We are proud of that fact.

These are great programs. They do a lot of good things. We provide historic investment in title II by reallocating the Inflation Reduction Act conservation dollars and expanding covered conservation practices.

It protects and enhances working lands conservation programs, like the environmental quality incentive program and the conservation stewardship program while promoting precision agriculture, the agriculture of today and tomorrow.

It includes commonsense easement reforms and protects working forest lands through newly authorized forest conservation easement programs.

It strengthens and improves program administration for the regional conservation partnership program and the technical service provider program and PL566, which deals with our watersheds.

It modernizes the conservation reserve program by incentivizing the enrollment of marginal lands and emphasizing State partnerships. We need to use soils that are fertile for growing. We need to be growing our crops. We need to be grazing our livestock. We have a nation to feed. Quite frankly, a lot of the rest of the world relies on

food that is produced in our great country.

These programs do that. We discourage fertile land from sitting idle. It is the marginal lands we invest in with this modernization.

It reauthorizes and funds successful programs, such as the feral swine eradication program—and, quite frankly, they are devastating in many parts of the country—and the voluntarily public access and habitat incentive program, an incredible program when it comes to wildlife through promoting the right kind of habitat on that rural acreage.

It emphasizes science, technology, and innovation, including within the conservation practice standards establishment and the review processes.

Agriculture is the backbone to most of the world's economies, and robust promotion programs not only create market access, but protect our agricultural interests and act as a catalyst for innovation and economic growth.

Mr. Speaker, the trade title expands the research and impact of the market access program and the foreign market development program.

The 2024 farm bill will mitigate global food insecurity while providing U.S. producers new markets, improving local economies, and lessening the damage of this administration's ineffective trade agenda.

Mr. Speaker, our bipartisan farm bill doubles funding for MAP and FMD. They have never been increased since those programs were created. We have doubled those. We know how important that is. We have listened to our farmers and ranchers around the country.

It prioritizes U.S. commodities rather than unlimited market-based assistance.

It balances the authorities of USAID with those of USDA.

It lessens the bureaucracy associated with programs meant to respond to immediate crisis.

It addresses trade barriers and infrastructure deficiencies.

It fosters education partnerships to ensure developing countries can benefit from our Nation's advanced research and developing technologies.

The nutrition title, Mr. Speaker, is a really important title within the farm bill. The fact is I think it is a value and a principle where we are from, right? Neighbors help neighbors in need, but it is also a market program for our farmers. It is a workforce development program as we provide assistance for individuals who are struggling in poverty and need nutrition assistance, to get the type of SNAP, employment, education, and career and technical education, to climb the ladder of opportunity.

It supports families formally disallowed to receive benefits. It refocuses work programs to support upward mobility. It vests in and modernizes food distribution programs to create parity with urban programming. It promotes program integrity and State accountability.

The biggest problem we have had with the nutrition program is not the farm bill program. It is how certain States have inappropriately implemented and administered that program. We take actions to provide better oversight and accountability on those States as they execute those programs in their States.

It advances policies related to healthy eating, healthy behaviors, and healthy outcomes. Our bipartisan farm bill provides resources across multiple programs that have successfully benefited Tribal communities, seniors, and households pursuing healthier options.

It offers significant opportunities for individuals to remain on their current career pathways without choosing between SNAP and employment. We encourage them to stay on those rungs of the ladder of opportunity and to climb higher.

It creates new access for participants either formerly disallowed or beholden to arcane restriction.

It corrects egregious executive branch overreach and disallows future unelected bureaucrats from arbitrarily increasing SNAP benefits. Congress holds the power of the purse, and no one else. We are the closest to the people here in the House, so this provision allows us to do our job as Members of Congress going forward.

It creates a stronger, more sustainable connection between health and Federal feeding programs. For example, the dietary guidelines process is flawed. The committee-passed bill makes certain that scientific rigor and total transparency are at the forefront of any Federal dietary policy. At a time when most of our food industry is under attack, it is so important to remember that science should guide our policymakers.

It holds USDA and States accountable to the generosity of the American taxpayer. There are ongoing integrity issues in SNAP, including billions of dollars in fraud, families falling victim to transactional criminals and States manipulating data to avoid able-bodied individuals in joining the workforce or pursuing career and technical education. We take measures to end that in this farm bill, Mr. Speaker.

Our Nation's producers borrow more capital in a single harvest season than most Americans do in their entire lives. Interest rates have exploded under the Biden administration, resulting in skyrocketing borrowing costs, which fall especially hard on our Nation's younger, less-established producers. Programs within the credit title are instrumental in helping producers both start and maintain their operations.

It enhances financing options for producers who are unable to obtain credit from a commercial lender.

It provides resources to new, young, beginning, and veteran farmers in their transition into farming and ranching.

It protects and enhances the ability of commercial lenders to provide rural

America with a reliable source of credit and capital. That is so important when you look at bigger projects in rural America, whether it would be schools or hospitals, rehabilitation centers, or nursing homes.

Programs offered by USDA's rural development play a vital role in enhancing rural life and fostering economic growth. The rural development title of the 2024 farm bill continues the long history of bipartisan support for rural development initiatives and implements important improvements to enhance a robust, rural economy.

It strengthens broadband connectivity to rural communities.

It improves precision agriculture practices and increases accessibility of precision agriculture services.

It protects access to healthcare in rural America.

It enhances efforts to meet childcare demands of rural areas.

It addresses existing workforce challenges within rural communities to effectively meet their needs.

It encourages private capital investments in rural communities, and it streamlines the permitting process for rural development processes.

The research and extension title of the 2024 farm bill keeps American agriculture at the forefront of innovation and productivity through the cutting-edge research and supports the Nation's land-grant and nonland-grant colleges of agriculture.

Our bipartisan farm bill supports the modernization of the agriculture research facilities by providing funding for the Research Facilities Act.

It increases funding for the Specialty Crop Research Initiative, allocates funding for research and the development of mechanization and automation technologies for the specialty crop industry.

It maintains funding for the emergency citrus disease research and extension program.

It provides continued funding for scholarships for students at 1890 institutions, and it promotes interagency coordination for further agricultural research and other Federal agencies.

The forestry title of the farm bill promotes active forest management through incentivizing public-private partnerships, creating new market opportunities and revitalizing rural communities while reducing wildfire risk and improving forest health to ensure healthy and productive Federal, State, Tribal, and private forests.

It incentivizes active forest management through the public-private partnerships by expanding existing authorities like the Good Neighbor Authority and the Stewardship End Result Contracting.

It creates new and enhances existing market opportunities for forest products, including existing and new data sources and tools, including investing in innovative wood products and expanding the use of biochar.

It revitalizes rural communities and forest health through cross-boundary

authority. It simplifies environmental process requirements while ensuring environmental protection by building upon the success of categorical exclusions and other streamlined authorities.

The energy title of the farm bill increases access to energy system and efficiency updates for farmers, ranchers, and rural small businesses while encouraging growth and innovation for biofuels, bioproducts, and related feedstocks.

It allows for critical cost and energy savings by increasing access to the Rural Energy for America Program.

It streamlines program delivery and enhances program integrity for biobased market programs and biofuels and bioproducts development program like the biopreferred program and the biorefinary, renewable chemical, and biobased product manufacturing assistance programs.

It requires the administration to study the impacts of solar installations on prime, unique, or statewide or locally important farmland.

Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 12 minutes remaining.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the horticulture marketing and regulatory reform title provides critical investments to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops and protect plant health. It delivers commonsense regulatory reforms necessary to relieve American farmers and ranchers from overregulation by the Biden administration.

It provides additional funding for the specialty crop block grant program and directs program administrators to consult with specialty crop producers when setting priorities for the program.

It increases funding for plant, pest, and disease management to further safeguard American agriculture and natural resources.

It maintains funding for the local agriculture market program and approves program delivery through simplified application.

It continues support for organic production through the national organic program, organic production, and the market data initiative and the national organic certification cost-share program.

Agricultural producers are greatly affected by numerous factors outside of their control, ranging from extreme weather to geopolitical instability.

Crop insurance, a vital risk management tool, is available to help producers manage the unique risks of farming and is delivered through an effective public-private partnership in which the Federal Government shares in the cost of the premiums, which would otherwise be unaffordable for most farmers.

The crop insurance title of the farm, food, and National Security Act ex-

pands premium assistance for beginning and veteran farmers.

□ 1315

It directs research and development of new policies and establishes an advisory committee for more robust engagement with specialty crop producers. It enhances certain coverage options to reduce the need for unbudgeted and ad hoc disaster relief. It bolsters the private-sector delivery system.

Mr. Speaker, the miscellaneous title brings together provisions related to livestock health and management, foreign animal disease preparedness, young and beginning farmers, and other key areas. It directs additional resources toward the three-legged stool to protect the entire livestock and poultry industry in the United States from foreign animal diseases.

This title provides guidance documents and other resources for small and very small meat and poultry-producing facilities. It allows livestock auction owners to invest in packing facilities, subject to capacity limitations. It directs the Secretary of Agriculture to work in consultation with the U.S. Trade Representative to negotiate animal disease regionalization agreements with our trading partners. It enhances protections for dogs under the Animal Welfare Act.

It clarifies that States and local governments cannot impose a condition or standard on the production of covered livestock unless the livestock is physically located within such State or local government boundaries.

It requires the Secretary to conduct regular assessments to identify risks and security vulnerabilities to the food and agriculture critical infrastructure sector.

It reforms certain reporting requirements under the Agriculture and Foreign Investment Disclosure Act to ensure accuracy and transparency of data on farmland owned by foreign persons or foreign entities.

Again, farm security is food security is national security.

Mr. Speaker, as I wrap up, I thank the thousands of stakeholders across the country who have made themselves heard and been a part of this process so far, from fly-ins to speaking directly to staff and Members, to hosting roundtables, webinars, social media campaigns, drafting letters of support, and so much more.

Mr. Speaker, we approach this bill in a tri-partisan manner. That means bringing Democrats and Republicans to the table, and it means bringing the people of rural America, and specifically agriculture and farming, to the table. We did that in traveling the country to around 40 States and one territory. I have been honored to chair and lead somewhere close to 100 listening sessions in those areas.

We brought the voices of American agriculture and American consumers to the table, and that is how we wrote

the bill. We wrote the bill with their voice. We did it in a manner I like to call from the outside in.

Too frequently and often in this Chamber, we write legislation that is inside out. We gather a handful of so-called experts here on Capitol Hill to write these bills, and then we take them outside the beltway of Washington and try to convince everybody it is the best thing since sliced bread. That doesn't always work out.

We did this bill from the outside in. We traveled the Nation. We heard from the very people who provide us food and fiber and building materials.

We heard from vulnerable populations who need nutritional assistance, the families that are living in poverty. There are way too many of them living in poverty today. That is why the cost of the nutrition title is so high. It is reflective of the fact that there are way too many American families living in poverty today.

This bill can help change that because within the moneys that are invested, as I talked about in the nutrition title, quite frankly, we invest in employment, education, and career and technical education, helping them reach the next rung on the ladder of opportunity so they can wake up one morning and don't need this type of assistance because they found the great American Dream, which is opportunity.

I often say, Mr. Speaker, if you are not at the table, you are probably on the menu, and it has been a truly rewarding experience to see so many advocates for our agricultural industry at the table as we crafted this bipartisan bill.

When I became chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture, I took seriously my mandate to protect our food supply and enhance the impact of our Nation's agricultural value chain.

As I have just highlighted, across each title of this bill are new and better tools and resources for our farmers and rural communities. From production and processing to delivery and consumption, this bill strengthens the rural economy across every region, State, and district.

The farm bill has long been an example of consensus, where both sides must take a step off the soapbox and have tough conversations. I do not draw red lines. I do not close the door to conversation. I do not keep anybody from coming to the table to work on legislation, and we certainly didn't do that here. I have encouraged everyone to come to the table with this farm bill.

Finally, let me be clear, we continue to have productive conversations across the aisle and across the Capitol Building. The stakes are too high to get this wrong or to fail to deliver, and I firmly believe the four corners of our Agriculture Committees agree on this.

Working together, we can pass a bipartisan, bicameral, and highly effective farm bill. Quite frankly, coming

out with the bipartisan bill for the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2024 that passed out of committee is a huge step in that direction.

Mr. Speaker, I so appreciate the opportunity and the privilege of speaking on this floor about America's number one industry, which is agriculture, the industry that every American family is so dependent on, and not just those three times a day when they pick up the tools of American agriculture, be it a knife, fork, or spoon, but when it comes to the economy, when it comes to jobs, when it comes to economic impact, when it comes, quite frankly, to the taxes that are paid by these hard-working members of the agriculture industry, processors and producers, at all levels of government. Significant tax dollars get paid to pay for what we hope are the essential services at all levels of government.

This industry and the tools around it make a better environment and a cleaner climate. I always like to cite data that I was so excited to read here that shows that our American farmers are the climate champions of the world. They sequester 6.1 gigatons of carbon annually. That is 10.1 percent more than what they emit.

Nobody does it better when it comes to a cleaner climate than the American farmer, rancher, and forester, and our processors, as well, with the processes that we use and the products that are developed.

Mr. Speaker, let me be clear, America is in a farm and food crisis. If we don't have farms, we don't have food, food security, national security. A nation that cannot feed itself will not exist.

I am hoping that all of my colleagues will join me, as many have, in supporting the Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2024. I look forward to getting this bill to the House floor in the lameduck session. I know I have the support of the other three corners, which is the leadership of the Senate and the House Agriculture Committees. They have made a commitment to do that.

We don't see a need for an extension. We see a need for Congress, that being the House and the Senate, to do our job and get the work done on behalf of the American people.

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

#### FOCUSING ON PRIORITY ISSUES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, there are a variety of issues that I think ought to be talked about, at least once, before we leave for our districts this Friday. They are topics I don't think the press is paying enough attention to, so one more time, I beg them to pay attention to these topics.

The first one is the border. Our fiscal year wraps up on September 30. Right now, we have 11 of the 12 months in the books for fiscal year 2024.

Now, something that I think has been underreported, we have one more time hit the all-time high of the number of people coming into this country who are—other than traditional means, I will say—coming across the southern border, in August, with 154,000 people. We have now hit 2,700,000 people for the year as a whole.

This is by comparison with Donald Trump in his last entire year, which was a little under 100,000. Part of that year was COVID, but nevertheless, even the next year after that was well under the million total.

It is a difficult number to get an exact count on. It includes people who have been released at the border. It includes what they call got-aways, which are a more dangerous class of people. It includes people who have entered the country on what we call the CBP One app, which is something I don't think President Biden had the ability or constitutional authority to do. It includes other people who he has allowed across under the Cuban, Haitian, Nicaraguan, and Venezuelan program.

Nevertheless, 11 months in with 1 month to go, we are at 2,700,000 people entering the country, breaking the previous record in the third year of the Biden administration, giving us a total of what appears to be 20 times as many people entering the country than President Trump's last year.

I think it would be useful at this time to deal with the argument that we have to allow some people here. Another number that I don't think is talked about enough, if you look in 3-year increments, we recently hit the all-time high—and we monitor when the new numbers come out—the all-time high of the number of people who were sworn in as legal citizens in the United States.

In the last 3 years, we have had an average of just under 900,000 people sworn in as legal citizens. By comparison, in both the Clinton and Bush years, we were around 700,000. In the 1960s, when I grew up, we were only a little over 100,000.

The reason I point that out is, people who think we should ignore the laws kind of imply that it is very difficult to come here and that we are desperately in need of more people from other countries.

Again, I repeat, in the last 3 years, we have had an average of just under 900,000 people sworn in, something that is the all-time record.

We now should combine that with the 2,700,000 people, who—it is not exactly the same thing—have come across our southern border or are allowed in under these special programs by President Biden.

It is important to remember the human cost of all these programs. In addition to changing the United States and having a lot of people who aren't