

vote coming up in the next month on MFN for China. It is going to be very difficult for people to justify this in the light of the human rights violations that are occurring in China.

#### RESTORE WIC PROGRAM FUNDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. ROEMER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROEMER. Mr. Speaker, I would just say that to start my 5 minutes I am delighted to see that we are on 5 minutes because that means that the rule for the bill that we were going to undertake has been defeated.

I think one of the reasons that the rule was defeated was because we did not allow, through the Committee on Rules, the opportunity to offer a bipartisan amendment that would have restored the entire amount of WIC funds, Women, Infant and Children Program funds to make sure that the program continues to help women that are pregnant not deliver anemic or underweight children.

Mr. Speaker, this is one of the best programs and one of the best bipartisan programs that we have in Government, yet the Committee on Rules had locked out and shut down and prohibited us from offering and discussing this bipartisan amendment with the self-executing rule.

So I am delighted that the Committee on Rules now is back to discuss ways by which to improve that bill. I think it was defeated in a bipartisan way, with 43 Republicans joining the Democrats, because we do want to discuss the importance of WIC. We also want to make sure that that bill is not loaded up like a Christmas tree with the branches sagging to the floor with pork barrel ornaments.

So there are two problems with that bill. I am hopeful that we can get that bill back to the floor right away because it does involve natural disaster relief that is very important for a number of States, including States in the Midwest, it involves funding for human disasters, which would help women and children with the restoration of \$38 million in the WIC Program.

Why do we need this funding for the WIC Program? There are a number of reasons. One is because the administration, the White House, recognized, with the help of some Republicans, that we were going to have an increased caseload, that disability payments through Social Security for children were frozen, and that we had increases in milk prices. So we needed to make sure we got this \$38 million put into the WIC Program to ensure that 180,000 children were not cut off from WIC.

Mr. Speaker, we were able to do that defeating the rule in a bipartisan way. I am hopeful that the gentleman from Ohio [Ms. KAPTUR], the gentleman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA), the gentleman from California [Mr. RIGGS] and whoever wants to will

go to the Committee on Rules and make sure that we get a fair rule to discuss and debate this WIC Program, which is a wonderful program to help our women and children throughout this country, and I would be happy at this time to yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio [Ms. KAPTUR] who has done a marvelous job fighting passionately for a wonderful program such as WIC.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Indiana for his strong support of the WIC program, making sure that there is a funding stream for WIC that is not smoke and mirrors, one that we can depend on and one that is not just invented a few hours before a bill comes to the floor.

I can say that I serve as a member on two of the subcommittees of concern here, the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, dealing with the WIC funding, and the Subcommittee on VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies as well, which includes the NASA budget. We never had any kind of hearings with NASA on taking money from that account and placing it in the WIC account.

It was very unclear to us yesterday when we went before the Committee on Rules. We were told, well, maybe they might make a rule in order where we could debate the funding issue. Then it turns out to be a self-executing rule, and when we asked the Committee on Rules yesterday when we testified, well, where is the money coming from, they said, well, we think it may be coming from a NASA account. I said which NASA account? Well, was it the wind tunnel account? They said, well, maybe it is section 8, maybe it is not NASA.

It was very confusing up in the Committee on Rules, and then today we are presented with a self-executing rule where apparently the money is being taken from some NASA account.

This was never, never talked about, as the gentleman from Georgia knows, in our Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, and I can assure the gentleman that as a member of the Subcommittee on VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies, which includes the NASA budget, we never talked about this and had the opportunity to deal with the agency people from NASA.

So I think for those of us who are fighting for the WIC Program and for certainty, not just after next fall, the gentleman from California [Mr. RIGGS] said he wants to hold hearings next fall. We have people being taken off the rolls today around the country, including in his own State of California, where the Governor has written us and said he needs an additional \$27 million just in California alone.

#### SUPPORT FULL FUNDING FOR THE WIC PROGRAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. BILIRAKIS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support our Nation's future by calling for full funding for the WIC nutrition program. All too often the debate in this great House of democracy focuses on estimates, projections, baselines, adjustments, or some other technical term that we hear every day. We are asked to ponder piles of paper filled with facts and figures and then make a judgment about how those numbers or how changing those numbers will affect the everyday lives of millions of Americans.

Today I ask that instead we take a moment and focus on the foundation of our Nation, indeed, its future, our children. I think it is more important to focus on the valuable benefits and help services WIC provides to its participants rather than haggling over census numbers and terms like full participation. When discussing the WIC Program, we must remind ourselves that it has a 22-year track record of providing valuable and, in fact, critical services to some of our Nation's most vulnerable citizens. The WIC Program provides specific nutritious foods to at-risk, income-eligible, pregnant, postpartum and breast feeding women, infants and children up to five years of age. WIC gives women and young children the means to obtain highly nutritious food like iron-fortified infant formula, calcium rich milk, eggs, juice, cereal and other staple foods necessary for healthy development. More than food, WIC is designed to influence a lifetime of good nutrition and healthy behavior by providing valuable nutrition education for its participants as well as referrals to other local health and social service organizations.

During pregnancy, Mr. Speaker, one of the most fragile periods in a woman's life, WIC enhances dietary intake, which improves weight gain and the likelihood of a successful pregnancy. After birth, WIC continues to promote the health of infants and is responsible for reducing low birth rate and infant mortality. Children who participate in WIC receive immunizations against childhood diseases at a higher rate than children who are not WIC participants, and WIC also helps to reduce anemia among children.

As we know, children receiving nutritious meals are in a better position to focus on their daily studies. I recently visited an elementary school in my district and spoke with the very people providing meals to students. They, along with many others, told me that proper nutrition is an integral part of our children's educational experience. In this regard WIC has been linked to improve cognitive development among children. Stated plainly, WIC children are more prepared to learn compared to those children who lack properly nutritionally balanced diets.