

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 14, 2026.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Enclosed is my resignation letter to Texas Governor Greg Abbott, effective April 14, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. EST. It has been my privilege to serve the residents of Texas' 23rd Congressional District.

Sincerely,

TONY GONZALES,
Member of Congress.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 14, 2026.

Governor GREG ABBOTT,
Office of the Governor,
Austin, TX.

DEAR GOVERNOR ABBOTT: I am writing to notify you of my retirement as a Member of the United States House of Representatives for the 23rd Congressional District of Texas, effective April 14, 2026, at 11:59 pm EST. It has been my privilege to serve the people of Texas' 23rd congressional district.

Sincerely,

TONY GONZALES,
Member of Congress.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE ERIC SWALWELL, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable ERIC SWALWELL, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 14, 2026.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker of the House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER JOHNSON: I am deeply sorry to my family, staff, and constituents for mistakes in judgment I've made in my past. I will fight the serious, false allegations made against me, however, I must take responsibility and ownership for the mistakes I did make.

I am aware of efforts to bring an immediate expulsion vote against me and other members. Expelling anyone in Congress without due process, within days of an allegation being made, is wrong. But it's also wrong for my constituents to have me distracted from my duties. Therefore, I plan to resign my seat in Congress effective at 2:00 pm ET on April 14, 2026.

I will work with my staff in the coming days to ensure they are able, in my absence, to serve the needs of the good people of the 14th Congressional District.

Sincerely,

ERIC SWALWELL.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 14, 2026.

Hon. GAVIN NEWSOM,
Governor of California,
Sacramento, CA.

DEAR GOVERNOR NEWSOM: I write to inform you of my resignation as United States Representative for California's 14th Congressional District, effective at 2:00 pm ET on April 14, 2026.

Sincerely,

ERIC SWALWELL.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under clause 5(d) of rule XX, the Chair announces to the House that, in light of the resignation of the gentleman from California (Mr. SWALWELL), the whole number of the House is 431.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

EMERGENCY CONSERVATION PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2025

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1011) to amend the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 to remove barriers to agricultural producers in accessing funds to carry out emergency measures under the emergency conservation program, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1011

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Emergency Conservation Program Improvement Act of 2025".

SEC. 2. EMERGENCY CONSERVATION PROGRAM.

Section 401 of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2201) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the subsection heading, by inserting "AND OTHER EMERGENCY CONSERVATION MEASURES" after "FENCING"; and

(B) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

"(1) IN GENERAL.—With respect to a payment to an agricultural producer under subsection (a) for the repair or replacement of fencing, or for other emergency measures to rehabilitate farmland or to repair or replace a farmland or conservation structure, the Secretary shall give the agricultural producer the option of receiving—

"(A) before carrying out such replacement or rehabilitation, not more than 75 percent of the payment for such replacement or rehabilitation, which shall be based on the fair market value of the replacement or rehabilitation, as determined by the Secretary; and

"(B) before carrying out such repair, not more than 50 percent of the payment for such repair, which shall be based on the fair market value of the repair, as determined by the Secretary.";

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(c) WILDFIRES.—A wildfire that causes damage with respect to which a payment may be made under subsection (a) includes any wildfire that is not caused naturally, including a wildfire that is caused by the Federal Government, if the damage is caused by the spread of the fire due to natural causes."

SEC. 3. IMPROVING THE EMERGENCY FOREST RESTORATION PROGRAM.

Section 407 of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2206) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (f); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (d) the following:

"(e) ADVANCE PAYMENTS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall give an owner of nonindustrial private forest land the option of receiving, before the owner carries out emergency measures under this section, not more than 75 percent of the cost of the emergency measures, as determined by the Secretary based on the fair market value of the cost of the emergency measures using the estimated cost of the applicable practice published in the Field Office Technical Guide of each State by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

"(2) RETURN OF FUNDS.—If the funds provided under paragraph (1) are not expended by the end of the 180-day period beginning on the date on which the owner of nonindustrial private forest land receives those funds, the funds shall be returned within a reasonable timeframe, as determined by the Secretary."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) and the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. TOKUDA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1011, the Emergency Conservation Program Improvement Act, introduced by Representative LETLOW of Louisiana.

The Emergency Conservation Program, or ECP, and the Emergency Forest Restoration Program, EFRP, are two important cost-share programs available to landowners following a natural disaster.

Under ECP, landowners can receive technical and financial assistance for repairs and restoration of land adversely affected by natural disasters, including floods, hurricanes, wildfires, and droughts. Additionally, EFRP offers financial assistance to nonindustrial private forestland owners for recovery efforts following similar natural disasters.

In recent years, agricultural producers have witnessed firsthand the devastation caused by numerous disasters. The recovery efforts and associated costs have underscored the importance of these programs during times of great need for our Nation's farmers.

Over the past decade, we have seen some of the largest and most destructive wildfires on record, particularly in

Western States. While the West continues to face forest health and wildfire crises, significant wildfires have also ignited in States such as Oklahoma, Texas, and Nebraska, leaving producers in these areas in need of conservation and restoration assistance.

Our agricultural community has also seen the devastating impacts of hurricanes in recent years. A harrowing example of this occurred in 2024, when hurricanes Helene and Milton wreaked havoc across several southeastern States. Many producers looked to ECP for help with fencing repairs, debris removal, replacement of watershed infrastructure, and land stabilization. At the same time, EFRP was utilized for hazard tree removal, reforestation, site preparation, and erosion control.

While these programs have been helpful to producers and forest landowners, some participants have reported experiencing delays in receiving payments.

To help expedite funding to those in need and get work done on the ground more quickly, this legislation would broaden eligibility for advanced payments for both ECP and EFRP and raise the cap on assistance from 25 percent of total costs to 50 percent of project costs for repairs and 75 percent for replacement.

Mr. Speaker, this is crucial for the American agriculture industry. When a natural disaster ravages valuable natural resources or dismantles critical agricultural infrastructure, landowners simply cannot afford to wait on the Federal government to finish processing paperwork before they begin the process of rebuilding. Advance payments allow us to streamline this process and improve program delivery.

Mr. Speaker, I support this legislation and encourage my colleagues to vote favorably, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1011.

Last month, back-to-back Kona Low storms brought catastrophic flooding to our islands. In the span of just a few days, our State was inundated with more than 2 trillion gallons of water. Some areas received over 36 inches of rain in a 24-hour period, far exceeding what scientists expected in a once-in-a-thousand-year storm event.

More than 200 people needed emergency rescue—some being picked up with excavators and farm equipment to be able to get away from the floods. Hundreds of homes were damaged or destroyed. Over 100,000 people throughout our islands lost power for an extended period of time. Some of our “seniors”; “kupuna” were trapped in their homes without food or electricity for days at a time.

□ 1510

While people and businesses across our State face a tough road toward recovery, our farmers have had an especially difficult challenge. Over the last

3 weeks, I have walked through farms and fields in my district and witnessed the devastation firsthand.

From Waiialua and the North Shore through Koolauloa, Wailuku, and upcountry Maui, across Molokai, and in Kona, I saw flooded fields, washed-out topsoil, collapsed roads, culverts completely blown apart by flooding, ruined farm equipment, crops dying in the fields, and animals stuck in mud. I saw entire seasons of crops wiped out, and real questions as to when their next harvest will be still remain unanswered.

Early estimates put the damage across Hawaii's farms at nearly \$70 million and counting. One in three farmers across our State was negatively impacted by the storms.

Our farmers and ranchers are resilient, tough, and proud. They will come out on the other side, but it is going to take real, sustained support to get them there. That is why this bill is so important.

This isn't the first time, sadly, that our farmers experienced such tragedy. Farmers in my specific district deal with some of the most relentless climate pressures and diverse natural disasters anywhere in this country—wildfires, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, landslides, and floods caused by increasingly powerful Kona low storms.

Each disaster we face chips away at our ability to grow our own food in an island State where we import 80 to 90 percent of the food that we consume. In a place as remote and geographically isolated as Hawaii, food security is fragile.

As we know, food security is also our national and State security, as well. Every farm that we lose, every farmer who decides that he is just going to give up after this last disaster, makes it more difficult for us to feed ourselves.

USDA disaster assistance programs like the ones we are talking about today, ECP and the forest restoration program, play a critical role in helping our farmers not just recover but to rebuild stronger and more resilient. I am grateful to the FSA, the NRCS, and the Rural Development offices in Hawaii that are already working to enroll storm-impacted farmers and get help out the door.

Let me be clear: USDA programs also work only if they have the funding and staff to deliver them. The President's budget proposes slashing USDA by nearly 20 percent and eliminating more than a quarter of Farm Service Agency staff. I need those people in our farms and fields helping them to make it through one more disaster, one more storm. This is the wrong decision if we are looking to pass bills like this and, at the same time, slash funding and the staff that we need to get that funding out the door.

When farmers are facing millions of dollars in losses, they cannot risk delays caused by hollowed-out agen-

cies. We need USDA to be fully resourced and ready to respond.

I also want to be honest about the long-term challenges we face, not just in Hawaii but across the country. Climate change is real, and intense storms, more destructive wildfires than we have ever seen in our lifetimes, prolonged droughts, and extreme weather events of every single kind will continue to increase in frequency and intensity.

Farmers and ranchers are on the front lines of that reality, and our Federal programs must be designed to help them meet and overcome these challenges.

The Emergency Conservation Program Improvement Act of 2025 would take important steps to ensure disaster assistance programs are responsive to the needs of our producers by providing more flexible, upfront cost-sharing payments. This will help farmers and foresters to begin rebuilding immediately after a disaster rather than waiting on reimbursements they simply cannot afford upfront.

Most farmers in Hawaii are small, mom-and-pop, family operations. When a disaster hits, they don't always have the cash on hand to pay tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of dollars in recovery costs while they wait months for reimbursements from the Federal Government. That is not how their finances work. Frankly, it is not reasonable to ask them to make that kind of investment upfront for people who have lost everything.

By expanding advanced cost-share payments and extending upfront assistance for select programs, this bill would make sure our farmers can access the help that they need quickly enough to actually make a meaningful difference—not after the season is lost and the crops gone, not after they have had to walk away from most of their livelihoods, seen it washed away in a disaster, but right when they need it most.

I thank my colleague Representative LETLOW for introducing this urgently needed, bipartisan legislation. I look forward to working together to strengthen USDA disaster assistance programs so that we can meet the needs of our farmers today and help them prepare for the challenges they will encounter tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this very important bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Louisiana (Ms. LETLOW).

Ms. LETLOW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1011, the Emergency Conservation Program Improvement Act of 2025.

Across this country, farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners are on the front lines of natural disasters. Whether it is hurricanes in my home State of Louisiana, wildfires in Nebraska, or severe storms across rural America,

these events do not just damage land. They threaten livelihoods, local economies, and our Nation's food and fiber supply.

Too often, when disaster strikes, the programs designed to help, including the Emergency Conservation Program and the Emergency Forest Restoration Program, are slowed by red tape, delays, and barriers to access.

My bill, H.R. 1011, takes a common-sense approach to fixing that. This legislation ensures that producers, forest landowners, and family forestry businesses can access advance payments of up to 75 percent of recovery costs so they can begin rebuilding immediately rather than waiting months for reimbursement.

It expands the types of emergency conservation practices that qualify for assistance, recognizing that recovery goes far beyond repairing fences. It includes restoring farmland, rehabilitating conservation structures, and stabilizing land after devastating events.

It also ensures that wildfire damage can qualify for assistance when natural conditions cause fires to spread, providing fairness and certainty for landowners facing increasingly severe fire seasons.

For forest landowners and family forestry businesses, this bill provides critical flexibility to remove debris, replant trees, and restore working lands without unnecessary delay.

Mr. Speaker, timing matters. We are quickly approaching both hurricane and wildfire seasons. Communities across the country are preparing for what may come. When disaster hits, recovery cannot wait. Producers and landowners need tools that match the urgency of the moment. This bill delivers exactly that.

For a farmer whose fields have been washed out, for a rancher rebuilding miles of fencing, and for a family forestry business working to recover from a storm or wildfire damage, this legislation means faster recovery, less financial strain, and a stronger path forward.

I also recognize the bipartisan leadership behind this effort. In the Senate, I thank Senator DEB FISCHER and Senator BEN RAY LUJÁN for leading this important legislation. Here in the House, I am grateful for the support of my colleagues, Representatives MARIE GLUESENKAMP PEREZ, DON BACON, MIKE FLOOD, and ADRIAN SMITH. This is what bipartisan, solutions-oriented policymaking looks like.

H.R. 1011 removes barriers, cuts through delays, and ensures that disaster assistance works when it is needed most. It strengthens the resilience of rural America because when our producers and forest landowners recover faster, our communities recover faster.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this practical, bipartisan solution and stand with the farmers, ranchers, forest landowners, and family forestry businesses who feed, fuel, and sustain our Nation.

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

I thank my colleagues for their support, specifically my colleague from Louisiana, on behalf of the farmers, ranchers, and forestry caretakers in my State. This bill is important, and I am so glad that she brought it forward.

Before we vote, I want my colleagues to see what I saw. I stood in a field where 20,000 saplings ready to be planted drowned before they ever had a chance to grow. I saw thousands of coffee trees lost, including heritage trees planted by the original owners generations ago, gone in a single storm. I saw banana fields buried in water and silt. I saw fruit contaminated and roots rotting in the ground. I saw livestock lost, mature animals and their young, newly born, swept away, with only empty pens left.

Even where crops are still standing, farmers don't know if they are safe. They are unsure of what flood waters carried into their soil and are unsure if their land will produce food again next season or the season after that.

This is not just damage. This is devastation. These are livelihoods hanging in the balance.

Farmers told me how they tried to fight back, saving seedlings by hand, rushing to harvest whatever they could before it was gone, and building up pens in the middle of the storm just to keep their animals from drowning.

□ 1520

These aren't just fields as we all know here. These are fields that feed families. For some, these are fields that are also their homes, and now they are asking a simple question: Can we recover?

Make no mistake, Hawaii needs help now, but farmers in every State and district are one disaster away from asking those same questions because disasters don't discriminate.

While the bill we are considering today will not make disaster-impacted producers whole overnight, it would help the Federal Government deliver support faster and give farmers and ranchers the resources they need to continue growing the food, fuel, and fiber that keeps this country running.

Our farmers are not asking for a handout. They are asking for a fair shot. That is what this bill delivers, not delayed help, not paperwork and waiting, but real support when it actually matters most. That is because disasters aren't slowing down, and neither should we.

Our farmers are doing everything that they can to hold on, making sure that we have food on our table and fuel in our tanks, clothes to wear at the end of the day, and real cotton grown here in America.

The question is whether we will meet them with the urgency they deserve. By passing this bill, we can say yes.

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional

speakers, I am prepared to close, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WIED). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1011.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EDWARD L. RAMSEY OLNEY POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. GILL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6310) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3570 Olney Laytonsville Road in Olney, Maryland, as the "Edward L. Ramsey Olney Post Office Building".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6310

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EDWARD L. RAMSEY OLNEY POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3570 Olney Laytonsville Road in Olney, Maryland, as the "Edward L. Ramsey Olney Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Edward L. Ramsey Olney Post Office Building".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GILL) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SUBRAMANYAM) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GILL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. GILL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill which would rename a post office in Olney, Maryland, after Edward L. Ramsey.

Mr. Ramsey was a dedicated public servant, retired Army sergeant, and valued member of the Olney community. Even into retirement, Mr.