

Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) representing the great City of Chicago.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding me this time. I could not let this moment go by without expressing some comments relative to John Thomas Weeker, J.T., as we all called him, especially those who knew him.

He was area vice president of operations for the United States Postal Service; and, unfortunately, he passed away at an early age. It was very interesting to me that as J.T. did his work in the Midwest area, how much he was revered by the individuals who worked with and for him.

As a matter of fact, I had the occasion to attend his funeral services, and he had asked that one of his employees give the eulogy. That was a fellow that he had supervised, Rufus Porter, who is the lead executive for the Chicago post office. It was also interesting that he had asked that the Chicago Postal Choir would perform at his services. Even though he was not from the Midwest, he was not from Chicago, he had grown up on the East Coast, he had adopted the area as his home and decided that that is where he wanted to have the last comments made for him.

It is also interesting that employees of the Postal Service made the request to have this facility named for their leader. It was Rufus Porter who was the first person who suggested that there ought to be some lasting way of remembering the tremendous service that J.T. had provided to the Postal Service, and especially to the Midwest region. And so, Madam Speaker, I am pleased to join with my colleagues in bestowing this honor upon a tremendous executive who gave not only of himself, in terms of providing leadership to postal operations, but who was an integral part of his community.

A little phrase he had about moving the mail that he sometimes would like to say, when talking about a letter, clean hands gentle touch; surely we owe a letter that much. And that is how J.T. felt about the work that he did in the Postal Service.

Mr. TURNER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to join the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BLAGOJEVICH) in urging the House to adopt this resolution naming this postal facility after an outstanding public servant who worked every day to be sure that the mail arrived on time.

All too often, I think, we fail to acknowledge the contributions that are made every day by the fine employees of our Federal Government. So, Madam Speaker, I urge adoption of H.R. 5016.

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

Mr. OSE. Madam Speaker, I have no 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 California (Mr. OSE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5016, 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.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to redesignate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 514 Express Center Road in Chicago, Illinois, as the 'J.T. Weeker Service Center'."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2000

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 2412) to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the National Transportation Safety Board for fiscal years 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 2412

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; REFERENCES.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "National Transportation Safety Board Amendments Act of 2000".

(b) REFERENCES.—Except as otherwise specifically provided, whenever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision of law, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

Section 1101 is amended to read as follows:

"§ 1101. Definitions

"Section 2101(17a) of title 46 and section 40102(a) of this title apply to this chapter. In this chapter, the term 'accident' includes damage to or destruction of vehicles in surface or air transportation or pipelines, regardless of whether the initiating event is accidental or otherwise."

SEC. 3. AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1113(b)(1)(I) is amended to read as follows:

"(I) negotiate and enter into agreements with individuals and private entities and departments, agencies, and instrumentalities of the Government, State and local governments, and governments of foreign countries for the provision of facilities, accident-related and technical services or training in accident investigation theory and techniques, and require that such entities provide appropriate consideration for the reasonable costs of any facilities, goods, services, or training provided by the Board."

(b) DEPOSIT OF AMOUNTS.—

(1) Section 1113(b)(2) is amended—

(A) by inserting "as offsetting collections" after "to be credited"; and

(B) by adding after "Board," the following: "The Board shall maintain an annual record of collections received under paragraph (1)(I) of this subsection."

(2) Section 1114(a) is amended—

(A) by inserting "(1)" before "Except"; and
(B) by adding at the end thereof the following:

"(2) The Board shall deposit in the Treasury amounts received under paragraph (1) to be credited to the appropriation of the Board as offsetting collections."

(3) Section 1115(d) is amended by striking "of the 'National Transportation Safety Board, Salaries and Expenses'" and inserting "of the Board".

SEC. 4. OVERTIME PAY.

Section 1113 is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(g) OVERTIME PAY.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the requirements of this section and notwithstanding paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 5542(a) of title 5, for an employee of the Board whose basic pay is at a rate which equals or exceeds the minimum rate of basic pay for GS-10 of the General Schedule, the Board may establish an overtime hourly rate of pay for the employee with respect to work performed at the scene of an accident (including travel to or from the scene) and other work that is critical to an accident investigation in an amount equal to one and one-half times the hourly rate of basic pay of the employee. All of such amount shall be considered to be premium pay.

"(2) LIMITATION ON OVERTIME PAY TO AN EMPLOYEE.—An employee of the Board may not receive overtime pay under paragraph (1), for work performed in a calendar year, in an amount that exceeds 15 percent of the annual rate of basic pay of the employee for such calendar year.

"(3) LIMITATION ON TOTAL AMOUNT OF OVERTIME PAY.—The Board may not make overtime payments under paragraph (1) for work performed in any fiscal year in a total amount that exceeds 1.5 percent of the amount appropriated to carry out this chapter for that fiscal year.

"(4) BASIC PAY DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term 'basic pay' includes any applicable locality-based comparability payment under section 5304 of title 5 (or similar provision of law) and any special rate of pay under section 5305 of title 5 (or similar provision of law).

"(5) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than January 31, 2002, and annually thereafter, the Board shall transmit to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee a report identifying the total amount of overtime payments made under this subsection in the preceding fiscal year, and the number of employees whose overtime pay under this subsection was limited in that fiscal year as a result of the 15 percent limit established by paragraph (2)."

SEC. 5. RECORDERS.

(a) COCKPIT VIDEO RECORDINGS.—Section 1114(c) is amended—

(1) by striking "VOICE" in the subsection heading;

(2) by striking "cockpit voice recorder" in paragraphs (1) and (2) and inserting "cockpit voice or video recorder"; and

(3) by inserting "or any written depiction of visual information" after "transcript" in the second sentence of paragraph (1).

(b) SURFACE VEHICLE RECORDINGS AND TRANSCRIPTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1114 is amended—

(A) by redesignating subsections (d) and (e) as subsections (e) and (f), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after subsection (e) the following:

"(d) SURFACE VEHICLE RECORDINGS AND TRANSCRIPTS.—

"(1) CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDINGS.—The Board may not disclose publicly any part of

a surface vehicle voice or video recorder recording or transcript of oral communications by or among drivers, train employees, or other operating employees responsible for the movement and direction of the vehicle or vessel, or between such operating employees and company communication centers, related to an accident investigated by the Board. However, the Board shall make public any part of a transcript or any written depiction of visual information that the Board decides is relevant to the accident—

“(A) if the Board holds a public hearing on the accident, at the time of the hearing; or

“(B) if the Board does not hold a public hearing, at the time a majority of the other factual reports on the accident are placed in the public docket.

“(2) REFERENCES TO INFORMATION IN MAKING SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS.—This subsection does not prevent the Board from referring at any time to voice or video recorder information in making safety recommendations.”.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The first sentence of section 1114(a) is amended by striking “and (e)” and inserting “(d), and (f)”.

(C) DISCOVERY AND USE OF COCKPIT AND SURFACE VEHICLE RECORDINGS AND TRANSCRIPTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1154 is amended—

(A) by striking the section heading and inserting the following:

“§1154. Discovery and use of cockpit and surface vehicle recordings and transcripts;

(B) by striking “cockpit voice recorder” each place it appears in subsection (a) and inserting “cockpit or surface vehicle recorder”;

(C) by striking “section 1114(c)” each place it appears in subsection (a) and inserting “section 1114(c) or 1114(d)”; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(6) In this subsection:

“(A) RECORDER.—The term ‘recorder’ means a voice or video recorder.

“(B) TRANSCRIPT.—The term ‘transcript’ includes any written depiction of visual information obtained from a video recorder.”.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The chapter analysis for chapter 11 is amended by striking the item relating to section 1154 and inserting the following:

“1154. Discovery and use of cockpit and surface vehicle recordings and transcripts.”.

SEC. 6. PRIORITY OF INVESTIGATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1131(a)(2) is amended—

(1) by striking “(2) An investigation” and inserting:

“(2)(A) Subject to the requirements of this paragraph, an investigation”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) If the Attorney General, in consultation with the Chairman of the Board, determines and notifies the Board that circumstances reasonably indicate that the accident may have been caused by an intentional criminal act, the Board shall relinquish investigative priority to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The relinquishment of investigative priority by the Board shall not otherwise affect the authority of the Board to continue its investigation under this section.

“(C) If a Federal law enforcement agency suspects and notifies the Board that an accident being investigated by the Board under subparagraph (A), (B), (C), or (D) of paragraph (1) may have been caused by an intentional criminal act, the Board, in consultation with the law enforcement agency, shall take necessary actions to ensure that evidence of the criminal act is preserved.”.

(b) REVISION OF 1977 AGREEMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the National Transportation

Safety Board and the Federal Bureau of Investigation shall revise their 1977 agreement on the investigation of accidents to take into account the amendments made by this Act.

SEC. 7. PUBLIC AIRCRAFT INVESTIGATION CLARIFICATION.

Section 1131(d) is amended by striking “1134(b)(2)” and inserting “1134 (a), (b), (d), and (f)”.

SEC. 8. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.

Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the National Transportation Safety Board and the United States Coast Guard shall revise their Memorandum of Understanding governing major marine accidents—

(1) to redefine or clarify the standards used to determine when the National Transportation Safety Board will lead an investigation; and

(2) to develop new standards to determine when a major marine accident involves significant safety issues relating to Coast Guard safety functions.

SEC. 9. TRAVEL BUDGETS.

The Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board shall establish annual fiscal year budgets for non-accident-related travel expenditures for Board members which shall be approved by the Board and submitted to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and to the House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure together with an annual report detailing the non-accident-related travel of each Board member. The report shall include separate accounting for foreign and domestic travel, including any personnel or other expenses associated with that travel.

SEC. 10. CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER.

Section 1111 is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (h) as subsection (i); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (g) the following:

“(h) CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER.—The Chairman shall designate an officer or employee of the Board as the Chief Financial Officer. The Chief Financial Officer shall—

“(1) report directly to the Chairman on financial management and budget execution;

“(2) direct, manage, and provide policy guidance and oversight on financial management and property and inventory control; and

“(3) review the fees, rents, and other charges imposed by the Board for services and things of value it provides, and suggest appropriate revisions to those charges to reflect costs incurred by the Board in providing those services and things of value.”.

SEC. 11. IMPROVED AUDIT PROCEDURES.

The National Transportation Safety Board, in consultation with the Inspector General of the Department of Transportation, shall develop and implement comprehensive internal audit controls for its financial programs based on the findings and recommendations of the private sector audit firm contract entered into by the Board in March, 2000. The improved internal audit controls shall, at a minimum, address Board asset management systems, including systems for accounting management, debt collection, travel, and property and inventory management and control.

SEC. 12. AUTHORITY OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter III of chapter 11 of subtitle II is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§1137. Authority of the Inspector General

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Inspector General of the Department of Transportation, in ac-

cordance with the mission of the Inspector General to prevent and detect fraud and abuse, shall have authority to review only the financial management, property management, and business operations of the National Transportation Safety Board, including internal accounting and administrative control systems, to determine compliance with applicable Federal laws, rules, and regulations.

“(b) DUTIES.—In carrying out this section, the Inspector General shall—

“(1) keep the Chairman of the Board and Congress fully and currently informed about problems relating to administration of the internal accounting and administrative control systems of the Board;

“(2) issue findings and recommendations for actions to address such problems; and

“(3) report periodically to Congress on any progress made in implementing actions to address such problems.

“(c) ACCESS TO INFORMATION.—In carrying out this section, the Inspector General may exercise authorities granted to the Inspector General under subsections (a) and (b) of section 6 of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.).

“(d) REIMBURSEMENT.—The Inspector General shall be reimbursed by the Board for the costs associated with carrying out activities under this section.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The subchapter analysis for such subchapter is amended by adding at the end the following: “1137. Authority of the Inspector General.”.

SEC. 13. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 1118 is amended to read as follows:

“§1118. Authorization of appropriations

“(a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated for the purposes of this chapter \$57,000,000 for fiscal year 2000, \$65,000,000 for fiscal year 2001, and \$72,000,000 for fiscal year 2002, such sums to remain available until expended.

“(b) EMERGENCY FUND.—The Board has an emergency fund of \$2,000,000 available for necessary expenses of the Board, not otherwise provided for, for accident investigations. Amounts equal to the amounts expended annually out of the fund are authorized to be appropriated to the emergency fund.”.

SEC. 14. CREDITING OF LAW ENFORCEMENT FLIGHT TIME.

In determining whether an individual meets the aeronautical experience requirements imposed under section 44703 of title 49, United States Code, for an airman certificate or rating, the Secretary of Transportation shall take into account any time spent by that individual operating a public aircraft as defined in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code, if that aircraft is—

(1) identifiable by category and class; and

(2) used in law enforcement activities.

SEC. 15. TECHNICAL CORRECTION.

Section 46301(d)(2) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking “46302, 46303,” and inserting “46301(b), 46302, 46303, 46318.”.

SEC. 16. CONFIRMATION OF INTERIM FINAL RULE ISSUANCE UNDER SECTION 45301.

The publication, by the Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration, in the Federal Register of June 6, 2000 (65 FR 36002) of an interim final rule concerning Fees for FAA Services for Certain Flights (Docket No. FAA-00-7018) is deemed to have been issued in accordance with the requirements of section 45301(b)(2) of title 49, United States Code.

SEC. 17. AERONAUTICAL CHARTING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 44721 of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking paragraphs (3) and (4) of subsection (c); and

(2) by adding at the end of subsection (g)(1) the following:

“(D) CONTINUATION OF PRICES.—The price of any product created under subsection (d) may correspond to the price of a comparable product produced by a department of the United States Government as that price was in effect on September 30, 2000, and may remain in effect until modified by regulation under section 9701 of title 31, United States Code.”; and

(3) by adding at the end of subsection (g) the following:

(5) CREDITING AMOUNTS RECEIVED.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, amounts received for the sale of products created and services performed under this section shall be fully credited to the account of the Federal Aviation Administration that funded the provision of the products or services and shall remain available until expended.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) take effect on October 1, 2000.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) and the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. SHOWS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER).

Mr. SHUSTER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume and I simply want to summarize by saying that while NTSB is a small agency, it is a highly respected agency for the quality of its accident investigations. It has also taken on the responsibility for assisting families of airline accident victims, a responsibility that we assigned to them in 1996.

The authorization for the agency expired last year, and this bill before us now will rectify that problem.

The reauthorization bill before you now adopts several changes to the Board's underlying statute. These changes should improve the operations of the NTSB. Many of these changes were requested by the agency itself.

The bill authorizes an increase in funding for the agency; not as much as the agency wanted, but still enough to ensure the Board's efficiency and technical competence.

The bill also—

Allows accident investigators out in the field to get full time-and-a-half overtime when they have to work nights and weekends trying to discover the cause of a crash;

Ensures that voice and video recorders in planes, trains, and trucks will only be used in accident investigations and will not be released to the media for sensational purposes;

Makes clear that NTSB accident investigations take priority over other investigations except in very limited cases where procedures are established for the FBI to take over; and

For the first time, the DOT Inspector General is given responsibility to review the financial and property management of the NTSB to ensure there is no waste, fraud, or abuse.

This is a Senate bill but it is very similar to the NTSB reauthorization bill that the House passed last year.

That bill is more fully described in House Report 106-335.

I urge the House to approve this bill.

Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN), the distinguished chairman of the sub-

committee who has been so deeply involved in moving this legislation forward.

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania, our very distinguished chairman, for yielding me this time. First of all, I want to start out by saying that being allowed to be chairman of the House Subcommittee on Aviation has really been the highlight of my congressional career; and that would not have been possible without the support of the chairman, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER). I am very proud to have served with a man of his character. He has served with great honor and distinction in this House, and I appreciate very much his support for me in this position.

Madam Speaker, this bill is very similar to a bill, H.R. 2910, that passed the House by a vote of 420 to 4 on September 30 of last year. This bill reauthorizes the National Transportation Safety Board for 3 years and provides funding of \$57 million, \$65 million, and \$72 million over those 3 years.

The safety board is the agency responsible for investigating transportation accidents and promoting transportation safety. The board investigates accidents, conducts safety studies, and coordinates all Federal assistance for families of victims of catastrophic transportation accidents. It also reviews appeals of certificate and civil penalty actions against airmen and certificate actions against seamen. Most importantly, the NTSB makes safety recommendations.

Based on its investigations, Federal, State, and local government agencies and the transportation industry take actions that will prevent similar accidents in the future. The aviation safety record is remarkably good, and the safety board deserves a lot of the credit for that.

Nonaviation people are amazed when I speak to them and tell them that, unfortunately, we have more people killed in 4½ months on the Nation's highways than have been killed in all U.S. aviation accidents combined since the Wright Brothers' flight in 1903. Much of that great aviation safety record has been aided by the work of the NTSB.

This legislation makes some changes to the agency's governing statute that should help make the board even more effective. I will list those changes in the statement that I will provide for the RECORD.

The bill also includes several technical changes that were not in either the House or Senate bills. These changes would ensure that the FAA can assess penalties against unruly passengers or passengers who tamper with laboratory smoke detectors. It would ensure that the FAA can issue its overflight fee rule as an interim final rule, and ensures that the FAA can keep the money it makes from the sale of aeronautical charts.

I would also like to make special mention of the provision in the bill on

law enforcement flight time. Currently, pilots who fly for police or for sheriff departments cannot count their flight time toward the requirements of a civil air license. This bill would change that. It would direct the FAA to count the time a pilot flies a law enforcement aircraft. This is similar to consideration given to military pilots. I know it will be very helpful to the sheriff departments in Tennessee, but it will also benefit our hardworking law enforcement pilots all over the country.

Madam Speaker, the NTSB has conducted a lengthy and thorough investigation of the TWA 800 crash. I personally do not believe that Chairman Hall, or any of the many good people at the NTSB, would be a party to any type of cover-up about this or any other crash, but I have a few comments that I would like to make about that.

I also recognize that there are many good, sincere, honest, intelligent people across this country who do not agree with or believe the NTSB conclusions about the TWA 800 crash. I want to assure everyone that neither I nor any member of our subcommittee or staff would ever have participated in or aided in any knowing way in any type of cover-up.

1600

In addition to our public hearings, I personally went to New York with staff to view that wreckage. We had private briefings by the FBI and others. I met with some of the eyewitnesses and people investigating this wreck. I met with Commander Donaldson after one of our hearings.

The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TRAFICANT) called one day and asked if he could conduct his own personal investigation. I gave him my approval for that.

I asked one of my constituents, Mike Coffield, the Continental Airlines pilot, to investigate this crash. We heard from family members of victims of this terrible tragedy.

Reed Irvine, a man for whom I have very great respect, recently came to my office at my request so that we could discuss this further because of ads and other activities by him and his group.

I doubt that we will ever be able to answer all the questions surrounding this crash to everyone's satisfaction. I personally find it almost impossible to believe that a U.S. Navy ship shot a missile that hit this plane either accidentally or intentionally.

I know very little about ships and missiles, but I do not believe that just one person could shoot off one without someone knowing about it. If several people were involved, someone would have talked to his wife or somebody, in my opinion.

I told Mr. Irvine this, if some terrorist group shot this plane down, they probably would have claimed credit. Yet I am still willing to read any report or listen to anyone about this.

Our government should not have stopped (Mr. SANDERS) or anyone else from investigating this crash. If anyone can come up with the final, definite, conclusive answer on this, more power to them.

I am most concerned, however, about the family members of the victims of this crash. I believe closure is an over-used, misused word because I do not believe a family member ever gets closure on something like this, particularly if they lost a child. But I certainly do not want to do anything to prolong the agony of any TWA 800 family member. They have suffered too much already.

I will say that, if any family member of victims of this crash wants me to look into this further, I certainly will do so. Absent that type of request, I will simply commend all those at the NTSB and all those private citizens, Mr. Irvine, Commander Donaldson, the many eyewitnesses and many, many others who have tried so hard to seek the causes of and/or solve the puzzle or answer the questions raised by the crash of TWA 800.

I also would like to commend Mr. Jim Hall, who I think has done an outstanding job as chairman of the NTSB during his tenure on that board.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that I am completing 6 years as chairman of the Subcommittee on Aviation. I have already thanked the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Chairman SHUSTER), who is the man mainly responsible for my having been allowed to be chairman. But I would also like to say that it has been a great honor and privilege to work with the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), who preceded me as chairman of the Subcommittee on Aviation.

I do not believe a person could have had a better ranking member than the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI). Our working relationship has been 100 percent friendly and cordial. I am proud that the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure is considered to be probably the most bipartisan committee or nonpartisan committee in this entire Congress.

I want, finally, to say a personal thank you to a wonderful staff: David Schaffer of the Republican staff, who has been head of that staff for so many years and is such a professional person and on whom I have relied so much, Adam Tsao, Jim Coon, Donna McLean, Ron Chamberlin, David Balloff, John Glaser, Felicia Goss, Diane Rogers, and Amanda Wind on our staff; and on the Democratic staff: Stacie Soumbeniotis, Tricia Loveland, Amy Denicore, Paul Feldman, David Traynham, Mary Walsh, Colleen Corr, Rachel Carr, and Michelle Mihin. All of them have been so helpful and I am very, very grateful to them.

I apologize for taking so much time. I urge passage of this bill.

The bill reauthorizes the agency for 3 years and provides modest increases in its authorized funding levels;

It makes clear that the NTSB has priority over other agencies in the investigation of transportation accidents;

However, the legislation does provide a procedure whereby the Safety Board would turn an investigation over to the FBI when a criminal act may be involved;

The bill allows the Safety Board to enter into agreements with foreign governments, after consultation with the Department of State;

The bill also provides overtime pay to NTSB investigators who have to work at the scene of an accident during nights and weekends.

However, this overtime is capped at one and a half percent of the agency's appropriation to ensure that overtime is not abused.

Also, the bill ensures that information on surface vehicle recorders and cockpit video recorders will not be disclosed. This is the same protection now provided for cockpit voice recordings. At our Subcommittee hearing last April, airline pilots expressed concern about the public release of cockpit video recordings for purely sensationalistic purposes. This bill protects them from that.

Another important provision in this bill is the section that provides authority to the Department of Transportation's Inspector General to oversee the business and financial management of the Board. Indeed, there are several provisions in this bill that ensure continued sound financial management at the Safety Board. These include restrictions on non-emergency travel and the implementation of internal audit controls.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of S. 2412, the National Transportation Safety Board Amendments Act of 2000.

S. 2412 reauthorizes the NTSB for 3 years so it can continue in playing a critical role in ensuring the safety of the United States transportation system.

Since 1997, the board has investigated more than 7,000 accidents, issued over 60 major reports covering all transportation modes (aviation, highway, transit, maritime, railroad, and pipeline/hazardous materials), and proffered more than 1,100 safety recommendations.

The NTSB currently has a workforce of approximately 400 full-time employees, many of whom are charged with investigating thousands of complex aviation accidents both in the U.S. and abroad. It is, therefore, important to ensure that the NTSB has the funds needed to continue its preeminent role in investigating such accidents.

Accordingly, S. 2412 increases NTSB's funding steadily over the next 3 years: \$57 million in FY 2000, \$65 million in FY 2001, and \$72 million in FY 2002. This funding will be used to permit NTSB to hire more technical experts as well as to provide better training for its current workforce.

In addition to increased funding, S. 2412 strengthens oversight of financial matters at the agency by requiring NTSB to hire a chief financial officer and improving its internal audit procedures. S. 2412 also vests the DOT Inspector General with the authority to review the NTSB's financial manage-

ment and business operations. The DOT Inspector General's authority is specifically limited to financial matters, however, so as not to undermine the NTSB's independence.

Equally important, S. 2412 provides the NTSB with the authority to grant appropriate overtime pay to all of its accident investigators while on an accident scene to give these professionals parity with other Federal agency investigators who are paid for extra hours worked.

S. 2412 also reaffirms NTSB's priority over an accident scene unless the Attorney General, in consultation with the NTSB chairman, determines that the accident may have been caused by an intentional criminal act. In that case, the NTSB would relinquish its priority over the scene, but such relinquishment would not in any way interfere with the board's authority to continue its probable cause investigation.

This is important because accident scenes can often be chaotic with many local, State, and Federal investigative agencies on scene, especially where accidents are not only being investigated for probable cause, but also when criminal activity is suspected.

S. 2412 ensures that the proper coordination between various investigative agencies will take place during a complex accident investigation.

S. 2412 will ensure that the NTSB workforce is well funded and well trained to meet its future challenges.

I urge my colleagues to support this critical piece of legislation.

I compliment the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Chairman SHUSTER), the gentleman from Tennessee (Chairman DUNCAN) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) for their efforts.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of S. 2412, the National Transportation Safety Board Amendments Act of 2000. S. 2412 reauthorizes the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) for three years to ensure that it continues to play a critical role in maintaining and improving the safety of the United States transportation system.

This agency's roots stem from as far back as 1926 when the Air Commerce Act vested the Department of Commerce with the authority to investigate aircraft accidents. During the 1966 consolidation of various transportation agencies into the Department of Transportation (DOT), the NTSB was created as an independent agency within DOT to investigate accidents in all transportation modes. In 1974, in further resolve to ensure that NTSB retain its independence, Congress re-established the Board as a totally separate entity distinct from DOT. Since that time, the NTSB has investigated more than 100,000 aviation accidents, and more than 10,000 surface transportation accidents. The American traveling public is much safer today due to the hard work of the NTSB staff in conducting investigations and pursuing safety recommendations.

In the last three years alone, the Board has investigated more than 7,000 accidents and issued more than 60 major reports covering all transportation modes (aviation, highway, transit, maritime, railroad, and pipeline/hazardous

materials). The Board has also issued more than 1,100 safety recommendations—many of which have been adopted by Congress, federal, state and local governments, and the affected industries.

The NTSB's tireless efforts in investigating accidents and issuing recommendations have led to innovative safety enhancements, such as manual cutoff switches for airbags, measures to prevent runway incursions, and countermeasures against operator fatigue in all modes of transportation. The NTSB has promoted the installation of more sophisticated voice recorders to enhance its ability to investigate aircraft accidents. In addition, the NTSB recently held a General Aviation Accident Prevention Symposium, which brought together all sectors of the growing general aviation community to proactively address safety issues gleaned from GA accident investigations. In 1999 alone, there were 691 aviation-related fatalities—628 of which occurred in general aviation. Last night's news of the tragic crash that took the life of Missouri Governor Mel Carnahan, his son, and a campaign aide underscores the importance of the NTSB's work, both in investigating and preventing accidents.

Despite a small workforce of approximately 400 full-time employees, the NTSB has provided its investigative expertise in thousands of complex aviation accidents—including its painstaking review of the TWA 800 crash. The NTSB is also frequently called upon to assist in aviation accident investigations of foreign flag carriers—such as Egypt Air Flight 990, and in accident investigations in foreign countries. The demands upon this small agency, with its highly trained, professional staff, will only grow with the aviation market's ever-increasing globalization.

To maintain its position as the world's preeminent investigative agency, it is imperative that the NTSB has the resources necessary to handle the increasingly complex accident investigations. S. 2412 ensures that NTSB has the necessary resources by increasing funding steadily and sensibly over the next three years: \$57 million in FY 2000; \$65 million in FY2001; and \$72 million in FY2002. This funding will be used to permit NTSB to hire more technical experts as well as to provide better training for its current workforce, as was recommended in a recent study by the RAND Corporation. Dramatic changes in technology, such as glass cockpits in aviation, demand such an investment.

However, with this increase in funding also comes the requirement to strengthen the oversight of financial matters at the agency. S. 2412 requires the NTSB to hire a Chief Financial Officer and to improve its internal audit procedures. In addition, S. 2412 vests the DOT Inspector General with the authority to review the financial management and business operations of the NTSB. This will help ensure that money is well spent and the potential for fraud and abuse is reduced. The DOT Inspector General's authority is specifically limited to financial matters, however, so as not to undermine the NTSB's independence.

Equally important, S. 2412 provides the NTSB with the authority to grant appropriate overtime pay to all of its accident investigators while on-scene. These competent individuals are oftentimes called upon to work upwards of 60, 70 or 80 hours per week in extreme conditions—whether in the swamps of the Florida

Everglades or the chilly waters off the Atlantic Ocean—side-by-side with other federal agency investigators who are paid for extra hours worked. Moving to this type of parity is the least that we can do to show our appreciation for the efforts of these dedicated professionals.

As we have learned from the tragic TWA 800 crash, accident scenes can often be chaotic with many local, state, and federal investigative agencies on scene. This is especially true where accidents are not only being investigated for probable cause, but also when criminal activity is suspected. Proper coordination between these various investigative agencies performing very important, albeit very different, functions is of paramount importance. S. 2412 reaffirms NTSB's priority over an accident scene unless the Attorney General, in consultation with the NTSB Chairman, determines that the accident may have been caused by an intentional criminal act. In that case, the NTSB would relinquish its priority over the scene, but such relinquishment will not, in any way, interfere with the Board's authority to continue its probable cause investigation.

Having a well funded, well-trained NTSB workforce to meet the challenges of the 21st Century is of the utmost importance for the American traveling public. I compliment Chairman SHUSTER, Subcommittee Chairman DUNCAN, and Subcommittee Ranking Member LIPINSKI for their efforts on this bill.

I urge my colleagues to support this critical piece of legislation.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 2412.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GEORGE E. BROWN, JR. UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5110) to designate the United States courthouse located at 3470 12th Street in Riverside, California, as the "George E. Brown, Jr. United States Courthouse".

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 5110

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

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION.

The United States courthouse located at 3470 12th Street in Riverside, California, shall be known and designated as the "George E. Brown, Jr. United States Courthouse".

SEC. 2. REFERENCES.

Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the United States court-

house referred to in section 1 shall be deemed to be a reference to the "George E. Brown, Jr. United States Courthouse".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) and the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. SHOWS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER).

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, George Brown is one of the most highly regarded Members of this Congress. And for so many years and while on the other side of the aisle, I don't know of a single instance in which he put partisan politics ahead of what he believed to be best for this country. And so it is with a great sense of opportunity that I lay before us today the opportunity to recognize a very distinguished American.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5110 designates the United States courthouse in Riverside, California as the "George E. Brown Jr. United States Courthouse." George Edward Brown Jr. was born in Holtville, California on March 6, 1920. He attended public schools in Holtville and graduated from El Centro Junior College and the University of California at Los Angeles.

Congressman Brown spent a lifetime in public service working for the betterment of this country. His life work started in the 1930's fighting color barriers and integrating housing at UCLA, and continued through the 1990's when he was working toward improving the environment and expanding economic opportunity for all citizens.

Although he first registered as a conscientious objector to the war, Congressman Brown went on to serve as a Second Lieutenant in the Army during World War II. He returned from the war and began his career with the civil service department of the City of Los Angeles. In 1954 he was elected mayor of Monterey Park an LA suburb, in 1958 he was elected to the California State Assembly and served in the assembly until 1962. While in the assembly he introduced a bill to ban the use of lead in gasoline.

In 1962 he was elected to the United States House of Representatives. He served for four terms and was an ardent fighter for civil rights legislation in 1964. In 1970 he ran for the U.S. Senate and was defeated. He returned to the House with a successful election in 1972 and served in the House for the next 13 succeeding Congresses.

Having his degree in Industrial Physics, Congressman Brown was a strong advocate for the advancement of sound science and technology policy. He was the Chairman of the Science Committee for the 102nd and 103rd Congresses. He also worked on policies for energy and resource conservation, sustainable agriculture, national information systems, and the integration of technology in education.

Congressman Brown died in his 18th term at the age of 79, on July 14, 1999. This is a fitting tribute to a dedicated public servant. I support this measure, and urge my colleagues to support it as well.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5110, a bill to designate the United