

Any record votes on postponed questions will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules but not before 6:30 p.m. today.

FEDERAL TRANSIT FORMULA GRANTS FLEXIBILITY RETENTION ACT

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5157) to amend section 5307 of title 49, United States Code, to allow transit systems in urbanized areas that, for the first time, exceeded 200,000 in population according to the 2000 census to retain flexibility in the use of Federal transit formula grants in fiscal year 2003, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 5157

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

SECTION 1. URBANIZED AREA FORMULA GRANTS.

Section 5307(b) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking the last sentence of paragraph (1);

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (3) and (4), respectively;

(3) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

“(2) SPECIAL RULE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2003.—

“(A) INCREASED FLEXIBILITY.—The Secretary may make grants under this section, from funds made available to carry out this section for fiscal year 2003, to finance the operating cost of equipment and facilities for use in mass transportation in an urbanized area with a population of at least 200,000 as determined under the 2000 decennial census of population if—

“(i) the urbanized area had a population of less than 200,000 as determined under the 1990 Federal decennial census of population;

“(ii) a portion of the urbanized area was a separate urbanized area with a population of less than 200,000 as determined under the 1990 Federal decennial census of population; or

“(iii) the area was not designated as a urbanized area as determined under the 1990 Federal decennial census of population.

“(B) MAXIMUM AMOUNTS.—Amounts made available pursuant to subparagraphs (A)(i) and (A)(ii) shall be no more than the amount apportioned in fiscal year 2002 to the urbanized area with a population of less than 200,000 as determined in the 1990 Federal decennial census of population. Amounts made available pursuant to subparagraph (A)(iii) shall be no more than the amount apportioned under this section for fiscal year 2003.”; and

(4) in paragraph (3) (as redesignated by paragraph (2) of this section) by aligning subparagraph (C) with subparagraphs (A) and (B).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI).

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

The Transit Operating Flexibility Act, the bill before us, is bipartisan legislation that will allow the transit systems in 52 communities that grew to more than 200,000 in population as

defined by the 2000 census to retain flexibility in the use of their Federal transit formula grants in budget year 2003.

H.R. 5157 was favorably reported without amendment by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on July 24 of this year. The bill now has a total of 45 original cosponsors. Legislation was developed with the assistance and cooperation of the Federal Transit Administration, and has been endorsed by the American Public Transportation Association.

The 2000 census made wholesale changes in urbanized area designations. Some of the communities that are crossing 200,000 in population simply grew since 1990. Others were absorbed into nearby major metropolitan areas. Yet others were combined with another nearby small city. Many of these communities were not aware they were going to cross 200,000 until the final urbanized area notice was published in the Federal Register in May of 2002.

Under current Federal transit law, areas of more than 200,000 cannot use Federal formula grant funds to pay for transit operating expenses. The Transit Operating Flexibility Act will allow the 52 communities affected by the 2000 census change to retain their operating flexibility in budget year 2003 to the same extent that they did in fiscal year 2002.

Without this legislation, some transit operators in the affected areas may be so strapped for resources that they will have to drastically reduce service or even shut their doors. We cannot allow a change in census definition to result in a loss of public transportation services.

This bill does not change the amount of transit formula funding that these communities or any other community will receive under TEA-21 in fiscal year 2003. The Federal Transit Administration will apportion formula grant funds to its grantees according to the 2000 census numbers as they are required by law to do. H.R. 5157 gives these 52 communities some breathing room to adjust to their new urbanized area status as they plan how to fund these transit services under their new urbanized area designation.

I urge that the House pass the bill that is before us, H.R. 5157.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I commend the subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI), and the ranking member, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BORSKI), for advancing legislation, H.R. 5157, that will allow local flexibility in the use of Federal transit funds in the newly designated urbanized areas over 200,000 population.

H.R. 5157 amends the Federal transit program to allow transit systems in urbanized areas that for the first time exceeded 200,000 in population to retain

flexibility in the use of Federal transit formula grants in fiscal year 2003 for operating and capital assistance.

Without this flexibility, some transit systems would not have sufficient revenues to continue to provide public transportation services. The lack of flexibility in the use of Federal transit formula funds may result in the interruption in transit services or unnecessary hardship on transit systems.

Mr. Speaker, as the committee moves forward with legislation to reauthorize the surface transportation programs, the flexibility needed for transit systems in urbanized areas will be addressed in the legislation.

In the interim, I urge the enactment of H.R. 5157.

Mr. OTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 5157. This bill will allow Boise, ID and dozens of other transit systems around the county to maintain bus and transit service.

Boise, like many other communities around the Nation, depends upon its Section 5307 grants under TEA-21 to meet the operating costs of maintaining bus service. Unfortunately, the current 5307 program restricts federal funds to capital costs when an area's population increases to over 200,000. Boise and 51 other cities crossed that benchmark in the last census and now face losing the funds they need for operating bus services.

When TEA-21 was passed in 1998 the potential disruption after a census was not taken into consideration. Forcing communities to make major changes in their financing is unfair, particularly when that program, and its rules, are to be reauthorized in less than a year.

H.R. 5157, Mr. Speaker, will prevent large disruptions in service Idaho and nationwide. It will protect the jobs of those who commute to work by public transit. It will help the environment, and relieve traffic congestion. It will give community leaders another option in planning the growth of their cities and enable our transit systems to build for the future.

Boise is one of the fastest growing areas in the Nation, and is suffering the growing pains of traffic congestion and air pollution. An integrated program of highway and transit development is essential to meeting growth. At the same time federally provided funds must be flexible enough to meet the unique needs and challenges of each community.

As this House prepares TEA-21 reauthorization I will fight for more generous and flexible funding of transit needs in Idaho and other fast-growing rural states.

I want to thank Chairman YOUNG of the full committee for introducing this bill, and Chairman PETRI for managing the debate today. I also want to thank Kelly Fairless of Valley Ride in Boise, Grant Jones of Boise Urban Stages, and Steve O'Neal of the Idaho Transportation Department of their work on behalf of Idaho transit, and the drivers and maintenance personnel for Valley Ride who work everyday to bring mobility to the people of the Treasure Valley.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by

the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5157.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECOGNIZING THE HEROISM AND COURAGE DISPLAYED BY AIRLINE FLIGHT ATTENDANTS EACH DAY

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 401) recognizing the heroism and courage displayed by airline flight attendants each day, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 401

Whereas over 100,000 men and women serve as airline flight attendants in the United States;

Whereas flight attendants dedicate themselves to serving and protecting their passengers;

Whereas flight attendants are responsible for customer service aboard an aircraft;

Whereas flight attendants react to dangerous situations as the first line of defense of airline passengers;

Whereas safety and security are a flight attendant's primary concerns;

Whereas flight attendants evacuate aircraft in emergency situations;

Whereas flight attendants defend passengers against hijackers, terrorists, and abusive passengers;

Whereas flight attendants handle in-flight medical emergencies;

Whereas flight attendants perform routine safety and service duties on board an aircraft;

Whereas 25 flight attendants lost their lives aboard 4 hijacked flights on September 11, 2001;

Whereas 5 flight attendants helped prevent United Airlines Flight 93 from reaching its intended target on September 11, 2001;

Whereas flight attendants provided assistance to passengers across the United States who had their flights diverted on September 11, 2001;

Whereas on December 22, 2001, flight attendants helped subdue attempted shoe bomber, Richard Reid, who attempted to kill all 185 passengers and 12 crew members on board American Airlines Flight 63; and

Whereas on February 7, 2002, flight attendants helped prevent Pablov Moreira, a Uruguayan citizen, from breaking into the cockpit during United Airlines Flight 855 from Miami to Buenos Aires: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) expresses profound gratitude to airline flight attendants for their daily service to make air travel safe;

(2) honors the courage and dedication of flight attendants;

(3) expresses support for the flight attendants who displayed heroism on September 11, 2001, and to all flight attendants who continue to display heroism each day; and

(4) directs the Clerk of the House of Representatives to send a copy of this resolution to a family member of each of the flight attendants killed on September 11, 2001.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI).

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 401, honoring the over 100,000 men and women who serve as flight attendants. As we near the final anniversary of the September 11 attacks, I think it is appropriate that we stop to recognize these everyday heroes.

America's flight attendants dedicated their lives to ensuring the safety and the security of their passengers. There are over 20,000 commercial airline flights each day, and on these flights, flight attendants put the well-being of each of their passengers ahead of their own. They are the first responders to all emergencies in the cabin of an aircraft. They provide in-flight medical assistance to passengers in need. They may be the only line of defense should terrorists once again attempt to take control of an airplane.

It was the flight attendants who subdued attempted shoe-bomber Richard Reid aboard American Flight 63 last September. Last year, 23 flight attendants lost their lives aboard the four hijacked flights on September 11. In recognition of their important role, the House overwhelmingly passed legislation that would significantly increase self-defense and situational training to aid flight attendants in the case of another terrorist hijacking.

I would like to express my profound gratitude for all airline flight attendants for their daily service to make air travel safe and secure, and urge the passage of this resolution.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I, too, want to commend the subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA), and the ranking member, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI), for their action on House Concurrent Resolution 401 that recognizes the largely unsung heroism that airline flight attendants display on a daily basis.

On September 11 of last year, 25 flight attendants lost their lives as a result of terrorist attacks. When they left their homes and loved ones that morning, I am sure that none of them knew what tragic events would unfold before the day's end, and what role they would play in it. Five flight attendants working on United Airlines Flight No. 93 helped prevent hijackers from reaching their intended target of Washington, D.C. I am sure that many of us have to give credit to them for perhaps saving our lives.

Everyday a workforce of 100,000 flight attendants make it their mission to ensure the safety of passengers that rely on them. In the war on terrorism, they can be compared to ground soldiers. They are our front line of defense. Not only did flight attendants display acts of heroism on September 11, but they also have repeatedly reacted courageously to thwart acts of terrorism on American aircraft.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to acknowledge the heroism and bravery of flight attendants. After September 11, when many were afraid to return to the air, these courageous workers devotedly returned to their jobs. I admire their sense of dedication and professional attitude. I urge my colleagues to support this very, very appropriate resolution.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of West Virginians and Americans as a whole, I want to express our deep appreciation for the flight attendants who provide outstanding service while ensuring public safety for thousands of Americans on a daily basis. In addition, I want to commend our Nation's flight attendants for their acts of heroism. A considerable number of them demonstrated their great courage during the September 11th attacks that occurred almost exactly one year ago today.

It should not be overlooked that in the days, weeks, and months following that terrible day, America's flight attendants bravely resumed their duties serving our flying public. This contribution aided the almost immediate restoration of air service, and it provides a profound demonstration of this country's refusal to let the terrorists win. Our flight attendants, and by extension, all of us would not allow a few evildoers to destroy our daily activities and our unique way of life.

As we approach the anniversary of September 11th, we must remember the contributions of this group of individuals who have so ably demonstrated their importance to this country and to its citizens. They stand as an example for the brave efforts of all hard-working Americans as we cope with the events and the aftermath of that infamous day.

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, a great many things changed on September 11, 2001. Among them, Americans began thinking differently about air travel, and we all gained a greater respect for those who are pledged to guarantee our safety as we fly.

For its part, Congress has moved to make air travel safer, and I have not doubt we will do more. But one of the main lines of defense against events in the air rests with the pilots and flight crews.

The professionalism, courage and common sense exhibited by these individuals is clearly exemplified in the actions of Madeline Amy Todd Sweeney, who was a flight attend aboard American Airlines Flight 11 on September 11. That was the first aircraft to crash into the World Trade Center.

Showing courage under pressure, Amy was one of the first individuals to use a cell phone and notify the world of the hijackings that were underway. Her last acts of bravery were critically important in identifying and exposing those terrorists who threatened our lives, our country and our values.

Ms. Sweeney is a true American hero. She was many things to many wonderful people, a