

Mr. Speaker, that is what the Paycheck Protection Act is all about and designed to help, those hard workers throughout the country who are union members who believe they ought to have some say in where their political cash goes, which kind of candidates they might decide to support, and which kinds of political causes they identify with.

Mr. Speaker, it is an interesting battle that is about to begin here in Congress over the Paycheck Protection Act. This is an issue that divides the labor bosses from the rank-and-file union members. The Republican party stands firmly behind rank-and-file union workers, and we hope to get this legislation passed.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

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

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

MERGERS AND LOGJAMS ON THE RAILROADS

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

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, as ranking member of the Subcommittee on Railroads, I want to talk a little about the problems that I believe many Members, particularly western Members, are going to be hearing about, if they have not already, and those are the increasing tie-ups in the Union Pacific lines dealing from the recent merger of Union Pacific and Southern Pacific.

In some ways it is estimated, if continued under the present direction, this could end up causing as many problems to our economy as the UPS strike. There are many reasons for this. The purpose of my talk is not to point fingers but mainly to look at what are the causes and, more importantly, what can be done about them.

Mr. Speaker, there are many reasons, but basically it stems from the takeover of Southern Pacific by Union Pacific, two large railroads now having to merge their operations, and the logistics have proved to be overwhelming in some cases.

The Wall Street Journal yesterday estimated that there are 10,000 railroad cars a day stuck in limbo; 300,000 cars normally operating under UP and SP have now grown to 340,000, further increasing the congestion.

What has compounded the problems, the slowdowns in deliveries, in some

cases the nondeliveries for many days, if not weeks, what has compounded the problem has been the oncoming Christmas season as many manufacturers try to get their products to market.

Also, the predicted good harvests in the Midwest, the fact that the chemical industry has had a good year, particularly along the Gulf Coast, as well as the plastics industry, all of this has overloaded a system that was going through significant transition.

Union Pacific reports some good news, that on September 1, where there were 145 trains a day caught on sidings, that number has been reduced to over 90. However, the speed at which trains have been able to move now has been significantly reduced. That, in turn, means they have to use more locomotives, more crews, to get trains to where they are supposed to go. All of this has resulted in significant economic hardship and could result in more.

Mr. Speaker, the Surface Transportation Board will hold oversight hearings. This has implications for my State of West Virginia because, of course, while we are not a Union Pacific service area, we do have a merger under consideration, an acquisition, as Norfolk Southern and CSX have applied to the STB to take over Conrail.

There are obviously significant differences. Here we are not having one system completely take over another, but at the same time this should be a warning to the Surface Transportation Board and to those who will be involved in that process, the shippers, the consumer groups, and others, to look carefully at this.

Members should be aware that there are significant issues at stake here. What is it exactly that the Federal Government could be doing today, if anything, to improve the situation? How do we deal with this logistical snafu? Also, the adequacy of the Surface Transportation Board.

This body will be renewing and reauthorizing the Surface Transportation Board next year. Is the staffing adequate to do a number of different functions, to review a merger that is presently before the board such as the Conrail-Norfolk Southern-CSX acquisition or merger, and also to review past mergers such as the Union Pacific-Southern Pacific merger in which there is a 5-year ongoing review period? Is there adequate staffing and resources to review pricing issues and also abandonment issues?

This Congress is going to get firsthand a laboratory experiment that it can view in terms of how UP, SP, and the Surface Transportation Board all work their way through this.

As I say, it becomes important because now the Surface Transportation Board has in front of it another significant merger, this one in the East, unlike the one in the West with Norfolk Southern, Conrail, and CSX. There are some similarities, and yet there are also some great differences.

I do urge all shippers and consumer groups and others who might be involved to look closely, since it is presently in the public comment period, about what role they want to play, because what we are learning today is that once this merger is done, we cannot put the genie back in the bottle and we cannot undo it.

It is important that all parties in this situation of Union Pacific, Southern Pacific, Burlington Northern, Kansas City, and the others, be involved in helping resolve the short-term economic problem that is being caused, logistical problems that are being caused, and then look to see how they can be avoided in the future.

It is very likely that when the Congress comes back in another week, Mr. Speaker, there are going to be significant rail issues before it. Amtrak reauthorization will be one, perhaps the Amtrak PEB, but certainly we need to be paying attention to this as well.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS R. BROWN

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

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Thomas R. Brown, Chief of Recreation Therapy Service at the Veterans Administration Medical Center in San Antonio and national advisor to the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, for receiving the 17th annual Olin E. Teague Award for outstanding work with disabled veterans. The Teague Award, named for the late Texas Congressman Olin E. "Tiger" Teague, is given once a year to the VA employee or group of employees whose work benefits veterans with service-connected problems.

Mr. Brown has been involved with recreational therapy at the VA since 1976. A world-class athlete in his own right, he served from 1986-89 as Chairman of the VA's National Sports and Recreation Committee, which oversees the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, the Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, the National Veterans Golden Age Games, and the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. Each year, these events inspire thousands of veterans to get out of the hospital and be active and competitive in the community. Mr. Brown continues to serve as national advisor of the Wheelchair Games, which he helped found in 1980.

Mr. Brown's work in the daily therapy of veterans at the VA Medical Center and his leadership in organizing events for disabled veterans at the national level serve as an inspiration, not only to disabled veterans, but to all of our citizens. In dealing with those who have

suffered injury while in the service of our Nation, Mr. Brown stands as a beacon to take the road less traveled, and we commend him for his initiative and industriousness.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR MISSING AND EXPLOITED CHILDREN

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

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, as an American citizen concerned about our Nation's children and as a member of the Missing and Exploited Children's Caucus, I have always admired the work of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. This organization, among numerous other tasks, works in cooperation with law enforcement agencies to help locate missing children.

Regrettably, I had the opportunity to see this process firsthand during the August recess. I received a phone call in my eastern North Carolina district office from the parents of a young girl who was missing. I telephoned the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and was relieved to hear that the center was already working on the case.

Although the following days must have seemed like years to the young girl's parents, the center worked efficiently with the Lenoir County Sheriff's Department and other law enforcement agencies to locate the missing girl. I am pleased to report that those parents got their daughter back safely. The young girl was returned to them as a result of the hard work of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and their cooperation with local law enforcement.

Unfortunately, not all parents with missing children see this positive outcome. Each year more than 4,600 children are abducted by nonfamily members. It pains me to say that 800 of these abductions end in murder.

The good people at the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and a number of law enforcement agencies respond to reports of child abduction quickly, but saving each child is too often impossible. For this reason, the organization not only helps to locate missing children but it also works to raise public awareness about ways to prevent child abduction and exploitation.

Mr. Speaker, America's children are the future of this Nation. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of protecting them from the many dangers that unfortunately exist in today's world.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and law enforcement agencies throughout America for their hard work and dedication, not only in the case I just spoke of but in their efforts to protect all of our Nation's children. If we all continue to work together, I am confident that we

can make the world a safer place for our children.

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

[Mr. ENGLISH 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 Washington, Mrs. LINDA SMITH, is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. LINDA SMITH of Washington addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

BROKEN PROMISES MADE TO UTAH

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

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, many of us know that Utah was not too happy on September 18, 1996 when the President of the United States went safely to the South Rim of the Grand Canyon and declared 1.7 million acres a national monument. The President failed to talk to the governor, Senators, Members of Congress, including one from his own party, and did this thing.

Well, we talked about that this week and a bill went through to try to make sure that does not happen again. I commend my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for helping us out on that issue.

But the part that was not mentioned and that I think is very interesting was a promise that was made by the President on the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. I quote:

I will say again, creating this national monument should not and will not come at the expense of Utah's children. Today is also the beginning of a unique three-year process to set up a land management process that will be good for the people of Utah and good for Americans.

What is he talking about? What he was talking about is buried in this thing, the largest supply of compliance coal in the world, over a trillion dollars, trillion with a T, and that money, over a billion or so, would inure to the benefit of the education of the children of Utah.

Mr. Speaker, we are still looking for that to be set up. That was an election year promise. I thought it was interesting. He went on to say: "And I will now use my office to accelerate the exchange process." However, that has been 371 days. It would only take an hour of his time to fulfill that promise, but it has never, never, never, never occurred.

I feel a little bad about this.

I will say again, creating this national monument should not come at the expense of Utah's children who just

lost a billion dollars on this in royalties.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think that is interesting. Now we find the thing the other day, that the President of the United States used the line item veto, and he had the right to do that. I have no problem with that, but I sure wish he would talk to the Department of Defense. I sure wish he would talk to the people of Utah.

Because we had another interesting thing happen on June 16, 1995. In Budapest what happened is they stood up and they made the statement, they said 2002 Winter Games will go to Salt Lake City, and America is euphoric, we got the Winter Games. The Governor of the State stood up. And then we got a call. It was on nationwide TV. And who was it? It was from the White House. What did he say? "Truly, Salt Lake City offers the Olympic family and the people of the world an ideal place to enjoy this peaceful gathering of the world's champions."

He went on to say: "I want to congratulate Salt Lake City on their successful pursuit of the Olympics in 2002. This will be an historic event. It's a great event for Salt Lake City. It's a great event for the western part of the United States." It is a great thing for the United States of America, and we had the entire support of the Federal Government behind it.

So we went with that. We moved out. We started working on an Olympic village, and part of making this Olympic village would be moving 11 acres from the University of Utah and turning it into an Olympic place for all the world's athletes to come, and they could have nice, new facilities as they compete. And the world, 3 billion people at a time, watches the Winter Olympics.

Gosh, Mr. Speaker, do my colleagues know what happened? He vetoed it. I mean, this was the thing, just like what happened on the \$1.7 million promise to the children on education. Another promise to take care of this, and vetoed. Sure would have been handy if we just had a phone call. We could have explained to the President.

The Salt Lake Tribune, the largest newspaper in Utah, in its editorial called it a veto in the dark. I think that says it, because no one was alerted, and out of that, back to point zero.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I do not know where we are going to put all these athletes. I hope somebody can think of something. Possibly there are some World War II tents out there. We can put them out on the west desert, maybe bring in some facilities for them. I sure hope somebody with the vision and planning ability can see how to do this.

It is surely difficult to run a State and run a country when we do not think about it, when we veto things and make hollow promises.