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This week is a time for our Nation to reflect upon the important role that U.S. agriculture has played and continues to play in this Nation and throughout the entire world. The United States began as an agrarian society, and agriculture has been the backbone of this country. Over time, however, our Nation became more industrialized, and people left the farms and rural areas to pursue opportunities in the cities. And yet despite the fact that there are fewer people producing the Nation's food and fiber, productivity has increased.

While the business of farming has undergone significant changes since the founding of this Nation, one thing has not changed: farming continues to be one of the most hazardous occupations in the United States. A report by the National Safety Council concluded that agriculture had the second highest fatality rate of all industries in the Nation. In 2003 alone there were 710 farm-related fatalities and 110,000 disabling injuries.

I hasten to add that, because of the nature of family farms, farm-related injuries and fatalities are not solely limited to adults. A 2001 study by the National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety reported that nearly 1.5 million young people, 20 years or younger, lived or worked on farms. The same study showed that more than 660,000 in that age range were employed but not living on farms. According to the study, more than 100 children younger than 20 die each year and more than 22,000 are injured from agriculture-related injuries. Similarly, a study by the American Academy of Pediatrics showed that for teenagers farm jobs have the highest rate of fatalities of all types of teen employment.

While there are many potential hazards on a farm, the greatest continues to be machinery. Reports indicate that 30 percent of farm machinery-related deaths occur in children less than 5 years old. Additionally, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration concludes that 68 percent of farm-related deaths can be traced to some sort of machinery, including tractors, trucks, equipment such as augers and loaders, power takeoffs, and haying equipment.

Of all the equipment on the farm, tractors remain the most dangerous. In fact, OSHA reports that more than half of the deaths that occur on the farm are the result of tractor accidents. Of the deaths caused by tractor accidents, 57 percent are the result of rollovers and another 9 percent are the result of people either falling off or getting run over by a tractor.

Agriculture-related deaths and injuries are not limited to incidents involving machinery, however. Farmers and ranchers are subject to a whole host of other dangers including agriculture chemicals and fertilizers, unruly and unpredictable livestock, and buildings

that contain high dust levels and toxins.

It goes without saying that the commitment to farm safety cannot be limited to a single week. Nevertheless, this timely and welcome resolution to commemorate farm safety reminds us all of how important it is for farmers, ranchers, and their workers to perform their work safely and to take precautions to protect themselves. When one's child is out there with them, take a little extra bit of care for that youngster.

By recognizing the dangers inherent in farming and ranching and by taking steps to prevent accidents, our Nation will continue to lead the world in the production of agriculture commodities.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. REYNOLDS), the author of the concurrent resolution.

(Mr. REYNOLDS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of the Committee on Agriculture for yielding me this time. I also appreciate the strong support of my concurrent resolution by both the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Agriculture today.

Mr. Speaker, I am here to recognize the National Farm Safety and Health Week and to thank our farmers and ranchers nationwide for their hard work day in and day out.

Over half the land in the United States is used for agricultural production; and without the work of our farmers and ranchers, our Nation and others around the world would not have the safe, stable supply of food and fiber that we enjoy today.

In my home State of New York, agriculture is the number one industry, and I am proud to represent one of the largest agricultural areas in the State. In districts like mine all across this great land, farmers work long, hard hours and make tremendous sacrifices. They should be applauded for their efforts.

Unfortunately, those long, hard hours are not risk-free. Sadly, there are hundreds of farm-related fatalities and thousands of injuries every year, and sadder still, many of these accidents could be prevented through increased awareness and better safety practices.

The National Farm Safety and Health Week is a national effort to reduce the number of farming- and ranching-related deaths and injuries through educational and awareness initiatives. Helping educate our farmers and their families on necessary safety precautions is essential to ensuring the strong productivity of our agricultural sector.

I would like to commend the National Safety Council for their leader-

ship and continued work towards achieving these goals through the National Farm Safety and Health Week. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

I have no further requests for time, but let me just say in closing that I am honored to join today with the chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture and the gentleman from New York (Mr. REYNOLDS) in joining with the President, President Bush, having declared this week National Farm Safety Week; and I am very happy to join in support of that concurrent resolution, in support of the President. I thank the President for recognizing this important contribution.

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

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

I would like to thank the gentleman from Texas for working with us on bringing forth this concurrent resolution and congratulate the gentleman from New York for bringing this forward. And I urge my colleagues to adopt what I think is important to not just people in rural America but in all America, to understand the importance of agriculture and the importance of farm safety. With that, I urge my colleagues to support the concurrent resolution.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 494.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Con. Res. 494, the concurrent resolution just considered.

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

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2028, PLEDGE PROTECTION ACT OF 2004

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 781 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows: