

says David Laney, Amtrak's chairman. "We have to demonstrate what we can do on our own before it is taken out of our hands."

Last year, the Bush administration proposed eliminating subsidies to Amtrak, which has been kept afloat with \$30 billion in federal aid since 1971, according to the Department of Transportation. While Congress approved \$1.3 billion in funding for the current fiscal year, the Bush administration latest budget request includes \$900 million—a 31% cut—for fiscal 2007. And the DOT would hold back nearly half of the money until Amtrak demonstrated continued progress on reform. Yesterday, Amtrak said it would ask Congress for \$1.598 billion for fiscal 2007, almost all the increase for capital spending.

As part of the do-or-die overhaul, Mr. Laney fired Amtrak President David Gunn last November. Mr. Gunn had been widely praised for stabilizing Amtrak's finances, jumpstarting repairs to the Northeast Corridor and restoring credibility with Congress. But Mr. Laney, a Dallas lawyer and Republican loyalist appointed to the Amtrak board in 2002, concluded that Mr. Gunn was standing in the way of more-drastic reforms. Mr. Gunn says he was fired because he opposed the Bush administration's Amtrak strategy.

Mr. Laney says the next crucial step for Amtrak is to fix some notorious customer-service problems, ranging from dirty cars to unhelpful and rude onboard employees. About 30% of all Amtrak trains are late. Rep. John Mica, a Republican from Florida and longtime Amtrak critic, complains Amtrak can "rival some of the Third World and former Soviet Union rail experiences." Mr. Laney acknowledges that passenger service by Amtrak is "in some cases superb and in some cases miserable."

The restructuring likely puts Amtrak on a collision course with its 17,000 unionized workers, two-thirds of whom haven't had a new contract for about five years. Amtrak officials estimate union restrictions cost the railroad about \$100 million a year. Edward Wytkind, president of the AFL-CIO union's Transportation Trades Department, said in a statement that the Bush administration's reform effort is an attempt to "scapegoat workers for the failures of the federal government and the current Amtrak board."

Some of Amtrak's worst problems are beyond its control. Formed to relieve freight railroads of money-losing passenger trains, Amtrak shares nearly 22,000 miles of track with the freight trains, and congestion is worsening. Still, Amtrak believes better service will lure riders and shrink losses on long-distance lines. On long-distance routes that are primarily used by passengers for basic transportation, starting with the Texas Eagle and the City of New Orleans, the railroad is rolling out a new type of dining service that makes greater use of precooked meals and introduces disposable plastic plates. Those changes are designed to cut the number of dining-car employees to three per train from five or six.

Meanwhile, Amtrak is replacing mandatory meal-serving periods with more flexible hours. Over the next few years, it plans to rebuild dining cars to replace traditional table seating and allow passengers to sit at the bar or watch passing scenery from crescent-shaped booths that face the windows. Meal service will then be available as much as 18 hours a day, up from about eight hours now, allowing Amtrak to serve more people and boost revenue. Amtrak hopes to cut \$32 million from its annual food-service loss of \$123 million.

The Empire Builder is the rolling laboratory for some of the changes. The train, which made its first trip in 1929, is one of Amtrak's most popular, carrying nearly

500,000 riders a year. During the daily 2,200-mile trek between Chicago, Seattle and Portland, Ore., the Empire Builder chugs past spectacular scenery. Its on-time record is about 68%, and it posted an average loss of \$78.57 per passenger in the fiscal year ended Sept. 30.

While the Empire Builder is so far sticking with the traditional dining-car format, staffing level and made-to-order food, its added amenities and upgraded service are noticeable. Amtrak put a small fleet of rebuilt passenger cars with hip blue-and-white interiors on the line—a big improvement over the drab orange and brown that dominated older cars. Employees now must introduce themselves to passengers. Conductors must stay up all night in the dining car in case they are needed.

So far, the Empire Builder makeover appears to be enticing more passengers, particularly during the off-season when ridership typically declines. But David Hughes, Amtrak's acting president, says it is impossible to ever make long-distance trains like the Empire Builder profitable. Those trains are expected to generate \$382 million in fiscal 2006, or about one-fourth of overall Amtrak revenue, but post losses of more than \$493 million, or about \$125 for every passenger.

IN MEMORY OF PERRY RICHARDSON BASS

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 14, 2006

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of the leading citizens of District 12 and the Fort Worth community that I serve, Perry Richardson Bass. On June 1, 2006 Mr. Bass died at his home at the age of 91. The Fort Worth Star-Telegram aptly described Mr. Bass as "a Texas oilman who turned his riches into philanthropic gold for Fort Worth, the state and the nation." Mr. Bass's legacy continues in his four sons—Sid, Ed, Robert and Lee—who, in their own right, are business leaders and philanthropists.

Those of us who knew Mr. Bass had an incredible opportunity to see how a man who had worked in the West Texas oil fields had come to be a legend not only in the oil business, but also in the world of high finance, civic and public service endeavors, and the arts. Mr. Bass touched the lives of millions of people in Fort Worth, in Texas and in the United States. Sometimes he did this in dramatic fashion, as with the creation of the marvelous Bass Performance Hall in Fort Worth to which he and his family made a major financial contribution, and other times, he did it in untold ways so people's lives could be bettered.

Mr. Bass was born on November 11, 1914 in Wichita Falls, TX. He was the son of Dr. E.P. Bass, who left an East Texas medical practice for the oil industry, and Annie Richardson Bass. After attending a boarding school in Pennsylvania, Mr. Bass earned a science degree in geology from Yale University in 1937. Mr. Bass became enamored with the Texas oil business as a teen when he assisted his uncle, Sid Richardson, also a legendary Texas oilman. After Yale, Mr. Bass joined his uncle as a business advisor and they formed the Richardson & Bass Co. Upon

the death of Mr. Richardson, Mr. Bass created Bass Brothers Enterprises which he operated on behalf of himself and his four sons until 1991 when his oldest son, Sid, took control of the company. Bass Brothers Enterprises flourished into one of America's most successful companies with a wide array of business interests that at one time included a major stake in the Walt Disney Companies. Mr. Bass also was chair of the Sid Richardson Foundation, created by Mr. Richardson, which has been a generous benefactor of District 12, Texas and the Nation.

While he will be remembered for many accomplishments as a superb businessman, Mr. Bass said his proudest accomplishment was his service on the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission that he chaired. During his tenure on the commission, he was instrumental in the creation of numerous wildlife conservation efforts. Mr. Bass and his family rightfully are credited with transforming downtown Fort Worth into one of the most vibrant downtowns in the U.S. through the construction of high-rise office buildings, the renovation of turn-of-the-century storefronts and by introducing innovative downtown housing. Mr. Bass demonstrated his love of the arts by not only generously funding the arts, but also by serving as a member of the National Gallery of Art's Trustees' Council.

Mr. Bass's life will be best remembered for two things: the love of his family and his generosity. Mr. Bass described his beloved wife Nancy Lee Bass and their four sons as the greatest treasures of his life. He also called his sons Sid, Ed, Robert and Lee his greatest accomplishment. His sons have followed in their father's footsteps by their generosity, creativity, sharp business sense and love of community. Mr. Bass also felt that he should share his successes through his generosity. Nothing epitomizes this deeply held belief than a decision by Mr. and Mrs. Bass to mark their 50th wedding anniversary by contributing \$50 million to 50 institutions and organizations.

Mr. Bass's great business skills, his love of wildlife, his generous philanthropy, his absolute devotion to his wife Nancy Lee Bass and sons Sid, Ed, Robert and Lee and their families, and his visions have resulted in a better Fort Worth, a better Texas and a better United States. It is with humility that I honor Perry Richardson Bass as a great American who used his skills and treasures wisely. Mr. Bass will be missed but not forgotten.

RECOGNIZING CODY NICHOLS FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 14, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Cody Nichols, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 102, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Cody has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Cody has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous

merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Cody Nichols for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING THE PORT OF BALTIMORE ON ITS 300TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 14, 2006

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Port of Baltimore on its 300th Anniversary.

Baltimore and the state of Maryland are home to some of the most cherished and enduring symbols of our Nation.

It was during the War of 1812 that Francis Scott Key while sequestered on a boat off the shores of Fort McHenry in Baltimore was inspired by the American Flag to write our National Anthem, the Star Spangled Banner. It was also during that war that Fort McHenry protected the City of Baltimore and the Port of Baltimore.

I believe that today, Flag Day, is an appropriate day to recognize the Port of Baltimore on its 300th Anniversary.

Established in 1706, the Port of Baltimore is here today because it was successfully defended by the American soldiers and militiamen at Fort McHenry and North Point during the War of 1812.

Today, the Port of Baltimore is one of America's busiest international deepwater ports and serves as a critical anchor for Baltimore and the Inner Harbor. It is also an economic engine for the state. From cars to tractors, from coal to paper, from sugar to aluminum, the Port of Baltimore handles 400,000 containers a year filled with goods that help us in our everyday lives. The Port employs more than 19,000 people, supports more than 42,000 jobs related to the maritime industry, and generates more than \$2 billion in revenue annually.

A busy Port has ensured a buzzing economy and more jobs for Maryland residents. The hard work and dedication of Baltimore's port workers together with the support of local, state, and federal leaders have ensured that the Port will be a success today as well as tomorrow.

It is impossible to comment on the success of the Port of Baltimore without recognizing the strong commitment to the Port by former Congresswoman Helen Delich Bently. Recently Governor Robert J. Ehrlich, Jr. of Maryland announced that the Port will be renamed the "Helen Delich Bently Port of Baltimore." Former Congresswoman Bently served in the United States House of Representatives from 1985–1995 representing Maryland's Second Congressional District and has since become one of the Port's most staunch supporters.

In honor of the Port of Baltimore, I am introducing a resolution, with the support of the entire Maryland Delegation in the House, to honor the Port of Baltimore on its 300th Anniversary.

I urge my colleagues to join me and the Maryland Delegation and honor the Port of Baltimore on this patriotic day.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOE BARTON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 14, 2006

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, June 12, 2006, I was unable to fly to Washington, D.C. for votes. As a result, I missed votes on this day and some votes before returning Tuesday, June 13, 2006. I would have voted on the following rollcall votes, had I been present.

Monday, June 12, 2006:

AYE: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, as Amended: 362–1 (Roll Call 251). Recognizing the 17th anniversary of the massacre in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, in the People's Republic of China, and for other purposes.

AYE: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, as Amended: 362–1 (Roll Call 252). Condemning the unauthorized, inappropriate, and coerced ordination of Catholic bishops by the People's Republic of China.

AYE: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, as Amended: 363–1 (Roll Call 253). Condemning the escalating levels of religious persecution in the People's Republic of China.

AYE: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree: 364–0 (Roll Call 254). Expressing the sense of Congress regarding the activities of Islamist terrorist organizations in the Western Hemisphere.

AYE: On Ordering the Previous Question: 204–165 (Roll Call 255). Waiving points of order against consideration of the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 4939) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes.

AYE: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, as Amended: 409–0 (Roll Call 256). Commending the Government of Canada for its renewed commitment to the Global War on Terror.

AYE: On Agreeing to the Conference Report: 351–67 (Roll Call 257). Making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes.

AYE: On Agreeing to the Resolution: 221–194 (Roll Call 258). Waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules.

AYE: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended: 415–1 (Roll Call 259). To provide for certain access to national crime information databases by schools and educational agencies for employment purposes, with respect to individuals who work with children.

AYE: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, as Amended: 407–0 (Roll Call 260). Supporting responsible fatherhood, promoting marriage, and encouraging greater involvement of fathers in the lives of their children, especially on Father's Day.

RECOGNIZING JOSH SUTTON FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 14, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Josh Sutton, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 102, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Josh has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Josh has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Josh Sutton for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

MINE IMPROVEMENT AND NEW EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACT OF 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. ROSCOE G. BARTLETT

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 17, 2006

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, we must encourage the development of new mine safety technologies and not hinder advances. Remember that when an accident occurs underground all power is shut off and our miners are working in the dark, perhaps unaware of what has taken place, and under stressful conditions.

Recent discussions about advancing mine safety technology have focused on a few distinct areas including self-contained self-rescuers, emergency shelters, two-way communications equipment, tracking devices, and lifelines.

Specifically, Mr. Speaker, I would like to address the references to self-contained self-rescuers in section 2 and section 6 of S. 2803. It is important to clarify that in no way should the requirements under section 2 discourage improving the design of self-contained self-rescuers.

A self-contained self-rescuer, SCSR, is a respiratory device used by miners for the purpose of escape during mine fires and explosions; it provides the wearer a closed-circuit supply of breathable air for a period of time that varies from model to model.

While the current MSHA regulations require that miners be provided with SCSRs that protect for a least 1 hour, some SCSRs on the market provide longer protection, approaching 2 hours, and research is under way to develop longer lasting SCSRs.

Mr. Speaker, in a 2001 study, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, NIOSH, reported that out of 214 miners surveyed 38 percent had been notified to evacuate a mine because of fire or explosion during their career. Data provided by the U.S.