

funding study authorized in the bill, be provided useful information on innovative financing mechanisms that could be used to fund FAA operations and the development of aviation infrastructure. In the meantime, I believe that the dedicated funds, which are now in surplus, contained in the trust fund for aviation purposes should be spent for the purpose intended.

Mr. EWING. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman SHUSTER and Aviation Subcommittee Chairman DUNCAN for the expert leadership they have demonstrated in bringing this much-needed fundamental FAA reform legislation before the House of Representatives today. As a member of the Aviation Subcommittee, and as a frequent flyer, I am committed to ensuring that our Nation's aviation system remains the safest and most efficient in the world. H.R. 2276, the FAA Revitalization Act, is sound bipartisan legislation that will strengthen and improve U.S. aviation.

H.R. 2276 will restore efficiency and accountability to the FAA by removing FAA from U.S. Department of Transportation control and establishing it as an independent agency. The new FAA will have a corporate structure, with a five-member Board of Directors, and a chief executive officer from the aviation industry who will oversee the Agency's daily operation. This arrangement will provide direct accountability and improve FAA's responsiveness to the aviation community. It will also save taxpayers money by eliminating 200 FAA oversight positions in DOT.

However, the reforms contained in H.R. 2276 are not just structural. The bill implements desperately needed personnel and procurement reforms. Under current rules, the FAA does not have the flexibility to sufficiently allocate employees to facilities that are chronically understaffed, like the Chicago en route center, while other facilities are over staffed. H.R. 2276 grants FAA private sector-like powers to hire and dismiss employees, as well as the additional flexibility to offer incentives to employees for accepting jobs in hard to staff facilities. This personnel flexibility is achieved with the support of each major FAA employee union, and without weakening employee's rights to collectively bargain.

Finally, H.R. 2276 implements critical FAA procurement reforms. Current Federal procurement rules are so inefficient and cumbersome that new equipment is often outdated by the time it is installed. This problem not only deprives the traveling public and the aviation community of the latest and best equipment, but it frequently results in substantial Government waste and chronically over-budget projects. For example, the FAA's plans to replace its aging en route traffic control computers with the new advanced automation system [AAS] is nearly 10 years behind schedule and approximately \$4 billion over its original budget. These cost overruns and delays are clearly unacceptable by any reasonable standards.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2276 is true reform legislation. It will fundamentally improve and restructure the FAA, which will benefit anyone who flies in the United States. For all the reasons I have outlined above, I urge all of my colleagues to support passage of H.R. 2276.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 2276, the Federal Aviation Revitalization Act of 1996. This legislation assures that an independent Federal

agency will assume the current powers of the Federal Aviation Administration [FAA], for aviation safety, air traffic control, airway modernization, and yes, aircraft noise mitigation. As a Nation we are very dependent on aviation for movement of our citizens and movement of many goods and products. We need an agency that is responsible to the aviation industry, air travelers, as well as all taxpayers across our Nation.

In my view and the view of many aviation professionals, the stonewalling and arrogance which characterize the FAA's response to noise complaints, reflects the culture, attitudes, and philosophy of its parent bureaucracy, the U.S. Department of Transportation [DOT]. Making the FAA independent of the massive DOT bureaucracy, as well as the creation of the Management Advisory Committee and the Aircraft Noise Ombudsman, will enable the FAA to better represent the taxpayers. In a streamlined and independent agency, no decisionmaker will be able to hide behind layers of DOT bureaucracy. The three members of the Federal Aviation Board, who will administer the FAA, will be more visible and publicly accountable.

My colleague from New Jersey, Congressman BOB FRANKS, and his constituents, have experienced the same frustrations as I have with the FAA bureaucracy in the DOT. His successful effort to include in this legislation the creation of an Aircraft Noise Ombudsman directly addresses the needs for the taxpayers to have an advocate for their concerns regarding the very important issue of aircraft noise mitigation. The success of the Aircraft Noise Ombudsman will depend on the degree to which the FAA changes its approach toward communicating with taxpayers and Congress. The establishment of the FAA as an independent agency provides a positive starting point.

Consequently, Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues support H.R. 2276 and give the American taxpayers a more responsive and efficient Federal Aviation Administration.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, Chairman SHUSTER, Congressman OBERSTAR, Congressman DUNCAN, Congressman LIPINSKI, and I want to commend and congratulate you for working together in a bipartisan fashion to bring a good bill to the House floor.

H.R. 2276, the FAA Revitalization Act, addresses FAA's serious bureaucracy and procurement problems while ensuring that Congress keeps an important oversight role. H.R. 2276 makes the FAA an independent agency separate from DOT but still part of the executive branch. H.R. 2276 exempts the Agency from personnel and procurement systems, subject to congressional review. However, this bill does require FAA to develop new personnel and procurement systems tailored to meet the FAA's specific needs while still maintaining important employee rights such as whistle-blowers protection, labor-management relations, and laws prohibiting discrimination. That's why it is important that H.R. 2276 be enacted into law before April 1.

If this bill is not enacted into law before April 1, then the fiscal year 1996 Transportation Appropriations Act's requirement that the FAA establish new personnel and procurement rules will go into effect. Unfortunately, the Appropriations Act does not require the FAA to adhere to employee rights that are clearly stated in H.R. 2276, especially the protection of labor-management relations. For the last sev-

eral months, I have been hearing from FAA employees in my district who are very concerned that Congress will not meet its April 1 deadline and that they will lose their rights to negotiate with the FAA about the new personnel system. These employees have a great deal at stake. Let's get this bill enacted before it's too late.

Again, I commend my colleagues on their fine work and would ask my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time, and ask all Members to support this very important landmark legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. SHUSTER] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2276, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 2276, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1615

BI-STATE DEVELOPMENT AGENCY, BY THE STATES OF MISSOURI AND ILLINOIS

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 78), to grant the consent of the Congress to certain additional powers conferred upon the Bi-State Development Agency by the States of Missouri and Illinois, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.J. RES. 78

Whereas the Congress in consenting to the compact between Missouri and Illinois creating the Bi-State Development Agency and the Bi-State Metropolitan District provided that no power shall be exercised by the Bi-State Agency under the provisions of article III of such compact until such power has been conferred upon the Bi-State Agency by the legislatures of the States to the compact and approved by an Act of Congress; and

Whereas such States have now enacted certain legislation in order to confer certain additional powers on such Bi-State Development Agency: Now, therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That (a) the consent of Congress is hereby given to the additional powers conferred on the Bi-State Development Agency of the Compact Between Missouri and Illinois approved under the Joint Resolution of August 31, 1950 (64 Stat. 568) by

section 70.378 of the Act of May 26, 1993 (1993 Mo. Laws 382) and section 5 of Public Act 88-611, Laws of Illinois 1994.

(b) The powers consented to in subsection (a) and conferred by the laws referred to in such subsection shall take effect on January 1, 1995.

SEC. 2. The provisions of the Joint Resolution of August 31, 1950 (64 Stat. 568) shall apply to the additional powers approved under this joint resolution to the same extent as if such additional powers were conferred under the provisions of the compact consented to in such Joint Resolution.

SEC. 3. The right to alter, amend, or repeal this joint resolution is expressly reserved.

SEC. 4. The right is hereby reserved to the Congress to require the disclosure and furnishings of such information or data by the Bi-State Development Agency as is deemed appropriate by the Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. GEKAS] and the gentleman from Rhode Island [Mr. REED] will each be recognized for 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. GEKAS].

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

Mr. Speaker, as everyone knows by now, the Constitution of the United States empowers, no, directs the Congress to approve any kind of compact that may be entered into by any of the several States. If more than one State wishes to join with another in a joint venture, the consent of the Congress must be sought and obtained under the Constitution.

So, from time to time, we here in the House, in fact the entire Congress has to entertain importunings from various States to approve such compacts.

Back in 1950 there was such a compact approved by the Congress between Missouri and Illinois having to do with a joint venture across the river that divides them, and that compact was approved. That had to do with planning, development, et cetera. Now, the two States have found reason to come back to the Congress because one of the agencies that they empowered began operating a light-rail transit system and requested that the respective legislatures authorize it to appoint or employ a security force to prevent fare evasion and other misconduct on the system.

So, the Illinois Legislature and the Missouri Legislature did exactly that, passed their own concurrent legislation, as it were, which they referred to us for our consent, and that is the gist of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, we ask that the Congress approve it with first a vote here in the House. Our subcommittee and the full committee approved the passing of this legislation and have brought it to this stage in the legislative process.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the bill. I know of no objections to this legislation. House Joint Resolution 78

seeks congressional approval for additional powers conferred on the Bi-State Development Agency of Missouri and Illinois by those two State legislatures. These additional powers involve the jurisdiction of various local police officers to make arrests on the light-rail system and the agency's efforts to prosecute fare evaders.

Mr. Speaker, I urge speedy passage of this legislation.

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

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Joint Resolution 78, of which I am a cosponsor. This legislation is necessary to give enforcement authority to the Bi-State Development Agency, the local organization that operates the mass transit system in the St. Louis metropolitan region. Bi-State was originally established by the States of Illinois and Missouri and approved by the U.S. Congress. However, that compact did not give Bi-State the authority to appoint or employ a security force or to enact rules and regulations governing fare evasion and other conduct.

As Bi-State has expanded from providing transit via buses to the large-scale and widely known success of the MetroLink light rail system, its needs have changed. With its growth and new responsibilities, the agency now requires more authority to enact rules and regulations on fare collection and to employ a security force. MetroLink passengers currently pay fares through a barrier-free, self-service, proof-of-payment system. This system, while successful, needs a consistent enforcement policy to ensure fare compliance.

The agency does not currently have the authority to enact these rules under the original compact approved by the U.S. Congress. Because both the Illinois and Missouri Legislatures have acted to extend Bi-State's authority and because local officials and Members of Congress from the region support the change, I urge my colleagues to support passage of this legislation.

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. GEKAS] that the House suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution, House Joint Resolution 78, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5, rule I, and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the joint resolution just considered.

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

There was no objection.

HISTORIC CHATTAHOOCHEE COMPACT

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2064) to grant the consent of Congress to an amendment of the historic Chattahoochee compact between the States of Alabama and Georgia.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2064

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

SECTION 1. CONSENT OF CONGRESS TO THE HISTORIC CHATTAHOOCHEE COMPACT BETWEEN THE STATES OF ALABAMA AND GEORGIA.

The consent of Congress is given to the amendment of articles I, II, and III of the Historic Chattahoochee Compact between the States of Alabama and Georgia, which articles, as amended, read as follows:

"ARTICLE I

"The purpose of this compact is to promote the cooperative development of the Chattahoochee valley's full potential for historic preservation and tourism and to establish a joint interstate authority to assist in these efforts.

"ARTICLE II

"This compact shall become effective immediately as to the States ratifying it whenever the States of Alabama and Georgia have ratified it and Congress has given consent thereto.

"ARTICLE III

"The States which are parties to this compact (hereinafter referred to as 'party States') do hereby establish and create a joint agency which shall be known as the Historic Chattahoochee Commission (hereinafter referred to as the 'Commission'). The Commission shall consist of 28 members who shall be bona fide residents and qualified voters of the party States and counties served by the Commission. Election for vacant seats shall be by majority vote of the voting members of the Commission board at a regularly scheduled meeting. In Alabama, two shall be residents of Barbour County, two shall be residents of Russell County, two shall be residents of Henry County, two shall be residents of Chambers County, two shall be residents of Lee County, two shall be residents of Houston County, and two shall be residents of Dale County. In Georgia, one shall be a resident of Troup County, one shall be a resident of Harris County, one shall be a resident of Muscogee County, one shall be a resident of Chattahoochee County, one shall be a resident of Stewart County, one shall be a resident of Randolph County, one shall be a resident of Clay County, one shall be a resident of Quitman County, one shall be a resident of Early County, one shall be a resident of Seminole County, and one shall be a resident of Decatur County. In addition, there shall be three at-large members who shall be selected from any three of the Georgia member counties listed above. The Commission at its discretion may appoint as many advisory members as it deems necessary from any Georgia or Alabama County, which is located in the Chattahoochee Valley area. The contribution of each party State shall be in equal amounts. If the party States fail to appropriate equal amounts to the Commission during any given fiscal year, voting membership on the Commission board shall be determined as follows: The State making the larger appropriation shall be entitled to full voting membership. The total number of members from the other State shall be divided into the amount of the larger appropriation and the resulting quotient