Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may

consume.

I rise today in support of S. 1716, legislation that would ensure

that U.S. livestock producers will be able to utilize the vital

disaster assistance recently approved by this Congress.

The effect of this bill is essentially identical to an amendment last

week by my colleague and friend from Oklahoma (Mr. Lucas) to the Farm,

Nutrition, and Bioenergy Act, which I supported and which was

unanimously accepted.

This legislation is critical to deliver on the promise we made to

American livestock producers just this past May. After more than a

year's effort and despite several veto threats from the President, we

were successful in passing much-needed disaster assistance through this

Chamber and enacted into law. Then, several months after the bill's

passage, the Secretary of Agriculture determined that a certain phrase

in the bill effectively denies aid to all livestock producers that

didn't participate in the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance program

or a crop insurance pilot program for rangeland.

I assure my colleagues that this was not the intention of this

Congress and, regardless of the accuracy of USDA's legal

interpretation, we need legislative action to fix it. This bill simply

strikes the one sentence in the disaster bill that is causing the

problem.

I appreciate the leadership of the Agriculture Committee in working

with me to find a solution to this problem, and I am pleased to have

the opportunity to offer this legislation. I also shared this problem

with the leadership of the Appropriations Committee to ensure that this

year's Agriculture appropriations bill contains language to address

this as well, and I am pleased to report that it does. That would be

unnecessary, however, if we can pass this stand-alone legislation and

get it directly to the President. Doing so will solve this problem in

time to prevent any delays in delivering much-needed assistance to

American producers. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the distinguished

ranking member of the full Committee on Agriculture, Mr. Goodlatte, for

his support of this bill. We have Senate colleagues who we have served

with here in this body previously who have already been working hard on

this legislation. I am pleased that we have bipartisan agreement on our

intention in providing this disaster assistance and certainly

acknowledge and agree with the gentleman from Virginia's statements as

it relates to future disaster assistance and the importance of further

developing the pilot project programs for livestock producers to have

adequate coverage for their losses

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the

gentlewoman from South Dakota (Ms. Herseth Sandlin) that the House

suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 1716.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the

rules were suspended and the Senate bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.