

and maintains beneficiary access to durable medical products and quality services.

THE FARM BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, we have a major piece of legislation again being considered by this Congress, the farm bill. It expired in the last Congress; and, due to significant political machinations and controversies, we couldn't get it across the finish line because it was too expensive, didn't have enough reform, shortchanged nutrition and, frankly, didn't deal with the conservation elements that Americans care about.

Well, we're at it again, and the big, contentious issues remain. The direct payments appear to be gone, subsidies that go to farmers regardless of whether or not they even farm the land; but the big, contentious issues remain.

The issues of subsidization have simply migrated. There's an effort to have a shallow-loss provision or additional crop insurance subsidies that may actually end up being far more expensive than the direct payments they're supposed to be replacing.

There is an ongoing controversy regarding nutrition. The Senate bill cuts \$4 billion at a time when too many Americans are, in fact, food insecure; and food stamps, the SNAP program, plays a vital interest in communities around the country.

The House bill is even worse: \$16 billion in additional cuts that families rely upon and, frankly, that provide \$1.70 of economic activity for each dollar that is given to beneficiaries.

Well, there is one area that shouldn't be unduly controversial: the conservation title of the farm bill. The farm bill is the most important piece of environmental legislation that will be considered by this Congress. The question is whether it will be a good environmental bill or a poor one.

The conservation title deals with programs that are very, very important but that the private market doesn't provide, a market-based incentive for people to invest in. I'm talking about things that, if you asked the public generally, of course they are concerned about clean air, clean water, soil protection, wetland and grassland preservation.

□ 1040

But these are things that we've seen for the last 60 years. Unless the Federal Government steps in with either subsidy or regulation, we pay a terrible price, dating back to the monstrous soil erosion that was part of the Dust Bowl tragedy.

Here, again, we're in a situation where the conservation title is in the crosshairs. It's the conservation programs that too often have been cut

when we are in need of money. They are touted when people are encouraged to vote for the bill, and then those resources dissipate. Funding is diverted to large projects. Large, confined animal feedlot operations take huge amounts of this money to deal with something that should be part of their cost of doing business and large operations that could fund it themselves. It takes away resources from small and medium-size farmers, or drains valuable wetlands.

There's a reason why only one in four of the applications for conservation programs are approved. Because there isn't enough money and too much is diverted. I've introduced H.R. 1890, the Balancing Food, Farms, and Environment Act, which seeks to change those priorities to be able to have more money available, targeted toward small and medium-size farmers and ranchers, and be able to put a premium on longer-term conservation.

We have a bizarre situation now where, because of the amazingly bloated and inefficient farm crop insurance program, people are plowing up land that previously had been in conservation, land that's going to be eroded and that's probably going to fail because it's marginal cropland but they don't care because the Federal Government is going to pay them anyway. And the taxpayer loses twice. They pay through unnecessary crop insurance subsidies and they pay because they lose the water quality, the water quantity, the protection of wildlife habitat—and soil erosion.

By all means, let's have the political tug-of-war over unnecessary subsidization in terms of fighting nutrition, but let's come together on the conservation items, which really ought to be nonpartisan, focused, and economically productive.

U.S.-CHINA RELATIONSHIP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, in a few days, China's new President, Xi Jinping, will conclude a tour of the Western Hemisphere by meeting with President Obama in an informal summit in California. The leaders of the Pacific Rim's two most powerful countries will discuss many issues of mutual concern. This important relationship continues to evolve dynamically in spite of the difficulties that we both have. These difficulties spring from some radically different philosophical outlooks on both life as well as governance. These differences deserve both our attention and candor.

Mr. Speaker, 24 years ago, this week, June 3, 1989, a massacre took place in China in a place called Tiananmen Square. Student protesters who were seeking some form of liberty for their interests gathered there. And I remember very vividly two very stark images

from that time. One was the homemade replica of the Statue of Liberty that was erected in their midst. The other was a courageous Chinese man who decided to take it upon himself to stand as a silent witness, arms at his side like a soldier at attention, for the cause of human rights. He stood in the street and blocked four tanks as they proceeded toward the student protesters. The tanks tried to make their way around him. As they did, he would move and stand in front of them. Clearly, there was a dilemma going on in the minds of the young Chinese soldiers who were driving those tanks. Perhaps they didn't want to kill one of their countrymen. So they tried to avoid it. But the young man persisted. For a time, he blocked those tanks, courageously and alone, from carrying out part of what would become the Tiananmen Square massacre. Eventually, some of his friends or other Chinese citizens whisked him away from certain death. Those were two very stark images in my mind that have stayed with me ever since.

In the House Foreign Affairs Committee this week, another one of those student leaders actually spoke. Her name is Chai Ling. She's a courageous new American, one who knows well the tragedy of forced repression—both political repression and the painful, silent repression in China that is not spoken of enough, which is that country's forced abortion policies, its One Child policy, which has, by the way, disproportionately targeted unborn girls.

In her testimony, she spoke clearly about her passion and love for China and her hope that the United States and China can begin a new embrace in a spirit of cooperation rooted in the fundamental respect for human dignity, which transcends both language and culture. She argues that the fear that led to the devastating persecutions of the Cultural Revolution, Tiananmen Square, and more recently, this genocidal One Child policy, which has seriously distorted China's demographic balance, must be transformed by truth. She echoes the spirit of Chen Guangcheng, the blind Chinese activist who stood up so courageously against repression last year in China. When he visited here in Washington, he said this to a small group of us: The intrinsic kindness of persons cannot be defeated by violence and force.

Mr. Speaker, dysfunction in this important bilateral relationship between the United States and China serves neither of our countries, nor the broader world, as the influence of this relationship extends far beyond our respective national borders. China wants our markets, we want their stuff and, perversely, there are incentives for our businesses to seek out their low-cost manufacturing. We want their investment, they want our resources. We sell our enterprises, we also run up our debt, and they buy the debt. In turn, we run down our economy in an endless