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Matsui Opposes Provisions in Agricultural Appropriations Bill That Would Hurt Sacramento Families

Anti-Hunger, Preventive Health, and Programs for Women and Children Are Put At Risk

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Congresswoman Doris Matsui (D-Sacramento) voted against the Fiscal Year 2012 Agricultural Appropriations bill because of a series of troubling provisions in the bill that together would hamper critical support for American families.

“Unfortunately the legislation before us proposes some of the hardest cuts to endure as they impact those who have so little,” Congresswoman Matsui said as she addressed her colleagues on the House floor.

The bill has been before the House since Tuesday, when Congresswoman Matsui voiced her opposition to a series of these provisions, including the proposed cut to the Women, Children and Infants (WIC) Program, which provides American women access to healthy food, nutrition information and preventative public health education for their families. In addition, WIC connects mothers with prenatal care and increases healthy birth outcomes.

In California there are 82 WIC agencies, serving over 1.4 million women, infants and children. One such center recently visited by Congresswoman Matsui, has such high demand for its services that its office alone has a caseload of over 32,000 individuals a month, but can only serve 30,000, because of a lack of resources – even at current funding levels.

Fortunately, \$147 million of the proposed cuts to the WIC program were restored by an

amendment adopted late Wednesday. But the final bill will still cut almost \$400 million from current funding levels, and was a primary reason for Congresswoman Matsui's opposition to the final bill.

The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), which helps supplement meals for low income individuals, and the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), which provides food banks with food they distribute are also on the chopping block. The California Emergency Foodlink distributes over 80,000 pounds of food per month to approximately 8,000 low-income seniors in need in Sacramento County. TEFAP provides funding for approximately 18 percent of food that comes into the Sacramento Food Bank. The Food Bank provides a five day supply of emergency groceries to those who are struggling to get by, and over 18,000 individuals receive fresh groceries from this site every month. For many of these recipients, this is their only access to a full meal.

In addition to these cuts, the legislation includes report language to stop the process of updating the school nutrition standards. In the Sacramento City Unified School District, approximately 67 percent of students are eligible for free and reduced lunches. Without an investment in proper nutrition, these students will not only fall behind in their studies, they can also face serious health issues.

To see footage of Congresswoman Matsui speaking on the House floor in opposition to the proposed cuts, please click [HERE](#) .

Moreover, the FY12 Agricultural Appropriations bill would cut funding for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) by 44 percent. The CFTC is an independent agency with a mission to protect the public from abusive practices relating to derivatives, including speculation in the oil markets. If this proposal is enacted, it would in effect limit both oversight and monitoring of manipulation or fraud on oil prices. Cutting funding for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission will severely hamper checks and balances, and limit our government's ability to regulate oil prices.

"In today's economic climate, consumers do not have a lot of extra money to spend on things they need most – like food to feed their families. Yet the Republican majority is trying to roll back the programs that are helping Sacramento families put food on the table, and disabling our government's ability to oversee speculation on everyday consumer products – like a tank of gas. If these destructive policies are put into place, we will all pay the price," Congresswoman

Matsui stated.

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