manner inconsistent with the trust and confidence placed in him as an officer of the United States, as follows:

During his confirmation hearing before the Senate Committee on Finance, John Andrew Koskinen promised, ''We will be transparent about any problems we run into; and the public and certainly this committee will know about those problems as soon as we do.''

Commissioner Koskinen repeatedly violated that promise. As early as February 2014 and no later than April 2014, he was aware that a substantial portion of Lois Lerner's emails could not be produced to Congress. However, in a March 19, 2014, letter to Senator WYDEN of the Senate Committee on Finance, Commissioner Koskinen said, ''We are transmitting today additional information that we believe completes our production to your committee and the House Ways and Means Committee. In light of those productions, I hope that the investigations can be concluded in the very near future.''

At the time he sent that letter, he knew that the document production was not complete.

Commissioner Koskinen did not notify Congress of any problem until June 13, 2014, when he included the information on the fifth page of the third enclosure of a letter to the Senate Committee on Finance.

Wherefore, John Andrew Koskinen, by such conduct, warrants impeachment and trial and removal from office.

Article 4:

John Andrew Koskinen has failed to act with competence and forthrightness in overseeing the investigation into Internal Revenue Service targeting of Americans because of their political affiliations as follows:

Commissioner Koskinen stated in a hearing on June 20, 2014, that the Internal Revenue Service had ''gone to great lengths'' to retrieve all of Lois Lerner's emails. Commissioner Koskinen's actions contradicted the assurances he gave to Congress.

The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration found over 1,000 of Lois Lerner's emails that the Internal Revenue Service had failed to produce. Those discoveries took only 15 days of investigation to uncover. The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration searched a number of available sources, including disaster backup tapes, Lois Lerner's BlackBerry, the email server, backup tapes for the email server, and Lois Lerner's temporary replacement laptop. The Internal Revenue Service failed to examine any of those sources in its own investigation.

Wherefore, John Andrew Koskinen, by such conduct, warrants impeachment, trial, and removal from office.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee). Under rule IX, a resolution offered from the floor by a Member other than the majority leader or the minority leader as a question of the privileges of the House has immediate precedence only at a time designated by the Chair within 2 legislative days after the resolution is properly noticed.

Pending that designation, the form of the resolution noticed by the gentleman from Louisiana will appear in the RECORD at this point.

The Chair will not at this point determine whether the resolution constitutes a question of privilege. That determination will be made at the time designated for consideration of the resolution.

PERMISSION TO POSTPONE PROCEEDINGS ON MOTION TO CONCUR ON S. 764, NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2015

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the question on adoption of the motion to concur on S. 764 be subject to postponement as though under clause 8 of rule XX.

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

There was no objection.

NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2015

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 822, I call up the bill (S. 764) to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes, with the Senate amendment to the House amendment thereto, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the Senate amendment to the House amendment.

Senate amendment to House amendment:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted, insert the following:

SECTION 1. NATIONAL BIOENGINEERED FOOD DISCLOSURE STANDARD.

The Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''Subtitle E—National Bioengineered Food Disclosure Standard

''SEC. 291. DEFINITIONS.

''In this subtitle:

''(1) BIOENGINEERING.—The term 'bioengineering', and any similar term, as determined by the Secretary, with respect to a food, refers to a food—

''(A) that contains genetic material that has been modified through in vitro recombinant deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) techniques; and

''(B) for which the modification could not otherwise be obtained through conventional breeding or found in nature.

''(2) FOOD.—The term 'food' means a food (as defined in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321)) that is intended for human consumption.

''(3) SECRETARY.—The term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of Agriculture.

''SEC. 292. APPLICABILITY.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—This subtitle shall apply to any claim in a disclosure that a food bears that indicates that the food is a bioengineered food.

''(b) APPLICATION OF DEFINITION.—The definition of the term 'bioengineering' under section 291 shall not affect any other definition, program, rule, or regulation of the Federal Government.

''(c) APPLICATION TO FOODS.—This subtitle shall apply only to a food subject to—

''(1) the labeling requirements under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.); or

''(2) the labeling requirements under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 601 et seq.), the Poultry Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 451 et seq.), or the Egg Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 1031 et seq.) only if—

''(A) the most predominant ingredient of the food would independently be subject to the labeling requirements under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.); or

''(B)(i) the most predominant ingredient of the food is broth, stock, water, or a similar solution; and

''(ii) the second-most predominant ingredient of the food would independently be subject to the labeling requirements under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.).

''SEC. 293. ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL BIOENGINEERED FOOD DISCLOSURE STANDARD.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF MANDATORY STANDARD.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this subtitle, the Secretary shall—

''(1) establish a national mandatory bioengineered food disclosure standard with respect to any bioengineered food and any food that may be bioengineered; and

''(2) establish such requirements and procedures as the Secretary determines necessary to carry out the standard.

''(b) REGULATIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A food may bear a disclosure that the food is bioengineered only in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Secretary in accordance with this subtitle.

''(2) REQUIREMENTS.—A regulation promulgated by the Secretary in carrying out this subtitle shall—

''(A) prohibit a food derived from an animal to be considered a bioengineered food solely because the animal consumed feed produced from, containing, or consisting of a bioengineered substance;

''(B) determine the amounts of a bioengineered substance that may be present in food, as appropriate, in order for the food to be a bioengineered food;

''(C) establish a process for requesting and granting a determination by the Secretary regarding other factors and conditions under which a food is considered a bioengineered food;

''(D) in accordance with subsection (d), require that the form of a food disclosure under this section be a text, symbol, or electronic or digital link, but excluding Internet website Uniform Resource Locators not embedded in the link, with the disclosure option to be selected by the food manufacturer;

''(E) provide alternative reasonable disclosure options for food contained in small or very small packages;

''(F) in the case of small food manufacturers, provide—

''(i) an implementation date that is not earlier than 1 year after the implementation date for regulations promulgated in accordance with this section; and

''(ii) on-package disclosure options, in addition to those available under subparagraph (D), to be selected by the small food manufacturer, that consist of—

''(I) a telephone number accompanied by appropriate language to indicate that the phone number provides access to additional information; and

''(II) an Internet website maintained by the small food manufacturer in a manner consistent with subsection (d), as appropriate; and

''(G) exclude—

''(i) food served in a restaurant or similar retail food establishment; and

''(ii) very small food manufacturers.

''(3) SAFETY.—For the purpose of regulations promulgated and food disclosures made pursuant to paragraph (2), a bioengineered food that has successfully completed the pre-market Federal regulatory review process shall not be treated as safer than, or not as safe as, a non-bioengineered counterpart of the food solely because the food is bioengineered or produced or developed with the use of bioengineering.

''(c) STUDY OF ELECTRONIC OR DIGITAL LINK DISCLOSURE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this subtitle, the Secretary shall conduct a study to identify potential technological challenges that may impact whether consumers would have access to the bioengineering disclosure through electronic or digital disclosure methods.

''(2) PUBLIC COMMENTS.—In conducting the study under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall solicit and consider comments from the public.

''(3) FACTORS.—The study conducted under paragraph (1) shall consider whether consumer access to the bioengineering disclosure through electronic or digital disclosure methods under this subtitle would be affected by the following factors:

''(A) The availability of wireless Internet or cellular networks.

''(B) The availability of landline telephones in stores.

''(C) Challenges facing small retailers and rural retailers.

''(D) The efforts that retailers and other entities have taken to address potential technology and infrastructure challenges.

''(E) The costs and benefits of installing in retail stores electronic or digital link scanners or other evolving technology that provide bioengineering disclosure information.

''(4) ADDITIONAL DISCLOSURE OPTIONS.—If the Secretary determines in the study conducted under paragraph (1) that consumers, while shopping, would not have sufficient access to the bioengineering disclosure through electronic or digital disclosure methods, the Secretary, after consultation with food retailers and manufacturers, shall provide additional and comparable options to access the bioengineering disclosure.

''(d) DISCLOSURE.—In promulgating regulations under this section, the Secretary shall ensure that—

''(1) on-package language accompanies—

''(A) the electronic or digital link disclosure, indicating that the electronic or digital link will provide access to an Internet website or other landing page by stating only 'Scan here for more food information', or equivalent language that only reflects technological changes; or

''(B) any telephone number disclosure, indicating that the telephone number will provide access to additional information by stating only 'Call for more food information.';

''(2) the electronic or digital link will provide access to the bioengineering disclosure located, in a consistent and conspicuous manner, on the first product information page that appears for the product on a mobile device, Internet website, or other landing page, which shall exclude marketing and promotional information;

''(3)(A) the electronic or digital link disclosure may not collect, analyze, or sell any personally identifiable information about consumers or the devices of consumers; but

''(B) if information described in subparagraph (A) must be collected to carry out the purposes of this subtitle, that information shall be deleted immediately and not used for any other purpose;

''(4) the electronic or digital link disclosure also includes a telephone number that provides access to the bioengineering disclosure; and

''(5) the electronic or digital link disclosure is of sufficient size to be easily and effectively scanned or read by a digital device.

''(e) STATE FOOD LABELING STANDARDS.—Notwithstanding section 295, no State or political subdivision of a State may directly or indirectly establish under any authority or continue in effect as to any food in interstate commerce any requirement relating to the labeling or disclosure of whether a food is bioengineered or was developed or produced using bioengineering for a food that is the subject of the national bioengineered food disclosure standard under this section that is not identical to the mandatory disclosure requirement under that standard.

''(f) CONSISTENCY WITH CERTAIN LAWS.—The Secretary shall consider establishing consistency between—

''(1) the national bioengineered food disclosure standard established under this section; and

''(2) the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.) and any rules or regulations implementing that Act.

''(g) ENFORCEMENT.—

''(1) PROHIBITED ACT.—It shall be a prohibited act for a person to knowingly fail to make a disclosure as required under this section.

''(2) RECORDKEEPING.—Each person subject to the mandatory disclosure requirement under this section shall maintain, and make available to the Secretary, on request, such records as the Secretary determines to be customary or reasonable in the food industry, by regulation, to establish compliance with this section.

''(3) EXAMINATION AND AUDIT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may conduct an examination, audit, or similar activity with respect to any records required under paragraph (2).

''(B) NOTICE AND HEARING.—A person subject to an examination, audit, or similar activity under subparagraph (A) shall be provided notice and opportunity for a hearing on the results of any examination, audit, or similar activity.

''(C) AUDIT RESULTS.—After the notice and opportunity for a hearing under subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall make public the summary of any examination, audit, or similar activity under subparagraph (A).

''(4) RECALL AUTHORITY.—The Secretary shall have no authority to recall any food subject to this subtitle on the basis of whether the food bears a disclosure that the food is bioengineered.

''SEC. 294. SAVINGS PROVISIONS.

''(a) TRADE.—This subtitle shall be applied in a manner consistent with United States obligations under international agreements.

''(b) OTHER AUTHORITIES.—Nothing in this subtitle—

''(1) affects the authority of the Secretary of Health and Human Services or creates any rights or obligations for any person under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 301 et seq.); or

''(2) affects the authority of the Secretary of the Treasury or creates any rights or obligations for any person under the Federal Alcohol Administration Act (27 U.S.C. 201 et seq.).

''(c) OTHER.—A food may not be considered to be 'not bioengineered', 'non-GMO', or any other similar claim describing the absence of bioengineering in the food solely because the food is not required to bear a disclosure that the food is bioengineered under this subtitle.

''Subtitle F—Labeling of Certain Food

''SEC. 295. FEDERAL PREEMPTION.

''(a) DEFINITION OF FOOD.—In this subtitle, the term 'food' has the meaning given the term in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321).

''(b) FEDERAL PREEMPTION.—No State or a political subdivision of a State may directly or indirectly establish under any authority or continue in effect as to any food or seed in interstate commerce any requirement relating to the labeling of whether a food (including food served in a restaurant or similar establishment) or seed is genetically engineered (which shall include such other similar terms as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture) or was developed or produced using genetic engineering, including any requirement for claims that a food or seed is or contains an ingredient that was developed or produced using genetic engineering.

''SEC. 296. EXCLUSION FROM FEDERAL PREEMPTION.

''Nothing in this subtitle, subtitle E, or any regulation, rule, or requirement promulgated in accordance with this subtitle or subtitle E shall be construed to preempt any remedy created by a State or Federal statutory or common law right.''.

SEC. 2. ORGANICALLY PRODUCED FOOD.

In the case of a food certified under the national organic program established under the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.), the certification shall be considered sufficient to make a claim regarding the absence of bioengineering in the food, such as ''not bioengineered'', ''non-GMO'', or another similar claim.

MOTION OFFERED BY MR. CONAWAY

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the motion.

The text of the motion is as follows:

Mr. Conaway moves that the House concur in the Senate amendment to the House amendment to the bill, S. 764.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 822, the motion shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Agriculture.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

□ 0930

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 764.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, for thousands of years, mankind has used biotechnology in its various forms to improve crops and livestock. In fact, these technologies have led to the evolution of nearly every food product we consume and have enabled us to enjoy the safest, highest quality, and most abundant and affordable supply food and fiber in the history of the world.

The majority of the scientific community, including the American Medical Association, the World Health Organization, and the National Academy of Sciences, contends that food products grown with the use of biotechnology are just as safe as, if not safer than, any other food.

Just last month, a group of 107 Nobel laureates joined the effort to fight back against the anti-science, activist group Greenpeace for its attempts to

stifle these lifesaving advances. With almost 800 million malnourished people worldwide and the global population expected to rise to 9 billion by 2050, we are more reliant on biotechnology than ever to meet the ever-increasing demand for a safe and stable food supply.

In recent years, campaigns against agricultural biotechnology have raised concerns among consumers, and some States have begun to implement arbitrary and inconsistent labeling laws that threaten to increase consumer confusion and food costs while ultimately interfering with interstate commerce.

The bill before us today addresses these issues by providing a blueprint for a nationwide uniform standard for labeling products derived from biotechnology. Though I believe the government should only require labels when it is a matter of health or safety, or to provide valuable nutritional information, it is important that this State-by-State patchwork not disrupt the nationwide marketing of food.

With the Vermont mandate kicking in earlier this month, time is now of the essence. I reached out to USDA last week, asking for clarification on the limits of authority that the Senate bill vests with the Secretary. USDA'S response has helped to provide much-needed clarity. I include in the RECORD those letters.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON NUTRITION,
Washington, DC, July 7, 2016.

Mr. JEFFREY PRIETO,
General Counsel, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRIETO: In the next day or so, the Senate is expected to vote on S. 764, a bill requiring mandatory disclosure of genetically engineered food. The House of Representatives passed its own bill, the Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act of 2015, last year. However, because of the time constraint imposed by the Vermont law, the House and Senate will be unable to conference the two bills and the House expects to take up the Senate bill in a matter of days. As a result, I am looking to the Department to clarify some remaining areas of ambiguity in the Senate's legislation. Accordingly, I ask that the Department provide answers to the following questions:

1. It is my understanding that the preemption provision is to take effect on the date of enactment of this Act. Absent such clarifying language in this bill, I would like assurances from you that you understand the above to be the intent of Congress and that you would indeed interpret the language to mean as such.

2. After reading the text of the bill, I had serious concerns over what limitations existed as far as what can be required in the actual disclosure. I was directed to look at section 292 regarding applicability. As it was explained to me, that section is meant to limit the application of the disclosure requirement only to the presence of the bioengineered food or ingredient. The language seems somewhat unclear. Can you confirm that the Department would have no authority beyond requiring disclosure of the presence of a bioengineered food or ingredient? Do the same limitations apply to the content of the text or symbol options for disclosure?

3. In response to the study required by Sec. 293(c), the Secretary ''shall provide additional and comparable options to access the bioengineering disclosure.'' Does this provision direct the Secretary to provide a means of accessing the disclosure (e.g. paying to install land-line phones in supermarkets, purchasing and donating mobile phones for customers to able access QR codes, etc)? Does this provision limit the Department's authority, simply providing additional disclosure options comparable to those enumerated in Sec. 293(b)(2)(D)?

4. There appears to be overlap between the new authorities and limitations on authorities conferred upon the Secretary and existing authorities. For instance, while this bill specifies that there is no new recall authority, the Department already has recall authority. Is it your understanding that such authorities cannot be used in the context of bioengineered food disclosure unless the use is specifically authorized by this bill?

Finally, the Senate bill provides no funding to implement the mandatory labeling program. I would be remiss if! did not point out that I, along with all parties with whom I have conferred, expect this program to be implemented by the Department using funds not otherwise dedicated to ensuring the safety of our nation's food supply.

Thank you for your willingness to work with me on this matter. Again, given the short timeframe, a prompt response to the above questions would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

K. MICHAEL CONAWAY,
Chairman.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL,
Washington, DC, July 8, 2016.

Representative MICHAEL CONAWAY,
Chairman, House Committee on Agriculture, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN CONAWAY, Thank you for your letter of July 7, 2016 inquiring as to various technical aspects of the legislative text of the GMO labeling bill currently pending before the U.S. Senate. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), as the lead implementing agency has carefully studied this legislation from legal, program policy, and scientific aspects. I will respond in turn below to the questions raised in your letter.

1. It is my understanding that the preemption provision is to take effect on the date of enactment of this Act. Absent such clarifying language in this bill, I would like assurances from you that you understand the above to be the intent of Congress and that you would indeed interpret the language to mean as such.

The preemption provisions in Sections 293(e) and 295 of the Senate bill are triggered upon the date of enactment.

2. After reading the text of the bill, I had serious concerns over what limitations existed as far as what can be required in the actual disclosure. I was directed to look at section 292 regarding applicability. As it was explained to me, that section is meant to limit the application of the disclosure requirement only to the presence of the bioengineered food or ingredient. The language seems somewhat unclear. Can you confirm that the Department would have no authority beyond requiring disclosure of the presence of a bioengineered food or ingredient? Do the same limitations apply to the content of the text or symbol options for disclosure?

The Section 293 of the Senate bill only authorizes the Secretary to require disclosure pertaining to the presence of bioengineered food.

3. In response to the study required by Sec. 293(c), the Secretary ''shall provide additional and comparable options to access the bioengineering disclosure.'' Does this provision direct the Secretary to provide a means of accessing the disclosure (e.g. paying to install land-line phones in supermarkets, purchasing and donating mobile phones for customers to be able access QR codes, etc.)? Does this provision limit the Secretary's authority, simply providing additional disclosure options comparable to those enumerated in Sec. 293(b)(2)(D)?

Section 293(c) of the Senate bill calls for a study to be conducted subsequent to enactment to determine if there are technological or other barriers to accessing the electronic disclosure. If the Secretary determines that barriers exist, the bill requires the Secretary to offer other comparable means of disclosing bioengineered foods. The Senate bill does not provide any new authority to provide equipment, funding, or services to assist in accessing the electronic disclosure.

4. There appears to be overlap between the new authorities and limitations on authorities conferred upon the Secretary and existing authorities. For instance, while this bill specifies that there is no recall authority, the Department already has recall authority. Similarly, the Department has other labeling authority apart from what this bill now grants. Is it your understanding that such authorities cannot be used in the context of bioengineered food disclosure unless the use is specifically authorized by this bill?

As an initial matter, the Secretary does not have authority to mandate a recall of meat, poultry or egg products. The Senate bill does not present avenues to utilize recall for the purposes of implementing the disclosure provisions of this bill.

If needed, my team and our USDA programmatic and scientific experts are available to discuss any aspects of the legislation in greater detail at your request. Please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

(For Jeffrey M. Prieto, General Counsel).

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, advances in biotechnology are key to the future of agriculture and to ensuring the world has an adequate and stable supply of food. Those advances can only be maintained if we preserve interstate commerce while turning the page on a debate that has unnecessarily maligned this lifesaving technology.

I stand in support of this bill and encourage my colleagues to vote ''yes.''

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

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

Mr. Speaker, the bill we are considering today, S. 764, recognizes consumers' demand to know more about their food by directing USDA to create a national, mandatory genetically engineered food labeling program.

My colleagues may remember that almost a year ago, this Chamber passed legislation to establish a voluntary labeling program. I still believe a voluntary label is best, but, frankly, if we are going to address this issue—and, as the chairman said, we are out of time—we need to work with the Senate. This is the compromise that was reached and, in my opinion, is probably the only alternative that is available at this point.

Science tells us that foods and ingredients from genetically engineered crops are safe to eat. This technology

allows farmers to protect natural resources and provide an abundant food supply.

Unfortunately, there is a lot of public confusion about these issues, but labeling products is really more about marketing than any safety concerns that people have. This legislation is needed to avoid a situation where 50 States set up 50 different labels, which would only create confusion for consumers, farmers, and food companies.

News reports indicate that Vermont's labeling law, which went into effect July 1, has already led to the loss of some 3,000 products from store shelves. This legislation would rectify this problem while addressing the law's shortcoming.

For example, the Vermont law exempts processed food products containing meat from labeling. So cheese pizza would be labeled, but pepperoni pizza would not. That doesn't make any sense. S. 764 closes this loophole, requiring an additional 25,000 food products to meet new labeling requirements.

I am also pleased that USDA will be responsible for implementing and enforcing this program. They have the expertise to do this. They have shown this with the labeling that they did for the successful National Organic Program.

I would also like to note that S. 764 received strong bipartisan support in the Senate and more than 1,000 farm and food organizations, including the American Farm Bureau Federation, Grocery Manufacturers Association, and Organic Trade Association, and others are calling for passage.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I believe this is a good compromise. It is another example of what the Agriculture Committee has consistently done so well. No one gets everything they want, but at the end of the day, I believe this is a bill that will provide the transparency consumers crave while at the same time allow continued innovation in food production.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes.''

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

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS).

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for his hard work in getting us to where we are today.

I want to give a special thanks to MIKE POMPEO, who helped craft this legislation that, over a year ago in the House, 275 Republicans and Democrats voted on a bill to establish a voluntary nationwide program that would give consumers access to the information that they have requested about the food that they are actually consuming. This bill would have protected advancements in food production and innovation and ended the patchwork of State laws threatening our interstate commerce.

I was extremely disappointed to see that a small group of Members from the other body blocked this commonsense, bipartisan legislation to protect vital agricultural technology that has been proven time and time again by science to be safe.

I want to ensure that Americans have access to affordable food—and this bill would have done that—and to help address our world's hunger needs that biotechnology can only do in the future.

Unfortunately, this process has stalled for months. Congress was not able to act before Vermont's law went into effect on July 1. Just having one State alter the law—their law—would provide a drastic, drastic negative impact on producers in my district.

Despite what you may hear today, Mr. Speaker, this is not, and never will be, a movement for people to know more about what is in their food. This is a movement by people who want you to pay more for food using practices that are elite, not readily available, and expensive to the hard-working families in this country. These activists have publicly acknowledged their objective is to stigmatize a safe and valuable tool for America's farmers and ranchers.

If leaders of this movement in Vermont were so pure in their motives, they would not have exempted processed dairy foods, which excludes GMO labeling of a little ice cream company that operates in Vermont. I say, if ice cream from Illinois ought to have a label in Vermont, the environmentally conscious ice cream company from Vermont ought to follow the same rule.

While I still believe the voluntary approach is the correct course of action, I am supporting this legislation. The clock has run out. My producers need certainty. An interstate commerce nightmare will shortly pursue if we don't pass this bill.

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Maine (Ms. PINGREE).

Ms. PINGREE. I thank the gentleman from Minnesota for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is a complicated solution to a simple problem. Consumers do have the right to know what is in their food, but the problem is that, right now, when you pick up a box of cereal or a bag of rice in the grocery store, you don't know if you are buying something with GMO ingredients in it. The solution is simple: list GMO ingredients on the back of the package in the ingredient list in plain English.

It is a solution that 64 other countries around the world have already adopted. Most of Europe, Japan, Russia, even China, all require a simple, on-package label that anyone can read. But this bill fails to take that obvious, simple step toward transparency. Instead, it calls for a QR code on the label, which would require a smartphone and a special app and a good cell signal to translate. A complicated solution to a simple problem.

To be clear, knowing what is in the package does not determine the safety or health of GMO ingredients. It is about the consumers' right to know so they can make that decision for themselves.

I am voting against this bill, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE).

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my support for S. 764, the Senate-passed biotechnology labeling legislation that we are considering today.

Without enactment of this legislation today, right now, we will continue to see the emergence of an incompatible patchwork of State laws, like the one that took effect in Vermont just 2 weeks ago.

As a farmer myself, I can tell you with some authority that if these State laws, with their conflicting definitions and labeling requirements, are allowed to take effect, it will increase the cost of production and compliance for farmers as well as food producers.

This, in turn, will drive up grocery bills for American families by hundreds, even thousands of dollars. Mr. Speaker, I believe that is an unacceptable and unconscionable outcome to inflict on the American people.

To be clear, I don't think this bill is perfect. It is far from it. It is filled with ambiguous statements and, in many places, offers little guidance to USDA on how to best implement the bill's provisions.

I am also disappointed the Senate waited until the very last moment, imposing this crisis on the House, leaving us with only two options: either act on this imperfect bill or let the American people suffer.

Mr. Speaker, let the record reflect that the House did its job. It passed a biotech labeling bill for the Senate's consideration an entire year ago.

Generally, when we are talking about food labeling, it is for health and safety purposes. I believe people have a right to know what it is they are eating. But today we find ourselves in a place to require mandatory labeling for agriculture products that are 100 percent safe.

With my reservations noted, passing this bill is the right thing to do. It will establish a meaningful national standard for biotech labeling that will prevent an unworkable patchwork of conflicting State laws. It will provide consumers with information they want. And, finally, it will create an environment where farmers and researchers can continue to do their work and develop new food varieties that are healthier, more abundant, and more pest- and disease-resistant, and allow us to continue to feed our Nation and the world.

I urge my colleagues to support its passage.

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO), the esteemed

ranking member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I would agree with one of the earlier speakers. It would be confusing for consumers to have 50 different State standards. There is a simple solution, but it is not what is before us today: a simple, forthright disclosure in plain English.

For instance, this was obtained out of a House vending machine just today. It was distributed by Mars. We are all familiar with M&Ms. Partially produced with genetic engineering.

Wow, that wasn't too hard, was it?

I think that is what we should be doing here today, instead of saying: Oh, we are going to maybe have one of three ways of doing it, and one of them will be a QR code.

Well, this doesn't have any QR codes on it, so I won't get my QR reader out. So the average American will be in the grocery store pulling out their iPhone and they are going to have hope there is a good signal in there and they are going to read that. That is ridiculous.

Sixty-four countries require this. The last time we debated this, I brought in a Hershey's bar wrapper. It had a little nice American flag on it. Made in America. Contains GMOs. That is the version they sell in 64 other countries, but they can't do it here. They say you can't do it here. It is too expensive. We will have to change the labels.

Well, M&M's just changed the labels. And now, with what you are doing today, they will probably change it back and take off the words that say ''partially produced with genetic engineering,'' because they won't have to do that anymore.

□ 0945

This is not about passing judgment on the safety or the science behind genetic engineering. It is to say that 90 percent of the American people want to know what is in their food. They want to know it has Blue 1, Lake Yellow 6, Red 40, corn syrup, dextrin, corn starch, peanuts, milk, soy, oh, and partially produced with genetic engineering. That is not too hard. That is what the American people want. But you are going to deny them that.

On any other day, I would hear my Republican colleagues say we're for states' rights. Well, now we are just about to preempt the States because, if the States do it, it will become confusing.

Well, how about we just have a national standard, plain and simple, plain English, so that American consumers will know. It is not too hard, and it is very sad that we have come to this point.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. POMPEO), who has been involved with this process for a long time.

Mr. POMPEO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the farmers and constituents in my district and across the country, I rise in support of S. 764 today.

Over, now, what amounts to almost 3 years, Representatives and Senators from both parties have been diligently working on a solution to prevent a disastrous, statewide patchwork of food labeling laws from taking shape and causing chaos throughout our Nation's food supply chain.

As the proud sponsor of H.R. 1599, the Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act, which passed the House almost 1 year ago by a large bipartisan majority, I want to thank Senator ROBERTS and our friends in the Senate for building on our legislation and arriving at a solution to resolve this matter.

It is not perfect; it is not exactly the bill that we passed over; but without this legislation, inconsistent State-level food labeling laws will lead to market disruptions and supply chain complications which are simply intolerable for our ranchers and our farmers and those attempting to feed the world. It would not only harm agriculture communities, but it would have resulted in higher prices at the grocery store for hardworking Kansans and people all across our country.

I am extremely proud of the coalition that we have all built. Our committee, the Energy and Commerce Committee, the Agriculture Committee have worked hard to get to this day. From Coffeyville to Colby, Kansans need a workable solution, and this legislation will do that trick.

We couldn't have gotten here without the massive support I have received from all across Kansas, people like Rich Felts, the president of the Kansas Farm Bureau, and Stacey Forshee, who came and helped me at the most difficult times in making this legislation work. She is a mother and a farmer from Cloud County, Kansas. Mick Rausch, a good friend and farmer in Sedgwick County and head of the Sedgwick County Farm Bureau. Max Tjaden and his wife, Anne, worked diligently to help make this legislation come into being. Kent Winter, Leslie Kauffman, Tom Tunnel, Philip Bradley, Matt Perrier, from the Kansas Livestock Association, Dennis Hupe, and Raylen Phelon, all were part of making this day occur.

It will be better for Kansans; it will be better for Americans; and America will now have the capacity to use biotechnology to continue to feed that next billion people and solve the incredible hunger risk that faces our globe.

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. SCHRADER).

Mr. SCHRADER. Mr. Speaker, S. 764, well, we can demonize the work of Congress on a regular basis and, unfortunately, sometimes we are our own worst enemies. I, on the other hand, feel that S. 764 is an example of Congress getting it right. This is a big country, a lot of diverse opinions about what we should and shouldn't be doing.

I am a farmer and I am a veterinarian, a man of science. I am concerned, very concerned, much like my good colleague and friend from Washington State on the other side of the aisle, that there is a campaign of misinformation and disinformation about the health and safety of American food. I will stack American farmers and producers up against anyone in the world for producing the healthiest and safest food for American consumers.

This is a hard-fought compromise—hard-fought, very hard-fought. I was on the Ag Committee when we started this discussion. A lot of people want to know what is in their food, they say. Well, that is why we have ingredient labeling so, as my good colleague and friend from Oregon talked about, you can read what is on the label that might be important to you in terms of allergies, safety information, things that might actually affect your health and welfare.

Genetic engineering has been around for centuries. As a man of science, I will tell you, it is a lot safer to do it in a laboratory than out in the field where you have mutations that you can't control that might actually be detrimental to your health and safety. In the laboratory, you can control a great deal of that.

And lost in this discussion is what genetic engineering biotechnology has done for the people of this world. I remember not too many years ago—I am a little older—where we were worried about feeding the world's population. Back in 1965, 1966, there was concern: Do we have enough arable land? Is the food going to be nutritious?

A lot of people in other countries without conducive climates can't raise their own food. In this country, we can, and, through science and engineering, we have created more nutritious crops, crops that can grow in bad environments. We can now do no-till because we have agents that will control weeds and pests.

If you are concerned about climate change, you ought to be strongly in favor of this bill—strongly in favor of this bill. This is less use of some of the very agents that some of my friends on my side of the aisle are concerned about.

Having said that, I am from Oregon. We are a transparency State. We want to know as much as we can about everything—our election processes, our environment, and, apparently, our food.

The Senate has come up with a compromise. I liked our House bill, but they have come up with a compromise. We now have labeling for GMO. We actually have a definition in this bill of what GMO is so the consumer is protected. Again, it is not a patchwork of regulations around the country. Now we have a standard that the consumer can take to the bank and understand.

The idea that people don't have cell phones is ludicrous. I have had people in pretty tough situations in my district, don't have a whole heck of a lot, but they have got a cell phone. They know how to use it, get the apps and make sure they can understand what is in their food.

I think this should be an hour we celebrate. The other side has to, finally, I hope, accept victory. We have a mandatory labeling for GMO. This is a great compromise.

Democrats, Republicans, Senate, and House, let's accept and vote for S. 764 for the American consumer and the American farmer.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate the previous speaker's comments.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN).

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, this bill is a prime example of why the American people are so frustrated with Congress. This is a deeply, deeply flawed bill.

We are told that this is a mandatory GMO labeling bill, but the truth is not really. This bill is a deception. When people think of labels, they expect something that is easily identifiable, that is clear, like a written label. That is not a controversial idea.

This calls for a so-called Quick Response Code, whatever that may be, that is confusing and can only be accessed by using a smartphone with Internet access—never mind that many Americans don't have smartphones and many supermarkets don't even get service, thereby making it impossible to get information on GMOs and keeping consumers in the dark about what is in their food.

But let's be honest. This is exactly what some in Big Industry want. They want people to be confused. They don't want people to have access to information. And when Big Industry speaks, Congress not only listens, Congress rolls over and gives Big Industry whatever it wants.

And let's be clear about another thing. This debate is not about the science regarding GMOs. It is not about whether you love GMOs or hate GMOs. I consume GMOs. My kids consume GMOs. But I still believe that every consumer is entitled to know whether the food they buy contains GMOs. That is what this debate is about. It is about transparency.

And for those who think that this ends the debate, that this is it, I have a prediction: You are wrong. People are going to fight to demand for clear, mandatory GMO labeling. They have a right to know what is in their food. The overwhelming majority of the American people, Democrats and Republicans, all favor clear, mandatory GMO labeling.

I have got a radical idea. Why don't we give them what they want? Why don't we just put it on the package? It doesn't cost any more. This idea that this is an effort that will raise food prices is ridiculous.

This convoluted, complicated labeling system outlined in this bill, if that is not going to raise food prices, then a simple, in plain English listing on food that says ''this contains GMOs'' will certainly not raise food prices.

Mr. Speaker, sooner or later we are going to get clear, mandatory GMO labeling. I prefer sooner; and, therefore, I urge my colleagues to reject this bill, and let's give the American consumer what they want.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

I would point out to the gentleman, Mr. Speaker, that there are other options besides the QR code with respect to complying and getting the information for those few consumers that really, really want to know this information; they can get it.

This bill requires that the Secretary, within 1 year—actually, the rule is already written—within 1 year to conduct a study to make sure that consumers are really, in fact, getting the information they want in the ways that they want to get it, and then the Secretary will have ways of proposing additional comparable options for this issue.

The gentleman is misleading in the sense that there are other options to make this happen; and if it is not working, the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture will be able to complete that study.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. GABBARD).

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, people shouldn't have to jump through hoops to know what is in their food. That is really what this issue is all about.

When we go the grocery store, the very first thing that you do is you pick up whatever it is you are looking at and you read the label to see if it contains products or ingredients or things that you want to eat or that you want to feed your family.

Nearly 90 percent of Americans have called for this clear, simple, direct labeling of foods that have been either genetically engineered or modified. They support this very simple concept that we have a right to know what is in the food we eat; yet the GMO bill that we are voting on today is very misleading.

Proponents will say that this is a labeling bill, but it is not really about the right to know. It actually creates an illusion of transparency, while making things more difficult for consumers, not easier.

This is, as we have heard earlier, exactly what people hate about Washington, that we pretend to solve a problem when, actually, we are just making things harder and more confusing for the American people.

If this bill is really, truly intended to expand consumers' right to know, why not require a simple, uniform food labeling standard that is clear, straightforward, and easy to read?

Instead of doing that, this bill creates a system of electronic codes, symbols, and text that are intentionally confusing to consumers, making them work harder to try to get access to information that should be readily available to them. Additionally, this bill lacks any enforcement measure to hold companies accountable if they don't comply with labeling requirements.

This bill has raised concerns from the FDA over the bill's narrow definition of genetic engineering that leaves common foods without any labeling requirement at all.

So let's stop pretending that S. 764 does anything but create confusion, making it harder for the American people to know what is in their food. This is exactly the opposite of what they are calling for.

Sixty-four countries around the world have already required labeling of genetically modified foods, like the EU, Australia, Japan, and many others, and this is what we are calling for today. For here, in the United States, we must have one uniform national labeling standard that is simple, clear, and makes it easier for consumers to make their own informed decisions about the food that they are eating.

I have cosponsored H.R. 913, introduced by my colleague, PETE DEFAZIO, which would do just that. The bill passed by the Senate and the bill before us today is a bad bill that does not serve the best interests of the American people. That is why I strongly oppose this bill, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

□ 1000

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH).

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, a little background on this bill.

This started in Vermont, where there was a strong citizen movement to have the right to know what was in their food. It was not a battle about the science of GMOs or about whether it was healthy or not. It was really based on the proposition that for a consumer who wishes to know what is in their food, whether it is the number of calories or whether it is GMO-produced, they had a right to know. It is as simple as that.

The irony here is that the pushback has been from folks who are advocating the benefits of GMOs. If they are so great—and I am not disputing what some of their benefits may be—why not brag about it by putting it on the label? Why hide it? It really doesn't make a lot of sense.

In Vermont, we had a bipartisan vote in the Senate 28–2 and a strong, bipartisan vote in the House that was based upon the right of Vermonters who wanted to know whether there were GMOs to have that knowledge.

There was a lot of pushback initially by industry, but some of the industry has kind of got it right: if the consumer wants to know, let them know. Kellogg's and Campbell Soup both now have labeling on their products and let the consumers know. What is really the big deal?

Now we have a bill from the Senate that, frankly, when you look at it, it is kind of dumb, because what it does is give options on how you ''label.'' You can use English, where right on the label you can read ''GMOs'' or not. That makes sense.

But then there is another mechanism where there is, like, a barcode. You have to go to the store with your iPhone, scan the barcode—by the way, when you are grocery shopping, you are trying to get home, get dinner on, you have kids that are trying to go to a school practice. And you are supposed to stop and scan the barcode and go to a Web site to see whether that can of black bean soup has GMOs or not?

The other option you can have is you can, in the middle of the store, dial a 1–800 number, get a call center, probably overseas, and talk to somebody and ask them whether this can of soup that you are holding 5,000 miles away from the person you are talking to contains GMOs or not.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. WELCH. So we have this situation where, in the Senate bill that we are now considering, there is an acknowledgment that there should be a label, but it contains a label that is impossible to read.

So if there is an acknowledgment about the right of a consumer to have access to the information, why not give them the information in plain and simple English? We don't have to do dumb end-arounds in order to give consumers the information they are seeking.

That is the essence of the opposition to this bill. Make it simple, keep it simple, and let people know what it is they are buying so they can make the decision.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, my good friend just spoke—and he is my friend, not the common ''my good friend'' nonsense we typically say around here, but the gentleman from Vermont is my friend. And his argument would be a bit more forceful if, in fact, the wisdom of the Vermont legislature that he touted hadn't exempted all those State-produced products, like Ben and Jerry's ice cream, from the important label that folks who eat ice cream, apparently, in Vermont don't need to know.

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

Mr. PETERSON. Mr. Speaker, is the gentleman from Texas ready to close?

Mr. CONAWAY. Yes. I have no further speakers.

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

Again, this isn't a perfect bill. I think the chairman and I would prefer the House bill, but this is a bill that was able to pass the Senate. It will get us past this crisis situation that was developed because of the Vermont law going into effect.

It is something that we think is workable and gives the USDA the authority to not only develop this system but also, for the first time, actually determine what this means. Because that is one of the big issues, that as you talk to 10 different people about what a GMO is, you get 10 different answers. So what is going to happen here is we are going to have a situation where we will define what this means. That is a big step forward.

I encourage my colleagues to support the bill.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, before I yield back, I want to thank everybody involved in this debate, particularly my team and the hard work they did.

The bill that we passed a year ago with much labor and much work wound up not being the answer that we all wanted. I think we got 275 of our colleagues to vote for it a year ago.

There have been a lot of efforts in this regard. I want to thank our team for doing that. I want to thank the ranking member and his team for the hard work they have been doing.

I appreciate the civility of the debate this morning and look forward to passage of the bill shortly.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all of my colleagues to vote in favor of S. 764 when it comes to the floor later on.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, today this body voted on S.764, compromise legislation that provides a bipartisan solution to the state and local laws mandating different requirements for the labeling of genetically engineered (GE) ingredients in foods. While I was not present to vote on this legislation, had I been, I would have voted in favor of the bill.

It is a reality that many of our crops are genetically modified and it is important that food companies disclose ingredient information. S. 764 is a compromise and provides a common sense federal solution to a patchwork system that has the potential to disrupt the food supply chain by having certain labeling requirements in some states but not others, with the increased compliance costs ultimately being passed along to the consumer. The bill institutes a national mandatory labeling standard for foods that contain genetically engineered crops, with several options for how food manufacturers can label their products.

Mr. Speaker, it is for this reason that I support the disclosure of ingredient information and would have voted in support of this bill. I will continue to work tirelessly to ensure that no consumer is left in the dark regarding the ingredients of their food.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I will vote in opposition to S. 764, on labeling requirements for genetically-engineered foods. While I recognize this legislation, with a mandatory labeling requirement, is a step forward from the DARK Act that passed the House last year, it falls far short of the comprehensive labeling standard consumers need.

More than ever, Americans want to know what goes into the food they eat, and have concerns about the presence of genetically-modified ingredients. Rather than clear, sensible labels for these ingredients, this bill would allow manufacturers to use QR codes and other technologies to satisfy label requirements. These measures would shift a heavy burden to consumers to scan the code with a smartphone or other device and read about the food contents on a website rather than the package they hold in their hands. We need understandable, accessible labels that allow Americans to pick up a food product and easily understand its contents.

That is why I join with leading consumer groups like Consumers Union, Center for Food Safety, as well as prominent environmental organizations like the Sierra Club, Natural Resources Defense Council, and League of Conservation Voters to oppose this measure.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today, I will vote against S. 764, a bill that would preempt state genetically modified organism (GMO) labeling laws and replace them with a wholly inadequate federal standard.

People should be able to know what they are eating. The bill before us today would exempt many genetically engineered (GE) foods from any labeling altogether and would preempt pro-consumer state laws, including the engineered food labeling laws in Vermont, Connecticut, and Maine. I actively supported an effort to pass a GMO labeling law in my home state of Oregon, and I continue to support strong state efforts to stand up for transparency in the face of federal inadequacy or inaction.

The bill also includes several vague standards, and its labeling requirements would allow corporations to decide how to give consumers access to GE information, including through the use of a smartphone or the internet. Making access to GE labeling information electronic and/or dependent on a smartphone is not transparent, accessible, or available to many Americans.

S. 764 has been sold as a ''compromise'' because it would require some labeling, but these provisions are clearly just a fig leaf We need plain language, mandatory, on-package labeling, and until federal law protects our right to know what we are eating, the federal government should not preempt state efforts to protect and inform their citizens.

I continue to strongly support federal-level mandatory labeling for foods that contain GMOs, and I'm an original cosponsor of Rep. DEFAZIO's Genetically Engineered Food Right-to-Know Act (H.R. 913). I'll continue pushing for stronger consumer protections when it comes to food safety and will oppose any attempts to undermine these efforts.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, while I am fully supportive of a national standard to label genetically modified (GMO) foods, I am unable to support S. 764, the GMO Food Labeling Requirements bill.

Although this bill takes an important step toward federal preemption, it does so at the expense of consumer transparency and safety.

For example, S. 764 falls short of providing a robust definition of ''bioengineering'', which will exempt the majority of GMO foods from

being properly labeled. Additionally, this bill will hurt the most vulnerable among us. The provision to include ''digital labeling'' will withhold valuable information about GMO foods from rural, low-income and elderly Americans who are less likely to own a smart phone or have access to the internet.

That's over 50 percent of rural and 65 percent of elderly people who will not be able to access the consumer information they need.

Mr. Speaker, American consumers deserve the best information available when it comes to food choices that they make for themselves and their families.

We must continue to address this vital issue because all consumers deserve the right to know what is in their food and how it's grown.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana). All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 822, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the motion by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. WELCH. 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 and the order of the House of today, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Byrd, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1555. An act to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Filipino veterans of World War II, in recognition of the dedicated service of the veterans during World War II.

S. 2893. An act to reauthorize the sound recording and film preservation programs of the Library of Congress, and for other purposes.

S. 3207. An act to authorize the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped to provide playback equipment in all formats.

□ 1015

IRAN ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2016

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 819, I call up the bill (H.R. 5631) to hold Iran accountable for its state sponsorship of terrorism and other threatening activities and for its human rights abuses, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 819, the bill is considered read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5631

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Iran Accountability Act of 2016''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) On April 2, 2015, in announcing a framework agreement for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, President Obama stated that ''other American sanctions on Iran for its support of terrorism, its human rights abuses, its ballistic missile program, will continue to be fully enforced''.

(2) On July 14, 2015, President Obama stated that ''we will maintain our own sanctions related to Iran's support for terrorism, its ballistic missile program, and its human rights violations''.

(3) On January 16, 2016, President Obama stated that ''We still have sanctions on Iran for its violations of human rights, for its support of terrorism, and for its ballistic missile program. And we will continue to enforce these sanctions, vigorously.''.

(4) On January 21, 2016, Secretary of State John Kerry admitted that sanctions relief under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action would go to terrorist organizations, stating: ''I think that some of it will end up in the hands of the IRGC or other entities, some of which are labeled terrorists . . . You know, to some degree, I'm not going to sit here and tell you that every component of that can be prevented.''.

(5) Secretary of State John Kerry stated on July 23, 2015, ''We will not violate the [Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)] if we use our authorities to impose sanctions on Iran for terrorism, human rights, missiles, or other nonnuclear reasons. And the JCPOA does not provide Iran any relief from United States sanctions under any of those authorities or other authorities.''.

(6) Director of National Intelligence James Clapper wrote on February 9, 2016, ''[T]he Islamic Republic of Iran presents an enduring threat to U.S national interests because of its support to regional terrorist and militant groups and the Assad regime, as well as its development of advanced military capabilities. Tehran views itself as leading the 'axis of resistance' which includes the Asad regime and sub-national groups aligned with Iran, especially Lebanese Hezbollah and Iraqi Shia militants . . . Tehran might even use American citizens detained when entering Iranian territories as bargaining pieces to achieve financial or political concessions in line with heir strategic intentions.''.

(7) Secretary of the Treasury Jacob Lew stated on July 14, 2015, ''We harbor no illusions about the Iranian government's nefarious activities beyond its nuclear program. Make no mistake: we will continue to impose and aggressively enforce sanctions to combat Iran's support for terrorist groups, its fomenting of violence in the region, and its perpetration of human rights abuses.''.

SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) Iran's ballistic missile program and support for terrorism represents a serious threat to allies of the United States in the Middle East and Europe, members of the Armed Forces deployed in those regions, and ultimately the United States; and

(2) the United States should impose tough primary and secondary sanctions against any person that directly or indirectly supports the ballistic missile program of Iran, its state sponsorship of terrorism and human rights abuses, as well as against any foreign person or financial institution that engages in transactions or trade that support those efforts.