

New Yorkers agree that we have to reduce our deficit, but they also understand that we shouldn't do it on the backs of working and middle class people who are already struggling to make ends meet. The Republican-sponsored Agriculture Appropriations bill, on the other hand, cuts all the wrong things at exactly the wrong time. Here are five reasons I plan on voting against it:

1. **Raises gas prices by cutting anti-speculation efforts:** With speculation at an all time high, American families are paying over 60 cents more per gallon at the pump than they should be. But instead of ramping up anti-speculation efforts, this bill cuts almost half the funding for the the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC), the agency charged with policing oil speculation.

2. **Takes foods out of the mouths of low-income mothers, babies and kids, cutting WIC for about 15,000 people in New York State:** The bill cuts food assistance for pregnant women, infants and children by \$650 million or 10%, denying food and health counseling for up to 475,000 low-income women, infants and young children throughout America for next year. The bill also cuts food aid for low-income seniors and help for food banks.

3. **Increases the risks to our food supply by cutting safety inspections:** As many as 48 million Americans are sickened every year by contaminated food. That's why, with my support, last year Congress stepped up efforts to increase inspections of food manufacturing plants and imported foods. With new strains of lethal E. coli now sickening hundreds throughout Europe, now is not the time to be gutting the funding for food safety inspections. But this legislation would do just that, making it impossible to implement the new safety standards and guaranteeing millions more Americans will get sick from bad food.

4. **Cuts anti-childhood obesity efforts:** Childhood obesity has tripled in the past 30 years. It's an epidemic. Obesity costs our country \$147 billion a year in medical costs and for the first time in American history, life expectancy for the next generation will be lower than for the current generation. But instead of boosting efforts to combat this problem, the Republican bill eliminates funding for the Healthy Food Financing Initiative designed to combat childhood obesity by bringing healthy foods to underserved urban and rural communities.

5. **Raises the Cost of Prescription Drugs:** By severely cutting funding for the Food and Drug Administration, American consumers will get food and medical products that are less safe due to the erosion of essential oversight, and prescription drugs that are more expensive as a result of the agency's limited ability to approve less costly generics.

While I oppose the cuts detailed above, I do support responsible ways to reduce our deficit such as cutting wasteful subsidies and giveaways for the oil industry, ending special tax earmarks for Wall Street bankers and allowing Medicare to negotiate for bulk rate discounts on prescription

drugs for seniors. These reforms would save hundreds of billions of dollars without harming working and middle class Americans who are already struggling to get by. The GOP's Agriculture Appropriations bill accomplishes the goal of deficit reduction in the wrong way. Let's move forward with a plan that does it the right way.