

This House of Representatives has a responsibility. It has a responsibility to ensure that the executive branch is acting within the confines of the Constitution. It has a responsibility to make sure that the laws of this country are being obeyed, and it has a responsibility to make sure that the administration is not acting in ways that put American citizens in danger unnecessarily.

It is increasingly clear that the war in Iraq was not a war of necessity but rather it was a war of choice, and that choice was made by high-ranking people in the Bush administration.

So what is our obligation? Our obligation is clear. This Congress should at this moment be preparing to conduct a comprehensive and complete investigation into the allegations made by members of the administration. Supposedly those allegations were based upon intelligence that was supplied to the administration from the Central Intelligence Agency and other intelligence agencies within the Federal Government. But evidence that we have now suggests that the intelligence supplied to the administration was manipulated by people within the administration, perhaps even falsified, in order to justify our war in Iraq.

If that is the case, and it increasingly seems obvious that it is, this Congress has a responsibility to engage in an investigation to get at the truth. To what extent have our intelligence agencies been compromised by this administration? To what extent are our intelligence agencies now less reliable than they were before? And if they have been compromised, as it seems they have, and if they are less reliable, as it seems they are, as a result of the administration's activities, then this Congress has a responsibility to engage in that investigation.

The President just recently has said that he is going to establish a commission to look at some of the intelligence; but we know already, based upon the language coming out of the administration, some of the names of the people who have been suggested as members of that commission, and the limited direction and responsibility of the commission, we know that that commission is not going to conduct the kind of investigation that needs to be conducted if the American people can have some sense of security in the sanity and proper conduct of their intelligence agencies and the way that that information is used by the administration. This Congress needs to begin that investigation, and it needs to begin it immediately.

#### TEA-21 REAUTHORIZATION

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to discuss the reauthorization of highway funding, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century.

Our transportation system in this country has a direct and significant impact on the daily lives of all Americans. While the United States has benefited greatly from having a strong transportation network, we are indeed approaching a crossroads.

My area, north Texas, has experienced an increase in traffic over the past 3 decades, and this is a result of unprecedented population and employment growth and the underinvestment of Federal funds in my area. In many ways this is a silent crisis, rarely recognized by residents until they find themselves in an unbearable commute to work or unable to make the necessary connections between home, work, and the countless other activities our daily lives demand.

In Texas, our identified transportation needs outstrip available funding three to one. Texas has several specific transportation needs: supporting the international trade transportation, more efficient environmental processes, and expanding innovative financing techniques. Congress and the administration continue to discuss the need for increased funding in the transportation reauthorization bill. But we need to ensure the 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. There are many important Federal programs such as our transportation programs that are being hurt and neglected with expenditures that could be handled with greater care.

As a member of the committee, I wanted to be certain that the Department of Transportation was ensuring the most efficient business practices within the agency. Last year, just a few months after being sworn in, I met with the Department of Transportation Inspector General, Kenneth Mead, to discuss the business practices of the agency and how Congress can better facilitate the decrease of inappropriate expenditures related to transportation spending. Inspector General Mead and I discussed the need for greater stewardship and oversight of all of the functions of the Department of Transportation.

To date, the Department has not changed the way the agency distributes 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, if that 1 percent was saved, that would generate an additional \$5 billion; and, in fact, this \$5 billion could equate to the amount of funding needed for four of the 11 major transportation projects going on in this country right now. I believe this practice could better assist the Department of Transportation in spending of taxpayers' dollars more wisely.

There are several successful transportation projects that can be used as

examples for government efficiency. For example, Highway 15 in Utah was rehabilitated 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 government. Sadly, there are bad examples of transportation projects that are over budget and behind schedule. The Springfield interchange in Virginia and the Central Artery Project in Boston come to mind. We need to address the misuse of Federal transportation expenditures as soon as possible.

Furthermore, the General Accounting Office has estimated that from fiscal years 1998 to 2001 the highway trust fund lost over \$6 billion because of the ethanol tax exemption. And using the Department of Treasury's projections of the tax receipts based on current law, it is estimated that the highway account 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.

Prior to the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, the highway trust fund earned interest on its balance. If the highway trust fund had continued to earn interest on its balance, the Department of Treasury estimates that the highway trust fund would have earned about \$4 billion from 1999 to 2002.

Between modifying the Department's practices with State and local governments and reevaluating the true purposes of the highway trust fund, we can work together to ensure our government is more effective and more efficient for the taxpayer.

I believe we need to have policies included in the TEA-21 reauthorization bill to allow States flexibility to complete large projects in less time and save money. I believe streamlining the design-build process will achieve this goal, and I have asked for its inclusion in the final reauthorization legislation. More funding and modifications of current transportation programs will equate to better roads, bridges and transit facilities, ultimately less congestion, and ultimately a safer environment for our constituents.

I remain committed to working with Federal, State, and local officials during the reauthorization this year to address the long-term needs while ensuring that our Federal Government wisely spends the taxpayers' dollars on infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, finally, it is important to me because constituents in my district spend so much time in traffic jams, and my goal is to make certain that they have just as much time at the dinner table for family discussions as they spend waiting patiently in traffic.

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ADMINISTRATION SUPPORTS  
SHIFT OF JOBS OVERSEAS

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, even though I come from Ohio, I picked up the Los Angeles Times today and just could not believe the headline. It said, "President Bush Supports Shift of Jobs Overseas." "The loss of work to other countries," this is the sub-headline, "while painful in the short-term, will enrich the economy eventually, the President's report to Congress says."

I thought, that cannot be it. It is some overzealous headline writer that really did not understand this.

Well, then I started looking at some other papers. I saw the Seattle Times writes, "Bush report: Sending Jobs Overseas Helps U.S."

Then I looked at the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, just down the road a couple hours from where I live in Lorain, Ohio. The headline was, "Bush Economic Report Praises Outsourcing Jobs."

Then the Orlando Sentinel in the home State of the President's brother, Governor Bush, the headline was, "Bush Says Sending Jobs Abroad Can Be Beneficial."

Now, this is pretty hard to understand. The President of the United States, his top economic adviser would issue a report saying it is a great thing we are sending jobs overseas. I began to read about this, and it says, "The movement of American factory jobs and white-collar work to other countries," according to the Bush administration, "is part of a positive transformation that will enrich the U.S. economy over time, even if it causes short-term pain and dislocation."

Gregory Mankiw, the chief economic adviser for the President, the chief economic adviser for the United States of America, said, "Outsourcing is just a new way of doing international trade. That is a good thing."

Now, I want Mr. Mankiw, I want him to look in the eyes of a steelworker in Lorain, Ohio, and look in the eyes of a computer programmer in Palo Alto, California, and look in the eyes of a telephone operator in Akron, Ohio, or look in the eyes of a radiologist and say that outsourcing is a good thing.

But Mr. Mankiw has something today about radiologists, too. Do you remember when we passed other trade agreements in this Congress, past trade agreements, I always said if you get enough education, then you are all set. You just get ahead. You go to school, you get an education, you got a job. That is the way it works.

Well, Mr. Mankiw, the chief economic adviser for the President of the United States, said, "Maybe we will outsource a few radiologists. What does

that mean? Well, maybe the next generation of doctors will train fewer radiologists and will train more general practitioners and more surgeons. Maybe we've learned we don't have a comparative advantage in radiologists."

Obviously, Mr. Mankiw has been reading economic textbooks. He has not been talking to the computer programmer in Palo Alto, he is not talking to the steelworker in Lorain, he is not talking to the telephone operator in Akron, and he is not talking to any radiologists.

Now, why would President Bush's economic adviser say that outsourcing is a good idea? These are the same people that support the North American Free Trade Agreement, that support PNTR, the most-favored-nation trade advantages for China, the same people that support trade promotion authority, Fast Track, and now the same people that are pushing the Central American Free Trade Agreement and are pushing the Free Trade Area of the Americas, which will quadruple, quadruple, the size of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Every time there is an economic problem in this country, every time another report comes out about unemployment, President Bush's economic advisers and the President himself says, all we got to do is do more tax cuts for the most privileged, then the benefits will trickle down to the rest of the country, and all we have to do is more trade agreements.

You know what happens? Every single time they promise 200,000 increased jobs a month, and every time these tax cuts for the rich, they do not trickle down. In fact, we have seen job loss in manufacturing every month of the Bush administration. We have seen with this President the first President since Herbert Hoover to have job loss during his time in office.

In my State, one out of six, as the gentlewoman from Toledo, Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) knows, one out of six manufacturing jobs in my State has disappeared since George Bush took office. But every time there is a problem, every time there are more bad news statistics about jobs lost, the President says, let's do more tax cuts for the rich, let's do more free trade agreements and hemorrhage jobs overseas.

You know why? Because the people who benefit from these kinds of predictions, the people who benefit from these kinds of job losses, the people who benefit from this outsourcing of jobs, are the investors. And those are the people, the wealthiest investors in the country, those are the people that contribute money to George Bush's campaign, those are the people that benefit from the tax cuts, those are the people that benefit from trade agreements, as they line their pockets. But it might help the wealthiest in this country, it might help George Bush, but it hurts workers, it hurts families, it hurts communities, and it hurts our Nation.

MERCURY AND AUTISM: A  
"PLAUSIBLE" ARGUMENT

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. Mr. Speaker, for about the past 4 years we have been talking about children with autism. We have gone from 1 in 10,000 children who are autistic to 1 in 150 to 200. It is an absolute epidemic. And we have had hearing after hearing where we brought in scientists from around the world who told us that one of the major reasons for children to become autistic and have ADHD and other mental problems and psychological problems is because of an additive that was put into vaccines called thimerosal. It is a mercury-based additive, a preservative, that is supposed to preserve the vaccine if you put it in multiple shot vials.

Recently, a study was done by researchers from Johns Hopkins University, Northeastern University in Boston, the University of Nebraska and Tufts University, and it was published in the Vancouver Sun. It was not in any American newspaper, but in the Vancouver, British Columbia, Sun. It had a headline, "Vaccine additive linked to brain damage in children. Mercury-based preservative tied to autism, ADHD, U.S. researchers say."

After that came out, there was a flurry of activity over at Health and Human Services, and the Institute of Medicine's Immunization Review Board met yesterday and said, well, there is no conclusive evidence that this is causing that kind of a problem.

No conclusive evidence? One in 10,000 children used to be autistic; now it is 1 in 150 to 200. It is going to cost us billions and trillions of dollars to take care of them over the years to come because they are not going to be able to cope with society. This study is going to be published in a scientific journal in April called Molecular Psychiatry.

This meeting that took place yesterday with the Institute of Medicine's Immunization Review Board, they had the people that were on the side of the pharmaceutical companies saying, oh, there is no proof that the mercury in vaccines is causing these neurological problems.

The fact of the matter is, almost all of the people who were taking that position were people who had a vested interest in the pharmaceutical industry's position. They were getting money for research grants. Their universities where they study were getting grants from the pharmaceutical industry. Many of these people work for pharmaceutical companies, and they are taking the position that mercury in vaccines does not cause brain damage.

But it does not just affect kids. An article that came out just a couple of