

Coast or to the West Coast is equally important to all of us. We cannot build a transportation system that is sufficient to meet the needs of this country unless we are willing to do away with the outdated and inefficient formulas that are in the current law.

Texas and other States who have been contributing more than they are getting back want some relief. And in these times of tight budgets, when we are working hard to balance the Federal budget, and when those Federal dollars are shrinking, it is even more important that the limited dollars that we have be passed out in a fair and equitable manner.

I hope that this Congress will see fit to enact H.R. 647 because it will bring fairness to all of our States by improving the Federal transportation system that we all depend on.

STREAMLINED TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY PROGRAM FOR THE 21ST CENTURY (STEP 21)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. BOYD] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BOYD. Mr. Speaker, I also rise and want to thank the gentleman from California [Mr. CONDIT] and the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DELAY] for giving us the opportunity to address this issue of transportation funds.

Twenty-five States have received less than they put into the highway trust fund, and 17 States have gotten back less than 90 cents on the dollar. When that happens, the Federal highway program is clearly broken.

Personally, I am also cosponsoring a piece of legislation called the Transportation Empowerment Act that would return most of the highway program dollars to the States. However, because of our makeup here in Congress and particularly in the Senate, that is a piece of legislation which probably will not move as STEP 21 will. So I am also supporting STEP 21. I think that is the logical mainstream proposal that can fix the existing problems in the current law while still maintaining an appropriate Federal role in highways.

It is intriguing to me that as we stand here, 3 years from the 21st century, that we are dealing with proposals in our Federal highway funding program that uses formulas that date back to 1916. These two particular formula factors that we are talking about, lands area and postal route mileage, come from a time when the national highway system did not exist, for obvious reasons; there were not any cars. In fact, the national highway system did not come into effect until 1956.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that these two factors, land area and postal route mileage, may have made some sense in a time when we were trying to get our horse and buggy out of the mud, but today they have little value at a time when we are trying to get our cars out

of traffic. I would just like to remind my colleagues that what we are dealing with here is a gas tax, not a hay tax for horses.

I applaud the fact that the administration has stepped up to the plate and released their own plan for the reauthorization of ISTEA, which is called NEXTEA, but I want to remind you that this proposal is a giant step in the wrong direction.

The proposal maintains a State guarantee payback from the highway trust fund is at 90 cents, 90 percent, 90 cents on the dollar. However, I would like to remind my colleagues that over the last 5 or 6 years, even though we were guaranteed 90 cents return in ISTEA, Florida has averaged 77 cents on the dollar in gas taxes cents to Washington that would come back to Florida to help us with our roads. That is unacceptable.

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation's own calculations, the funding allocation under ISTEA for the State of Florida during the fiscal years 1991 through 1997 was approximately 4.28 percent. Under the NEXTEA proposal, those numbers will move to 4.08 percent. Certainly, that is less money. I am in the situation, Florida is in the situation with many other States in that we will be getting a much smaller slice of a larger pie, and that is not acceptable.

Proponents of NEXTEA have been arguing that 49 States also receive more dollars. But as I said earlier, that is simply because we have more dollars in the pot to carve up and we, in fact, will be getting a smaller slice. As a long-time donor State, Florida has consistently worked to provide greater funding equity in the Federal highway program. This legislation, STEP 21, is a clear step in the right direction, while also giving States more flexibility over how best to meet their individual transportation needs.

STEP 21 is a streamlined, common-sense approach to the current Federal program. It replaces a 40-year-old program, a program which was put in place to build an interstate highway system, and it replaces a system with a more decentralized approach that will allow the States to respond to changing statewide needs with adequate resources.

STEP 21 streamlines the program's structure, increases State flexibility and provides financial equity. STEP 21 will guarantee a return of at least 95 cents on the dollar back to the States. It does that through allocating 40 percent into a Federal highway pot, and then it takes 60 percent and returns it to the States through a new streamlined surface transportation program.

Many opponents argue that it will derail such programs as congestion mitigation and air quality programs and also transportation enhancement programs, such as bicycle trails and pedestrian trails. That simply is not true. There is nothing in this piece of legislation that prohibits those programs from going on.

I would like to remind my colleagues that the CMAQ, that is congestion, mitigation, and air quality program, is governed by the Clean Air Act, and actually it is the Clean Air Act and not the Transportation Act that governs that.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind our colleagues that if we truly believe that we ought to have a government that is closer to the people, that the dollars ought to stay back in our States where they can best be used by local folks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. DAVIS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. DAVIS of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. DEAL] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. DEAL of Georgia addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

BROWNFIELDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. MALONEY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MALONEY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague from Connecticut [Mr. SHAYS] for introductory remarks.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. MALONEY]. We have collectively between us 10 minutes and we would like to take this opportunity to talk about legislation that the gentleman from Connecticut, the Fifth Congressional District, and I have introduced dealing with old industrial sites, abandoned sites that are not in productive use in urban areas. These sites, called brownfields, are the issue that we intend to address tonight and, in fact, address in our legislation.

There are about 500,000 brownfield sites around the country in urban areas. These sites are old industrial areas that are basically lying fallow. Legislation that the gentleman from Connecticut and I have introduced attempts to address this issue. I would just say before yielding back to my colleague for a longer statement, in the city of Bridgeport, CT, last year the Clinton administration provided a grant of \$200,000 for us to inventory all these old industrial sites called brownfields. This \$200,000 was leverage for another \$2 million that helped us categorize, inventory, and begin to clean up these sites on a unified basis.

This was an initiative primarily of the Clinton administration backed by Congress. Our legislation seeks to add from the \$36 million appropriated by

the administration and Congress an additional \$50 million to begin to categorize, classify, and clean up these sites.

At the center of this legislation is the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. MALONEY] who has time now and I will have later so we can have a dialog. I would thank the gentleman for allowing me to make this introduction and tell the gentleman that it is really a pleasure to work with him on a bipartisan basis to begin to help do this very important thing, bring businesses back into urban areas to create jobs and to pay taxes by helping to clean up these sites.

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Mr. MALONEY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

I thank the gentleman for his help and cooperation, his partnership with me in bringing forward this legislation. It is deeply appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, breathing new economic life into Connecticut's communities and stimulating growth across our Nation is my top priority in the U.S. Congress. I strongly believe we can stimulate economic growth by cleaning up contaminated industrial sites and returning them to productive use. This process, known as brownfields cleanup, allows a community to turn a barren site, once unusable by business due to concerns of sky-high cleanup costs, into valuable land that can be fruitful for years to come.

What is genuinely attractive about this process is that the entire community shares in the benefits: Area businesses acquire new land for investment. Connecticut families have new jobs. Cities and towns gain tax revenue. Local homeowners enjoy increased property values. And everyone benefits from a cleaner environment.

Turning brownfields into productive properties will have a substantial positive impact on Connecticut's future prosperity and on the prosperity of every other State in the Nation as well.

Currently, due to contamination, hundreds of thousands of industrial properties across the country are idle, and some actually have negative land value because of excessive cleanup costs.

The Naugatuck Valley, located in my district in Connecticut, was known as the Brass Valley because of its tremendous level of metal fabrication industry. Today, however, it is home to 20 percent of the brownfields sites listed by the State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection.

While the Naugatuck Valley was once a booming industrial area, it is now the home of a shrinking job base, abandoned industrial sites, and chronic economic challenges with unemployment rate that hovers at nearly 10 percent.

The gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SHAYS] and I have introduced bipartisan legislation that will aggressively

address the situation and help communities like those in Naugatuck Valley thrive again. The Brownfield Economic Revitalization Act of 1997 empowers communities and residents to identify local contamination and provides them with the resources necessary to attract private investment.

By working with the EPA and the Department of Housing and Urban Development, towns and community organizations will have the ability to pay for site assessment, will have access to redevelopment grants and revolving loan funds, and will be able to leverage State, local, and private funds for redevelopment and job creation.

The act will also allow qualified taxpayers and businesses to deduct cleanup costs in the year incurred, a major new tax incentive.

I would like to share with my colleagues the success of the Waterbury Mall cleanup, which is a model of how cleaning up a brownfield is worth each and every dime.

SUCCESSFUL BROWNFIELDS CLEANUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BATEMAN). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SHAYS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. MALONEY].

Mr. MALONEY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

Following its closing after years of industrial activities of a brass manufacturer, a 100-acre factory site fell into disuse in the city of Waterbury. I worked to secure funding for the environmental cleanup of the site. Once clean, the site was made available to the private sector for reuse. This fall the residents of Waterbury will see the opening of one of the largest retail shopping malls in all of New England.

This new-use, successful brownfields cleanup will add hundreds of millions of dollars to Waterbury's tax base and will create 4,000 new jobs in Connecticut. The brownfield approach can of course also be used for commercial and industrial reuse and even for public recreation.

In Derby, CT, for example, we are working to reclaim an old industrial waste site known as O'Sullivan's Island for a combination waterfront park and marina. The O'Sullivan's Island project will both reclaim a valuable environmental asset and draw thousands of people every year to downtown Derby.

Successes like the Waterbury Mall and the planning now under way for Derby, can and should be replicated across the country. The Shays/Maloney Brownfields Economic Revitalization Act will ensure that that happens. It will ensure that communities and businesses have a more streamlined process which will allow them to stimulate economic growth. It will attract needed investments and stimulate welcome

activity. Connecticut's, and America's, businesses, employees, homeowners and families need and deserve this legislation, and I and the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SHAYS] are committed to making it a reality for all of us.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, our legislation increasing the funding from \$37 million to \$87 million would provide a \$200,000 maximum grant to each site assessment and redevelopment plan. It enables a community to go out throughout the community and determine what are the brownfields in their community, why these buildings are not being developed.

In some cases they will find the absence of knowledge has led people to stay away. When they come and make a more thorough review of these sites, they realize they do not have the contamination problems they might think they have, and the community is able to promote the development of this land. This money also becomes a leverage to bring in private money as well as State and local money.

It also provides a capitalization revolving loan fund of \$500,000 each in addition to the \$200,000 grant. We also are providing in our legislation \$25 million to HUD for each of the next 4 years to provide for brownfield activity to leverage some of the State and local and private funding.

I think one of the most important features of this is that it provides tax incentives. A business that comes in can expense out in the year of cost the cleanup of the sites, which makes it far more attractive to a business so that they can recoup their costs much earlier and not have to amortize it over 10, 20, 30, 40, or 50 years.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen the success that has happened, that it has provided Bridgeport. We are seeing the kinds of success in cities like Waterbury with cleaning up old industrial sites. We are looking to make brownfields into greenfields. I cannot emphasize enough the need for allowing businesses to see land in urban areas as having a positive land value, not a negative land value.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. MALONEY].

Mr. MALONEY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I just conclude by making an observation that frequently people have suggested that economic development and environmental protection are inconsistent. What this legislation does is clearly demonstrate that we can accomplish both goals simultaneously. We can in fact take property that has been environmentally degraded, put it back to use, clean it up from an environmental perspective and then, putting that property back to use, stimulate and encourage and expand economic growth.

This is legislation that is good for the environment. It is good for the economy. It is good for the people of this country. I urge my colleagues to support it.