just on the basis of common wisdom about this, who doesn't know that a mother and her children are going to be better off if those mothers are allowed to complete 2 years of higher education. So we will be back. We will be back and we will pass this amendment.

Mr. President, I, again, will just finish speaking about this amendment if I refer to Latashie Brown, who is a single mother in her thirties from Minnesota. She decided to return to college to enhance her nursing skills and improve her earning power.

You have a single mother, she wants to go back to school, it is 2 years to get that associate's degree to go into nursing, to be a nursing assistant. And too many women like Miss Brown are just essentially being told you have to leave school because the States get penalized for not meeting the work requirements. We will be back.

CRISIS IN AGRICULTURE

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I also want to bring up one other matter on the floor today because we are in another fight. You know, it seems like, with about 2 weeks to go, there is a whole lot that is actually going on here in the Congress. I think the tragedy of it is people may not be aware of all of it. But I will tell you, one issue that people in Minnesota, especially the farmers and people in greater Minnesota, are well aware of—we have a crisis in agriculture. We have a lot of people who are faced with record-low prices. There is no way farmers can cash-flow on the basis of $1.40 a bushel of corn.

Those farmers are being driven off the land. As those farmers get driven off the land, that is the death knell for many of our rural communities because it is those family farmers who live in those communities and buy in those communities that support our schools and support our small businesses and support our churches and support our synagogues—you name it. That is what is happening.

We put together a $7 billion package. Senator BAUCUS from Montana was part of that effort. I was hopeful because, whereas before our August recess I heard Senators come to the floor and say ''stay the course.'' The Freedom to Farm bill—which I call the Freedom to Fail bill—it is the market. Stay the course. Stay the course.

I was thinking to myself, it is easy for people here to say ''stay the course'' while farmers in Minnesota are just being driven off their land.

That changed. Now, finally I think, at least I hope that everybody recognizes there is a crisis out there. I also believe that many people realize this Freedom to Fail bill is not working. We just eliminated the leverage for farmers to get a fair price in the marketplace. We capped the loan rate at $1.89 for a bushel of corn.

What in the world are we doing supporting a piece of legislation that keeps prices down when prices have plummeted to the point where you could be the best farmer in the world and you cannot make it?

So we put together a $7 billion package that has indemnity payments for farmers that have experienced crop failure and have had to deal with scab disease, had to deal with terrible weather like wet weather in Northwest Minnesota, and we did a couple of other things, the most important of which was to take the cap off the loan rate so that we could get the prices up and have some kind of safety net for farmers who otherwise are going to go under.

Mr. President, we had a farm rally in Worthington, MN, just Saturday a week ago—not this past Saturday. There were petitions—I won't include them in the RECORD because there are too many—there were petitions that were passed out that talked about the importance of a fair price for family farmers.

I thank all of the farmers and small business people and lenders who came to this rally—almost 1,000 people were there—in Worthington. These petitions are going out all across our State. Ted Winter, who is house majority leader, a farmer himself, has been one of the people who has taken the lead.

This is a plea from Main Street businesses in rural America, a plea from family farmers, a plea from rural citizens. They are saying to people in the U.S. Senate, ''We are not asking for a handout, we are asking for a fair shake. We are asking you to take some action that corrects a major deficiency in a piece of legislation you passed''—the freedom to fail bill—''which is great for the grain companies but puts us family farmers under.''

What we got yesterday by the same Republican majority that I was talking about earlier—you talk about partisanship. I don't know if it is partisanship on the floor of the Senate right now or just an honest-to-goodness debate. I argue that any majority that gives away a break to people who have over $17 million estates and cuts low-income energy assistance—those are priorities that are distorted priorities. I don't think that is the goodness of our country.

I argue that any majority that eliminates an educational opportunity for a single parent and her children—that is punitive.

And I argue that this package that was put together yesterday in the ag appropriations conference committee shut out—I say to my colleague from Montana—shut out the Democratic proposal. It is way too little, way too late, doesn't get the price up, deficient in all sorts of ways, and will not do the job. It is like my Republican colleagues in the House and the Senate labored mightily and produced a mouse. It is an insult.

We will on Thursday—Yom Kippur is tomorrow; it is a religious holiday for some of us—Thursday we will have a motion to recommit this to the conference committee. We will keep coming back and fighting it.

I say to family farmers in Minnesota, ''Look, $4 billion doesn't get the price up, it isn't targeted, it helps landowners, not necessarily producers, doesn't help soybean growers, doesn't deal with the real issue.''

People are not looking for handouts. They are not looking for more payments. They want to get the price up. I say to farmers in Minnesota, ''Look, I have given this everything I have—everything I have,'' or ''everything I had,'' if it is in the past tense. I will tell you that whatever is out there is just not going to do the job. I refuse to be a part of a phony argument where we pretend like we have come up with some agricultural crisis relief bill that does not provide the necessary relief for people so they can stay on their land and farm their land. This is not going to do the job.

You can say, ''Well, but this goes part of the way.'' I suppose a quarter of a loaf of bread is better than none, but I am not going to be party to the argument that this is going to help the farmers or is anywhere near commensurate to the task before us.

The President has said that he is going to veto this. The administration is hanging in there tough. Let me tell you, Mr. President, I don't always agree with you on policies. I am a Democrat and quite often in disagreement with some of what the administration does. But I give credit where credit is due.

I am glad the President is hanging tough on this. I am glad that the President and the Vice President and Secretary Glickman—especially Secretary Glickman—are there for family farmers. I hope he vetoes this, and then I hope we sit down at the bargaining table and come back with a farm relief package that really provides relief.

I am tired of symbolic politics. We get ourselves in big trouble when we pretend like we put something together that is going to do the job. The Democrats' proposal, I say to my colleague from Montana, was barely a start. It was the best we felt we could do. It did not get the prices up there. It did not get the relief there. It was not all that we needed to do, but it was a credible start.

What has come out of this agricultural appropriations conference committee by the Republican majority—let me go on record and say this—is not a great step forward, it is a great leap sideways. It is not a step forward for family farmers, it is a great leap sideways. The family farmers in Minnesota and the people in greater Minnesota deserve better. They deserve better, and I am going to keep on fighting and raising heck on the floor of the Senate and in every other way I can until they get better. I believe I will be joined by many of my other colleagues as well.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a very eloquent piece by

Steve Calvin, ''We need to reconnect with the food supply,'' which was published in the Minnesota Star Tribune today, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Minnesota Star Tribune, Sept. 29, 1998]

WE NEED TO RECONNECT WITH FOOD SUPPLY

(By Steve Calvin)

The recent Great Upper Midwest Farm Price Crisis Rally was held at the Nobles County fairground in my hometown of Worthington, Minn. It was attended by sympathetic Democratic politicians and a small but enthusiastic crowd of 750 farmers. The invited Republican office holders had other priorities.

At a time when the ''crisis'' label is too widely used, there is agreement that the current farm situation is a disaster to rival the one that occurred in the 1980s. It is particularly ironic that this comes during a year when crop yields are bountiful. Yet this abundant harvest will likely be followed by foreclosures and personal tragedies.

There are many reasons for the current desperate situation. As usual, political hay is being made. Democrats blame the 1996 farm bill that gradually removed farm subsidies. Republicans say that the rationale for ending government involvement in agriculture is sound and that unforeseen global financial disruption dried up export markets. Truth is always more complicated than sound bites.

Though I was born in southwestern Minnesota, I grew up elsewhere and now live in the Twin Cities. I kept in touch with my roots through my grandfathers, who farmed for a combined 100 years. Five years ago I resisted the cabin-up-north urge and bought a farm down south. Though a small operation, it is currently home to a productively grazing flock of sheep and herd of cattle. However, my best credential for a comment on the farm crisis is that I am concerned about the source and security of our food supply.

Although fewer than 2 percent of Americans are engaged in agriculture, the family farm is still enshrined in our national psyche. Very few have a physical place where we can reconnect with our rural roots. The popularity of the animal barns at the State Fair is no surprise. Even though most of us could never tolerate the privations and efforts required of farming a generation ago we have a deep longing for what it represents. But farming has changed.

Developments in technology have reshaped agriculture. As always, change is doubled edged. A family farm may now encompass more than 1,000 acres. In 1950 this would have required three or four farm families. The consolidation has come at a price. Sometimes the advice to get big or get out trapped farmers in massive and ruinous debt. Thus the call for federal assistance.

The proper role of government in agriculture has always been hotly debated. My maternal grandfather and my great uncle were best of friends except when it came to that question. Grandpa saw the New Deal as the root of corruption of independent farming. Uncle Paul thought that government should guarantee the price of production. In their retirement the debate was suspended for reasons of health and family peace.

Whatever else they are, government programs are complicated. As the owners of 43 acres that were already enrolled in support programs, my wife and I receive the modest diminishing yearly payments of the 1996 Freedom to Farm Act. We have used the money for conservation projects. We also receive the voluminous regulations of the program. The dozen-plus years of postgraduate education that my wife and I share give us no help in understanding them.

Is the future agricultural landscape destined to be one of industrial mega-farms, dotted with a few decorative hobby farms? I hope not. If we are to have an agriculture that is safe, local, environmentally sound and affordable, government must serve as the impartial referee. The difficult debate will be in defining fair rules. The current situation favors the interests of agribusiness. Because of the influence that money has on the political system, change will be difficult.

On the other hand, farmers will not be guaranteed an income by federal programs. Those who plan to be farming very far into the next century will have to do so in innovative ways. Agricultural writers such as Wendell Berry, Wes Jackson and Gene Logsdon outline a future that includes a mosaic of profitable family farms across America. These farms will require a return to diverse enterprises and sustainable practices.

Nonfarming Americans have a stake in this too. That we pay such a small percentage of our incomes for food has lulled us into a false sense of security. We must reconnect with our food supply. This can be done by frequenting local farmers' markets and by joining the burgeoning community-supported agricultural movement, where product and meat can be obtained directly from farmers. We must know more about our food source than the location of the nearest food warehouse. Ignoring the current farm crisis may bring us closer to a much more dangerous food crisis.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I will conclude my statement by quoting the third to the last paragraph from the commentary of Dr. Calvin, who is a physician and a farmer:

Is the future agricultural landscape destined to be one of industrial mega-farms, dotted with a few decorative hobby farms? I hope not. If we are to have an agriculture that is safe, local, environmentally sound and affordable, government must serve as the impartial referee. The difficult debate will be in defining fair rules. The current situation favors the interests of agribusiness. Because of the influence that money has on the political system, change will be difficult.

That is true, change will be difficult, but not for a moment, those of us who come from States like Minnesota, do we intend to give up on this fight. The family farm structure of agriculture and food policy is our most precious priority. We have just begun to fight on this.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mr. BAUCUS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota controls the time.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, how much time do I have left?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 7 minutes remaining.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I yield the 7 minutes I have, and perhaps if the Senator needs more, the Senator from Vermont, Senator JEFFORDS, will yield some of his, but I yield to my colleague.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana is recognized for 7 minutes.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, what is the parliamentary situation?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are under an order up to 3:15 p.m., with 1 hour equally divided between the Senator from Minnesota and the Senator from Vermont. The Senator from Minnesota has 6 minutes 30 seconds left.

Mr. BAUCUS. What is the Senate business at the conclusion of that time?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont has 30 minutes.

Mr. BAUCUS. I apologize, I did not hear the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont has 30 minutes.

Mr. BAUCUS. The Senator from Vermont.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont has 30 minutes left.

Mr. BAUCUS. Thank you.

Mr. President, first I will chime in and praise the Senator from Minnesota. He is a fighter. As all the residents of Minnesota know and people across the country know, if there is anybody who is fighting for people's interests and to help people in America—it is the Senator from Minnesota.

He is particularly right, in this Senator's view, when it comes to the action taken last night by the agriculture appropriations committee and their failure to report out legislation that in some modicum way, in a bipartisan way, helps give some encouragement to American farmers. As the Senator knows even better than I, costs facing our farmers and ranchers have just continually risen over the years. Pickup trucks, combines, farm equipment is out of sight and so expensive.

At the same time, the price that farmers get for their products, commodities has just plummeted. In fact, at least in my State of Montana—I am sure it is the same for the Senator's State in Minnesota—we face wheat prices of $2, $2 a bushel, with freight rates sometimes $1 a bushel, which has to come off of the $2, so that means the farmer is only receiving about $1 a bushel for wheat, which is nowhere close to breaking even. You need about $5, $6—at least these days—just to break even in farm country.

I just want to again thank the Senator. He is a real champion when it comes to helping people. And I just want to let people know, who might be listening, just what a fine Senator he is and how he works so hard for people and people's interests.

Mr. WELLSTONE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I just say to Senator BAUCUS, thank you very much.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I rise on another issue. And depending upon whether the Senator from Vermont comes back, we will just kind of play this by ear on timing.

THE INTERIOR APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, at some point soon the Senate must either return to the consideration of the Interior appropriations bill or else consider an omnibus bill that includes provisions relating to the appropriations for the Interior Department or, dare I say, at a time when perhaps the Interior appropriations bill would come to the Senate, not directly to the floor, but via a conference report, where the conference report is not debatable. But when any of those events occur, we are going to face the issue of antienvironmental riders which are currently in the Senate Interior appropriations bill. In anticipation of that debate, I will take some time this afternoon to explain why I and several of my colleagues intend to offer an amendment that would delete many of those riders.

Three years ago, there was an attempt to fill appropriations bills with various riders—you know, those attachments that go on to appropriations bills that have virtually nothing to do with the bill—riders that made very controversial changes to our Nation's environmental laws: riders that would weaken, for example, the Clean Water Act, weaken the Clean Air Act, slow down the cleanup of hazardous waste sites, and prevent the protection of any more endangered species.

We all remember what happened. The President vetoed the bills, demanding that the riders be deleted. Congress refused. There was a standoff. The Government was shut down. A fierce public backlash occurred, not only against the Government shutdown, but also against the effort to lace appropriations bills with antienvironmental riders.

After that, we seemed to have learned our lesson. Chairman STEVENS urged us to ''get on with our work'' and get the appropriations bills passed. We pretty much did, keeping controversial riders out of most of the appropriations bills.

A few weeks ago that changed. When we took up the Interior Department appropriations bill it became, as Yogi Berra said, ''deja vu all over again.'' The anti-environmental riders are back. The Interior appropriations bill that the Senate was considering just a short while ago is replete with controversial provisions that would weaken the protection of our environment and environmental laws, our water, our forests and parks, and our wildlife.

The administration objects to about two dozen of the riders in this bill. It says it is an attempt to roll back environmental protection. The amendment that I and several other Senators plan to offer is much more focused. It strikes only eight of the most egregious antienvironment riders. Let me describe them. I will be brief because I and perhaps some other Senators will discuss each of these at a future date in more detail.

The first rider locks in new and existing rulings for commercial fishing at Glacier Bay National Park, AK. It jeopardizes the protection of one of the crown jewels of our national park system.

The second rider grants a right-of-way to build a road through the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge and Wilderness, also in Alaska. For the first time ever, Congress would allow a road to be built through a wilderness area.

The third rider prevents the Forest Service from decommissioning any of its authorized roads until it has dealt with every mile of unauthorized roads, the so-called ghost roads. This, in effect, would make it impossible for the Forest Service to manage the National Forest/Road System to protect public safety and the environment.

The fourth and fifth riders prevent the Forest Service from revising any more forest lands until the Forest Service publishes comprehensive new planning rules. What is the effect of this? It would lock in old, outdated plans that no longer reflect how our citizens want their forests to be managed.

The sixth rider requires the Forest Service to sell 90 percent of the allowable sale quantity of harvestable timber from one national forest, and one only. That is the Tongass, in Alaska. This would create a unique entitlement to take public timber from that one forest.

The seventh rider prohibits the reintroduction of grizzly bears in Montana and Idaho, disrupting a locally oriented public process designed to answer the very question of whether and how reintroduction should occur.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. BAUCUS. I ask unanimous consent to use the time that has been allotted to the Senator from Vermont.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BAUCUS. I thank the Chair.

The eighth rider prohibits changes to the management and operation of any dam in the Columbia River Basin without congressional approval. That would override environmental laws, make it impossible to protect the salmon and other endangered species, and establish congressional micromanagement of one of the largest river systems in the world.

I have been in the Senate for about 20 years. I like to think that I understand the appropriations process pretty well. And in some cases it is perfectly acceptable to make policy changes in an appropriations bill, for example, where there is a broad consensus or an emergency. I have supported provisions like that, and every Senator here has probably done the same. But that is not what we are talking about here.

We are talking about a slew of riders that go way too far, making dramatic and controversial changes in our environmental laws. In some cases, the riders micromanage the agencies. In other cases, they substitute a one-size-fits-all Washington, DC, decision for a decision that balances national concerns with the concerns of local residents. In still other cases they improperly favor special interests at the expense of the national interests.

Some Senators will no doubt disagree with my characterization of these riders. They will argue, well, this or that rider is good public policy, justified on the merits. As with most issues that we debate around here, there will be serious arguments on both sides. But that is part of the problem. There are serious arguments on both sides.

Each of the riders involve important and complex natural resource issues. These issues require close attention and careful consideration as part of the regular legislative process. But instead, they have been tucked away in a 200-page appropriations bill, or what probably will be a much, much longer omnibus bill, that we are rushing to enact before the end of the fiscal year—only days away. And if rumors of an unamendable omnibus appropriations bill conference report are true, the Senate may never get to the debate or vote on any of these riders.

It is, to my mind, not the way to do business. We all know what is going on. These riders cannot stand up on their own merits. They cannot stand up on their own merits in the full light of day. The public does not support them. And the President does not support them. So the advocates resort to an appropriations rider.

This is not what people expect of us. Time and time again, folks back home tell us how upset they are with these kinds of riders. I hear it all the time. I am sure other Senators do, too. You know what? People are right. They certainly are in this case.

There is another problem with these particular riders, and that is that they are a poison pill. They will kill the Interior appropriations bill. Let us not forget the Interior appropriations bill is an important bill for all States, but particularly for Western States like Montana. It provides funds for our national parks, our forests, wilderness areas, and other public lands.

Senator STEVENS, Senator BYRD and Senator GORTON have done a great job with all the other parts of the bill. I do not want to overlook that, not for a moment. They have worked very, very hard. And I commend them for it. Frankly, I do not understand how they do it, how they find the time or the patience of balancing all the competing interests—funding our natural resource agencies, funding tribal programs that are so critical to Native Americans, resolving the controversy over the National Endowment for the Arts.

They have done too much good work for us to allow these riders to sully and probably sink the bill. But that is what is going to happen.

Let me talk a little bit about the official version of what the administration says, the bureaucratic version.