

been one traffic jam from the Alexandria suburbs to New Haven, Connecticut. But we had Amtrak, and we did not have that desperate situation.

We have also had people take to the floor and talk about what is happening in the Midwest and with the Texas Eagle down through the South. Mr. Speaker, we find that every administration since President Nixon was in office have underestimated Amtrak's customers who continue to ride, often not just the underfunded system and often-uncertain service, but in some cases the equipment has been deplorable. These same passengers deserve better treatment from us. They include people who ride in rural communities. They are people increasingly in the tourism and resort activities where people are traveling the rails for pleasure. There are thousands of businesspeople who are involved with these critical corridors. In fact, we are finding that each and every day in the New York City area, Amtrak controls the flow of 1,100 trains and more than 300,000 passengers in and out of that city.

Despite a lack of clarity, the administration, and we have called them time and again when they have appeared before us on rail-related activities, our rail subcommittee in the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure has asked the administration repeatedly, they have been in office now a year and a half, what is their position? What is their plan? How can we work together? We have received no response.

Mr. Speaker, we have developed a bipartisan alternative under the leadership of the gentleman from New York (Mr. QUINN), the Chair, and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. CLEMENT), the ranking member. It has been supported by over 162 Members in this body, a broad bipartisan coalition. It has a majority of the Senate ready to move forward with ongoing programs that will get us through this year, not with a Band-Aid but in a way that actually enhances operation and security and puts us in a good position for the next Congress for full reauthorization.

We should not be held ransom for a \$205 million loan guarantee conditioned upon meeting some vague principles that, to the extent to which you can determine them, would be destructive. I strongly urge, Mr. Speaker, that we move forward, that we deal with the funding this year and be in a situation in the next Congress when we can reauthorize surface, reauthorize aviation, reauthorize rail. Give it the package that the American public deserves.

VIOLENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to speak to the very disturbing trend that we have

seen in the growing violence in the Middle East of Palestinian terrorists deliberately targeting Israeli children.

As we all know, there has been a tremendous increase over the last 20 months in the number of deaths, fatalities and woundings from these suicide bombers, homicide bombers. But what is particularly disturbing is what I see as an emerging trend in all of this to specifically try to target children.

I want to show to my colleagues here a picture and talk about these two young people. The first one I want to talk about is this baby over here, Shalhevet Pass. Shalhevet was literally in her stroller being pushed by her parents when a Palestinian sniper opened fire on the family. What is very, very disturbing about this particular incident is that, and this was based on the investigation after the event, it appeared as though the Palestinian sniper who was shooting at them from a hill specifically targeted the baby and targeted the baby first. This baby was shot by a gunshot wound to the head while in a stroller.

The next one I want to talk about is this little girl right here, Danielle Shefi. A Palestinian gunman broke into the family home. The mother had retreated into the children's bedroom. She was with two brothers, and the Palestinian gunman first shot Danielle and killed Danielle, then proceeded to shoot the mother and the two brothers. The mother and two brothers managed to survive. If you look at some of the other trends in these Palestinian attacks, there was a suicide or homicide bomber who attacked a discotheque filled with young people. Over and over again it appears as though the Palestinians are specifically attacking children.

The Palestinians tried to claim in their defense that the Israeli Defense Forces are just as bad, that they shoot Palestinian children and they made quite a big deal about a particular case. It involved the death of a 12-year-old Mohammed A-Dura during an exchange of gunfire between the Israeli Defense Forces and Palestinians. This little boy was killed. He got in the crossfire somehow. The Palestinians claim that the Israeli Defense Forces specifically targeted Mohammed. The IDF did a review. This is not part of Israeli policy, obviously, to attack children. They claimed, based on their review, that it was impossible for the Israeli Defense Forces to have killed this young boy. The Palestinians, of course, dismiss this as propaganda, but what was very interesting is German public television decided to do an independent review, and they based this on the ballistics, the angle of entry of the bullet into the boy, that it was impossible for the Israeli soldiers to have killed that boy, but that he was actually killed by the Palestinians.

Some people may say this is hard to believe, that the Palestinians would shoot a Palestinian boy, but let us keep in mind that they sent a 10-year-

old boy as a suicide bomber to try to blow up a bunch of buildings that ultimately collapsed and killed, I think, 13 Israeli Defense Forces. They have sent other teenage suicide bombers. It is very, very clear, at least in my opinion and based on my review of this issue, that they not only are targeting children, Israeli children, but they will even kill their own children for the purpose of furthering their political agenda.

It is my opinion, Mr. Speaker, that this is reprehensible. This is horrible. This is beyond the pale. Some people will try to justify this, claiming that they have no choice, that they have to resort to this. We should never allow this sort of thing to go on. I think it is perfectly justifiable for the Israeli Government to reoccupy the Palestinian territories. Land for peace has not worked. It has actually led to even more violence. The Palestinians have to do what the President said. They need to abandon violence. They need to abandon these suicide attacks. They need to establish democracy before we will ever have lasting peace in the Middle East.

AMTRAK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to speak on a very real national crisis we will face if we fail to fully and properly fund Amtrak. Contrary to the administration's rhetoric, this is not a case of the boy who cried wolf or Chicken Little claiming the sky is falling. Make no mistake, an Amtrak shutdown for any length of time, however temporary, will be disastrous for this country, not only for interstate business/leisure travel but for daily commuter travel as well.

In my home State of Massachusetts, Amtrak is under contract with the Metropolitan Boston Transit Authority to provide commuter rail service to thousands upon thousands of working people who depend on Amtrak to get to and from their jobs each and every day. An Amtrak shutdown will paralyze our mobility and the economy right along with it. These commuters will be forced on to already overcrowded highways, exacerbating public safety problems and adding to environmental pollution.

The worst part of the situation, Mr. Speaker, that we find ourselves facing is that the solution has been known to the administration for months. Amtrak's management has clearly and consistently said that Amtrak will have to shut down if the administration does not take swift, deliberate action to provide the \$200 million it needs to operate in the short term.

The administration's response to this imminent crisis has been to do nothing, absolutely nothing, nothing but

posture and engage in a reckless game of brinksmanship. The administration continues to cling to the myths promoted by the Amtrak Reform Commission that privatization of many of the lines is necessary. We all know that privatization of our rail system will not work, and if anyone has any doubt about that, they should call our friends in Great Britain where delays and safety problems are rampant due to privatization.

We also know that none of our transportation systems operate without Federal support. In fiscal year 2001, our highways received more than \$33 billion in Federal funding. The airline industry received \$13 billion in regular funding and a \$15 billion bailout. In the same fiscal year, Amtrak received \$521 million, which represents less than 1 percent of all Federal transportation spending and far less than the \$1.2 billion it needs to properly operate.

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Nevertheless, on the eve of a national crisis, the administration has said that it does not want to go above last year's funding level for Amtrak.

Mr. Speaker, instead of walking away from Amtrak, instead of turning our backs on the men and women who work for Amtrak, this administration should be running to invest in a national passenger inner city rail system to complement our aviation and highway systems. Rail is regarded as the cheapest, most energy-efficient, environmentally sound, comfortable and reliable mode of travel. It is the preferred mode of travel by thousands and thousands of Americans. Ridership in this country is rapidly increasing, and the potential is unlimited. America deserves a first-rate passenger rail system; and accordingly, Amtrak deserves to be fairly funded, both now and in the future.

Therefore, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 4545 to keep Amtrak and America moving forward; and I urge the Bush administration to stop the politics, to stop the posturing and do the right thing: give Amtrak the resources it needs to run.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KERNS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MALONEY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

SUPPORT FOR AMTRAK LOAN GUARANTEE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a \$200 million loan guarantee for the Amtrak national passenger rail system and to urge the ad-

ministration to expeditiously and favorably respond to Amtrak's request.

Amtrak services well over 500 cities and towns throughout the Nation and is a safe, efficient, and affordable mode of transporting millions of Americans to work and leisure activities each year.

The events of September 11 clearly underscore the need for an alternative mode of transportation to air travel. In the 8 months since the 9-11 attacks, Amtrak ridership has remained strong, despite a weakened economy, significant reductions in travel and tourism, and steep declines in domestic air travel.

In my own congressional district, the city of Richmond, Virginia, has invested over \$48 million in the restoration of the historic Main Street Station. Amtrak will be a major provider of service; and after 10 years of planning, the first phase of renovations is now finally under way and trains are expected to begin stopping at the Main Street Station within the next 6 to 8 months.

Mr. Speaker, passenger rail service is an essential component to our plans to create a multimodal transportation center at the Main Street Station, and an Amtrak shutdown will leave a significant gap in our region's transportation network.

A shutdown of Amtrak will also lead to the possible halt in other linked services, including the Virginia Railway Express, which transports 12,000 riders each day, many coming into Washington, D.C. on rail rather than adding to the congestion on Interstate 395.

Mr. Speaker, each year, this Congress appropriates significant dollars in the way of subsidies to our highways and national aviation system; yet we fail to provide the same level of support and commitment to passenger rail. A responsible Federal investment in our Nation's passenger rail system is long overdue. I believe this Congress is ready to work toward that end; but in the short term, I urge the administration to make available the resources that Amtrak needs to sustain its national operations.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CUMMINGS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

SUPPORT EMERGENCY AMTRAK FUNDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on a matter of utmost importance for the transportation, economic, and environmental needs of our Nation,

and the Northeast in particular, and that is the survival of Amtrak.

For 31 years the Amtrak rail system has provided an essential service to millions of Americans, providing safe, reliable travel at an affordable price. It has sought to balance competing public service and commercial objectives, but has never been given adequate resources to deliver either objective fully. And now, without an immediate infusion of \$200 million in emergency funds, an Amtrak shutdown could occur within days. This will cause serious disruptions for commuters and travelers everywhere.

The fact is, funding for Amtrak is not simply an issue of transportation. It is an issue of economics, commerce, and livability.

In my State of Connecticut, Amtrak's service is a vital component of daily life, as it is to thousands of cities and towns along the east coast. Over 1 million Connecticut citizens rely on Amtrak annually, 370,000 in my hometown of New Haven alone. So many people there rely on Amtrak to commute to work from New York City. Others rely on it to bring commerce and tourism into cities without commuter airline service. In the Northeast, people travel Amtrak because it is, quite simply, the most convenient and time-efficient method of traveling from city to city, alleviating the heavy rush-hour traffic faced by so many commuters today. In doing so, it is a major contributor to reducing emissions that contribute to respiratory illnesses like asthma. That helps us keep our air clean and our children healthy.

Amtrak means jobs as well. They own and operate a rail yard in New Haven, Connecticut, where maintenance and equipment repair take place. One can only imagine how busy they are, given the continual underfunding of Amtrak. All in all, Amtrak employs nearly 700 employees in Connecticut alone.

Since September 11, I might add, Americans are looking for alternatives to commercial airlines; and despite our best efforts to make our airline security the best in the world, many Americans still fear for their safety. Amtrak has proven that it is a viable transportation alternative.

With so many concerns regarding air traffic congestion, from safety to overcrowded skies, it simply makes sense that we have in place an alternative mode of transportation that will alleviate the stress currently on our air traffic controllers and our airline security forces. The fact is, more choices means less risk to our people, less stress, healthier communities and, thus, a more livable region.

For over 3 decades, funding for America's passenger railroad has nearly been enough to keep the system operating on a year-to-year basis, which prevents it from meeting its long-term public service mission, not to mention its capital obligations.

The administration's budget for Amtrak requests \$521 million for 2003, less