in this proposed SCHIP reauthorization and expansion, Mr. Chairman.

And as we all know, the Democratic majority, the Energy and Commerce Committee bill, which will be combined with the bill out of the Ways and Means Committee we will be dealing with in the next day or two on this floor, calls for a $50 billion increase over the next 5 years. Now, that's on top of the base program which, in the aggregate, was a $25 billion program over the last 5 years. We're not going to increase that by 10 percent, by 20 percent, by 50 percent, or even by 100 percent. We're increasing it even more than that, going from $25 billion, Mr. Chairman, to $75 billion.

So, that's why I'm standing before the body today and saying, look, this is a small cut; this is a little bit of money. But a little bit of money here and a little bit of money there, I've got lots of amendments where we ought to cut other programs here 1 percent to try to pay for some of these things that we are doing that violate your own rules, your own PAYGO rules.

Mr. Chairman, I will say this; this new SCHIP program, everything's got to have an acronym, doesn't it? And it sells well if it has a catchy little acronym. And the Democratic majority is calling this one, the chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee came up with a nice, little cutesy acronym for this mass expansion called the CHAMP Act, Children's Health and Medicare Protection Act.

Mr. Chairman, I've got an acronym for this bill which fits it a lot better, and that acronym is the ''CHUMP Act.'' That's what it is, the CHUMP Act, the Children's Health Unfunding Medicare Protection Act. Because, Mr. Chairman, what this bill calls for is to totally wreck, totally destroy Medicare Advantage. Medicare Advantage is that part of the Medicare program where some 8 million out of 41, 42 million seniors have chosen that health care delivery model because they know they get an opportunity for preventative health care, they get an opportunity to have a nurse practitioner, a physician assistant, or maybe even the doctor him- or herself looking at their health care needs and not just providing, as in traditional Medicare, episodic care where there is no coordination. And a lot of times patients, particularly our seniors with multiple systems diseases, will come home from one doctor with a handful of prescriptions and the next week they're going to another doctor with a handful of prescriptions.

The Medicare Advantage program was designed to help prevent that, to put an emphasis on coordination, on connecting the dots so that we wouldn't duplicate services, or in some instances, Mr. Chairman, even provide a level of care or prescription that could be detrimental to the patient, that could be counterproductive.

So, this is why I feel that my amendment, this small amendment to cut by 1 percent the Office of the Secretary of Agriculture, is a move in the right direction to say, look, don't do this massive expansion of the SCHIP program; reauthorize it. We all want to reauthorize it. In fact, I think maybe what the President called for in his budget was a little bit on the low side. Maybe increasing it $1 billion a year is not quite enough, if indeed, Mr. Chairman, there are 6 million youngsters who are needy and do not have health insurance in this country.

So, I ask my colleagues to support the amendment.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlewoman from Connecticut is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. I think my colleague from Georgia maybe doesn't understand what bill is on the floor today. This is the Agriculture appropriations bill. There will be an opportunity to discuss SCHIP, and you can continue to do that, but let me just comment about your Agriculture appropriations amendment.

The House bill includes funding for central administration offices to fund current staff. The only increase is for pay costs. And I might just tell you that for all of the staff offices in central administration, that the work that was done by the committee literally cut these offices by about 16 percent. So it was just pay and benefits.

However, you should know I feel the obligation to mention these things to you, that any cuts in these offices will result in the reduction of headquarters staff, not the field staff, because that's the personnel that deals directly on a one-to-one basis with our farmers and with our ranchers so that they can access the system and be able to do what they need to do.

Now, I'm going to give the gentleman an opportunity to withdraw his amendment, because I am prepared to accept your amendment, and I'm happy to accept your amendment.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chairman, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman may state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. KINGSTON. If the Chair seeks to accept the amendment, then that ends the debate; correct?

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair will put the question on the amendment at the conclusion of the debate on the amendment.

Mr. KINGSTON. The debate is over then; correct?

Ms. DELAURO. We have accepted the amendment.

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

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from North Carolina is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Chairman, I am happy that the Chair is accepting this amendment, but I would like to speak on it as an opportunity to speak about cutting government spending.

Though it's just $50,500, that's far more than the median income in my district. I want the American taxpayers to know that this is an important step, and it's good that they're accepting a limitation on the rapid increase in spending within this legislation.

There are a lot of good points that we have to consider here. We have to consider the totality of government spending when we're debating here on the House floor. The government spending for this fiscal year is over $2.7 trillion. To put that into perspective, Mr. Chairman, that is larger than all the economies of the world, except for two. It is far larger than even the Chinese economy, which is about $1.9 trillion.

The reason why I bring this up is that when we're discussing each of these appropriations bills, we tend to focus on small parts of the appropriations process. We tend to focus on an amendment here, an amendment there, maybe increasing funding here and there and increasing funding in a particular appropriations bill. But we have to talk about what's that doing to the whole of the budget. And if we spend money here in the Department of Agriculture, we may not have that money to fund this SCHIP proposal that the Democrats are bringing to the floor at the end of this week.

Now, to talk about that bill, what they're going to do is not simply cut government spending elsewhere in the budget, elsewhere in the government, reforming programs, eliminating programs that are ineffective and no longer cost-effective for the American taxpayers, but what they do is they go out and find new revenue and raise taxes under this SCHIP proposal.

The Agriculture bill we have here today increases government spending, thereby forcing this new Democrat majority to go out and raise taxes for their new programs. And, Mr. Chairman, they've proposed a lot of new programs, this new Democrat majority, and what we have to do is focus on making sure we balance the budget. Now, balancing the budget, to me, as a fiscal conservative, does not mean going out and getting new revenue.

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It means doing things, sensible things, such as the Congressman from Georgia, Mr. GINGREY, my good friend and colleague, is doing here. It cuts 1 percent out of the administrative budget of the Department of Agriculture, just 1 percent.

I have an amendment that I would like to perfect. If 1 percent was acceptable to the Chair, I would like to see if maybe 2 percent would be acceptable and see where we can actually draw the line in cutting government spending, where the breaking point is in this House of Representatives. To that end, I think it is important that we have a discussion on what that proper number is.