

significant impact on daily lives of all Americans. The United States has benefited greatly from having a strong transportation network. But, Mr. Speaker, we are approaching a crossroads.

In Texas our identified transportation needs outstrip available funding 3 to 1. Between 2000 and 2025, studies predict that the population of Texas will increase by 9 million people, and 90 percent, 8 million of those, will be living in metropolitan areas. The transportation system in Texas must be expanded to accommodate this projected population increase and related business growth. Important transportation projects all over the State of Texas are waiting in line for limited funding. Population growth, rise in construction costs, and increased transportation demands make this line a little bit longer every year.

We have three specific needs in Texas. The current pay-as-you-go funding system only covers about a third of our needs; the State's population growth is putting additional strain on aging roadways; and it just takes too long to get roads built.

As the only Texas Republican on the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, the reauthorization of Federal surface transportation programs is the top priority for my legislative agenda in the 108th Congress. Congress and the administration continue to discuss the appropriate level of funding in our transportation reauthorization bill, but we also need to ensure that current Federal transportation dollars are being spent wisely. Our charge as congressional Representatives is to protect dollars taken from the taxpayer by streamlining and improving the activities of our Federal Government.

As a member of the committee, I wanted to be certain that the U.S. Department of Transportation was ensuring the most efficient business practices within the agency. Last year I met with Inspector General Kenneth Mead to discuss the business practices of the agency and how the Congress can curb transportation spending. Inspector General Mead and I discussed the need for greater stewardship and oversight of the Department of Transportation's programs.

To date, the Department of Transportation has not changed the way the agency disburses transportation funding to State and local entities since President Eisenhower was in office. The inspector general recommended that if 1 percent of the \$500 billion spent over the last 10 years on transportation programs was saved, this would generate an additional \$5 billion. In fact, Mr. Speaker, this \$5 billion could equate to the amount of funding needed for 4 of the current 11 major transportation programs going on in the country today. I believe this practice could better assist the Department of Transportation in spending taxpayer dollars more efficiently.

There are examples of transportation projects that are done efficiently. Interstate 15 in Utah was finished ahead of schedule and under budget. In North Texas, the Dallas Area Rapid Transit system worked within their budget last year and actually returned over \$20 million in transit funding to the Federal Government. There are bad examples. Currently the poster child for bad examples is the Big Dig project in Boston, Massachusetts, and well over \$10 billion has been invested into that project.

Mr. Speaker, the General Accounting Office has estimated that for fiscal years 1998 to 2001, the highway account lost over \$6 billion because of the ethanol tax exemption and the General Fund transfer. Using the Treasury's projections of the gasohol tax receipts, based on current law, it is estimated that the highway fund will not collect \$13 billion because of the tax exemption from fiscal years 2002 to 2012 and almost \$7 billion from the general fund transfer between the same years.

Not paying interest on the Highway Trust Fund balance, the U.S. Department of Treasury estimates the Highway Trust Fund would have earned \$4 billion from September 1999 through February 2002. For those without a calculator handy, the total now is about \$30 billion.

Mr. Speaker, there are several policy initiatives that I have asked to be included in the highway reauthorization bill. These allow States more flexibility, especially in the realm of environmental streamlining, to get projects delivered on time. The RAPID Act, the Reforming, Accelerating, and Protecting Interstate Design Act of 2003, is one of these policy initiatives, and I urge the other Members to look at this legislation and to consider its inclusion in the overall transportation bill when it is voted out of committee and on the floor later this month.

The key to a 21st century transportation program is partnering private entities with the Federal Government and allowing large transportation systems to be built in a timely and sensible sequence. My bill allows large transportation systems to be built in less time and save money by constructing roads in commonsense increments as they are needed. Among other things, the bill would streamline and expedite project delivery by allowing an environmental assessment to be prepared simultaneously for several different elements of a project. It also expands States' authorities to collect tolls on interstate highways and expands the eligible uses of toll revenues collected on those facilities.

Mr. Speaker, in short, we all know we are approaching a crossroads in transportation in this country. My goal is to facilitate and allow States greater flexibility in handling these precious dollars that they will receive under this year's Federal transportation reauthorization. Mr. Speaker, it is my goal that families will be able to

spend as much time at the dinner table as they currently spend in traffic jams.

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

(Mr. DEFAZIO 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 Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

#### VACATING OF 5-MINUTE SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the 5-minute special orders of the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) are vacated.

There was no objection.

#### IRAQ 1-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, this Friday marks the 1-year anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. Over 10,000 Iraqi soldiers are dead. Thousands of Iraqi civilians are dead. Nearly 600 Americans, 600 of our sons and daughters, are dead. Thousands more have been wounded. Physically and emotionally, their lives changed forever.

But the dead and the wounded are not the only casualties of President Bush's decision to invade Iraq. Something else has died in those desert sands. Something else has been lost. Truth, nothing but the truth, honesty.

For over a year, the American people have been deceived by the words of the President and his administration. Officials at every level have misled the people that they were elected to serve. They have also misled the community of nations.

We asked for truth, and President Bush told us that "Iraq sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa." We asked for truth, and Vice President CHENEY repeatedly warned us of close ties between al Qaeda and Iraq. We asked for truth, and Secretary of State Colin Powell told the United Nations that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. Where are those weapons, Mr. Speaker? We asked for truth, and President Bush warned us that Iraq had planes that could fly weapons of mass destruction to our shores. We asked for truth, and they told us that our troops would be greeted as liberators, that Iraqi oil would pay to rebuild Iraq.

The falsehoods go on and on. I do not know whether this administration cannot stop or will not stop. I only know that they do not stop.

Just last Sunday National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice told the American people that "Iraq was the most dangerous regime in the world." Where is the truth?

Mr. Speaker, this administration would never be able to justify the war on Iraq because we cannot believe a word they say. They have never been honest about why we went to war. Just ask the former Treasury Secretary, Paul O'Neill. He told the Nation this administration was hell bent to go to war from day one, even before the President took oath of office.

And it is not just Iraq. It is almost on every issue, every comment, every deed. We cannot believe a word they say.

The Bush administration proposed a \$550 billion Medicare prescription drug bill and told us it will only cost \$400 billion. They cut down trees on public land and call it "Healthy Forests." They let industry pollute our air and call it "Clear Skies."

The President himself, President Bush, proudly told the American people that his budget would cut the deficit in 5 years, but his budget does not pay for Iraq. It does not pay for Afghanistan. It does not pay for his tax cuts for the rich.

Mr. Speaker, instead of searching for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, we should be searching for the truth right here at home. The Bible tells us, "The truth will set you free." And we will not find it at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue. The British novelist John Le Carre once said, "I think the single greatest enemy is the misuse of information, the perversion of the truth in the hands of terribly skillful people."

On the eve of the anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, we must reflect on these words. President Bush and his administration have misused information. They have perverted the truth, and now 600 Americans are dead, 10,000 civilians are dead in Iraq, hundreds of thousands of our sons and daughters, brave men and women, young people, 18, 19, 21, 23 years old, have been torn from their homes, from their families, and sent thousands of miles from home.

□ 2015

I would ask the President, what are they fighting for? I would ask him why so many of our young people are dead and wounded, but I do not want his answer. I do not want the answer from the Vice President or Secretary Powell or Secretary Rumsfeld. The American people do not want more of what we have been hearing for the past year. What we want, Mr. Speaker, and what we need more than anything else, is the truth.

#### WASHINGTON WASTE WATCHERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire). Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, along with several of my colleagues from the Washington Waste Watchers, a Republican working group dedicated to rooting out the rampant waste, fraud, and abuse in the Federal Government.

Over the last 3 weeks, my colleagues on the Committee on the Budget have been discussing the Federal budget and debating the growth of government spending. With a historically large deficit and with Federal spending now exceeding \$20,000 per American household for only the fourth time in American history and for the first time since World War II, many Democrats say, it is time to raise taxes yet again on the American people. Democrats are demanding that we roll back the tax relief that is responsible for the unparalleled growth that we have had in our economy, the tax relief that is bringing down our unemployment, the tax relief that amounts to only 1 percent, 1 percent of the \$13.1 trillion 5-year spending plan the Committee on the Budget approved today. In other words, 99 percent of our budget woes lay on the spending side.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, we have a spending problem, not a taxing problem in this town. And I, for one, say it is time to take the trash out of Washington. It is time to go after the costly waste, fraud, and abuse that permeate every nook and cranny in our Federal Government.

Albert Einstein once said that the definition of insanity was doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. Well, Mr. Speaker, each and every year, we pour more money into the Federal Government with scant accountability; and we continue to throw billions of dollars of American taxpayers' money away in waste, fraud, and abuse.

Let me discuss just a few examples. The Office of National Drug Control Policy awarded one advertising agency a \$150 million grant to craft ads keeping American youth away from drugs, even though this company had a history of overbilling the Federal Government. In 2002 the firm had to repay the government \$1.8 million for overstating its labor costs, and some representatives of the company are currently under indictment for filing false claims. Now, the ads are part of a 5-year, \$1 billion campaign whose effectiveness has been greatly scrutinized. A private research firm concluded that teenagers viewing the ads were no less likely to use drugs than if they had not viewed them and that some were even more likely to use drugs. False claims and ineffective ads, yet Democrats want to raise our taxes to pay for more of this.

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS, is currently undertaking a major crackdown on phoney claims for power wheelchairs and has recovered \$52.5 million thus

far. One 89-year-old from Florida said that she and her husband were approached by a salesperson who pressured them into an unnecessary order. Medicare was then billed \$15,500 for two scooters, a hospital bed, and a pressure mattress, none of which was needed. Another senior citizen testified in court that a claim had been submitted without her approval. She then demonstrated her lack of a need for a wheelchair by walking before the jurors. Mr. Speaker, \$52 million in fraud, yet Democrats want to raise our taxes to pay for even more of this.

The Drug Enforcement Agency contracts with the private sector to get translators and transcribers in many of its field divisions. However, the Inspector General's Office found such loose controls were in place that \$2.8 million of the \$9.4 million paid was going to unauthorized and unallowable expenses. Yet Democrats want to raise taxes to pay for more of this.

In the year 2000, an investigation discovered that the Department of Energy spent more than \$38 million developing information systems that it already had. They already had the systems in place. Yet Democrats want to raise taxes to pay for more of this.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a few examples of the rampant waste in our Federal Government. After we begin to look closely, we see that so many Federal programs routinely lose 10, 20, even 30 percent of their taxpayer-funded budgets to waste, fraud, and abuse and have for years.

There are so many different ways that we can save money in Washington without cutting any needed services or without raising taxes as our Democrat colleagues seek to do. Because when it comes to Federal programs, it is not how much money we spend that counts, it is how Washington spends the money that counts.

#### SUPPORTING BLUE DOG BUDGET PHILOSOPHY IS RIGHT FOR AMERICA

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

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, it is amazing listening to my colleague from Texas. One would think that we Democrats are still in control and that his party has not been in control of this House for the last 8 years. It is amazing listening to these speeches. It is amazing to see the budget that came out of the committee which he serves on, that next will propose to borrow \$377.6 billion, including all of the Social Security trust funds, all of the Civil Service trust funds, all of the Federal military retiree trust funds. In this same budget he supported today, the debt limit will be increased to \$8.88 trillion, and yet the finger-pointing stills goes on.

He had a chance today to vote for a budget enforcement bill that the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON)