

the broad fix to the section 8 program I had originally sought. And subsidized housing facilities like Creative Living cannot accept new students under the section 8 program until a more permanent solution is enacted by this body.

□ 1315

To that end I will continue to work to ensure that facilities like this can continue to house students with disabilities in the future and allow them to pursue their dreams.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank the gentlewoman from Ohio, Ms. PRYCE; the gentlemen from Ohio, Mr. TIBERI and Mr. HOBSON; and the distinguished chairman of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity, from Ohio, Mr. NEY; as well as the ranking member, Mr. BARNEY FRANK; and Chairman OXLEY for their work on this measure. The full Committee on Financial Services reported it out unanimously by voice vote on May 24 of this year. As indicated by my colleague Ms. PRYCE, this bill corrects an unintended consequence of a provision added to the HUD appropriations bill last year that sought to close a loophole in the Section 8 program allowing student athletes and other non-needy students access to subsidized housing.

The fiscal year 2006 Transportation, Treasury, HUD, Judiciary and D.C. Appropriations conference report, codified as Public Law 109-115, included a provision that effectively counted the income of parents when determining whether students under the age of 24 are eligible to receive Section 8 assistance. That provision does not apply to veterans or to students who are married or have children. This bill, H.R. 5117, would additionally exempt students with disabilities from this treatment.

Mr. Speaker, the same appropriations bill included language intended to close the loophole in the Section 8 program which allowed student athletes and other non-needy students access to Section 8 housing intended for low-income persons. While this was not the intention of the appropriators, it created a potential hardship for the disabled community. However, the final rule issued by HUD in response to Public Law 109-115 has the potential to disqualify from Section 8 eligibility those severely disabled individuals under the age of 24 who are enrolled in an institution of higher learning.

H.R. 5117 is prescriptive, Mr. Speaker. It merely adds persons with disabilities to the list of exempt individuals. Of course, the disabled can least afford additional burdens and, therefore, anything that we can do to lessen their burden is well worth it. The final rule issued by HUD included this prohibition, and the sooner it is lifted, we will be able to return a sense of fairness to

the Section 8 program, particularly where disabled students are concerned.

So I would urge my colleagues to support the passage of H.R. 5117.

And let me just say that this bill is typical of the kind of work that is getting done on our committee. We have tremendous cooperation from both sides of the aisle to do good work relative to making sure that not only rental opportunities are available to those who need it, but we are doing wonderful work in this committee on home ownership issues. What better month to be able to correct this problem in law than the month of June. This is National home ownership Month, and I think that our committee has certainly recognized this. And while we make this correction, we are working on a lot of other bills.

I am so proud of the work that we are all doing on FHA to bring it up to date and make sure that our opportunities are available for the least of these. I am so proud of the work that we are going to mark up on voucher reform. I am very pleased about the idea that many of us are getting together to try to hold on to HOPE VI.

So in this National home ownership Month, today we stand to send a signal not only to the disabled but to those who somehow get overlooked, forgotten, that we really are on point.

Mr. Speaker, again, let me just thank my colleagues on the committee on both sides of the aisle for the work that we are doing. I thank them today for 5117, for all of the other work that we are doing, and I would say that many others in this House can look at the work that this committee is producing and be proud and perhaps even use it as an example.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I urge passage at this time.

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

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I just want to say this is a great victory today. We are ensuring that these students do not have to put away their textbooks or even hang up their lab coats because of something that we did when we thought we were correcting a problem. There are enough challenges put in front of individuals with severe disabilities, and worrying about a place to call home while they attend college should not be one of them.

I also appreciate the bipartisan effort on this bill and so many other pieces of legislation that moved through our committee.

And thank you, Ms. WATERS, for joining me in this effort.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5117, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof)

the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation and insert extraneous material thereon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INTERSTATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 372) recognizing the 50th Anniversary of the Interstate Highway System.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 372

Whereas on June 29, 1956, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 to establish a 41,000-mile National System of Interstate and Defense Highways, known as the "Interstate Highway System", and the Highway Revenue Act of 1956 to create a Highway Trust Fund;

Whereas in 1990, the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways was renamed the "Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways" to recognize President Eisenhower's role in the creation of the system;

Whereas in 2006, this web of superhighways, now spanning a total of 46,876 miles throughout the United States, has had a powerful and positive impact on our national life;

Whereas the Interstate Highway System has proven vital in transporting people and goods from one region to another speedily and safely;

Whereas the Interstate Highway System has facilitated trade both within our national borders and globally and helped create unprecedented economic expansion and opportunities for millions of Americans;

Whereas the Interstate Highway System has brought diverse communities throughout our land closer together and kept us connected to one another as well as the larger world;

Whereas the Interstate Highway System has made it easier and often more enjoyable to travel to long-distance destinations and spend time with family members and friends who live far away;

Whereas the Interstate Highway System is a pivotal component in our national system of defense and emergency preparedness efforts;

Whereas the Interstate Highway System remains one of our country's paramount assets as well as a symbol of human ingenuity and freedom; and

Whereas this anniversary provides an occasion to both honor one of the largest public works achievements of all time and reflect on how it can remain effective in the years ahead: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) recognizes the golden anniversary year of the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways;

(2) recognizes the achievements of the Federal Highway Administration (and its predecessor,

the Bureau of Public Roads), the State departments of transportation, and the highway construction industry, including contractors, designers, engineers, laborers, materials producers, and equipment companies, for their contributions to the construction of the Interstate Highway System and the quality of life of the citizens of the United States; and

(3) encourages citizens, communities, government agencies, and other organizations to promote and participate in celebratory and educational activities marking this uniquely important and historic milestone.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on House Concurrent Resolution 372.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

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

Thursday, June 29, will mark the 50th anniversary of the Federal law that brought America its unparalleled interstate highway system. This 46,508-mile web of superhighways has transformed our Nation and our Nation's economy. It is a symbol of freedom and it is a tribute to human ingenuity.

As America entered the 20th century, good roads, even paved roads, were not common. In addition, it was rare for roads in one State to link up with roads in adjacent States. Roads might lead outward from cities, even to State lines, but there was no guarantee they would meet other roads in neighboring States. The concept of an interstate system as we know it today can be traced back to a 1939 report to Congress called "Toll Roads and Free Roads."

In 1944, the National Highway Committee, appointed by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and headed by Commissioner of Public Roads Thomas MacDonald, produced plans for a national system of approximately 34,000 miles of expressways.

However, it was the efforts of President Dwight David Eisenhower that gave us the interstate highway system we have today. Eisenhower personally witnessed the need for a national highway system in 1919, when as a young lieutenant colonel in the Army he helped staff a convoy of 81 military vehicles from Washington, D.C. to San Francisco. It is kind of a modern day Lewis and Clark Expedition. The journey took 62 days, and the convoy averaged 6 miles per hour. On today's interstate system, such a trip could be easily completed in less than a week.

During the journey, Lieutenant Colonel Eisenhower formed the opinion that the United States desperately

needed a better highway system. Eisenhower made the creation of an interstate system a keystone of his domestic agenda when he came into office in the early 1950s.

Eisenhower's original effort to pass legislation to create an interstate system went down in defeat in July of 1955. He was unwilling to accept defeat, however, and he resumed his campaign in 1956. Eisenhower's plan required the Federal Government to bear the majority of the construction cost, recognizing this massive public works project was vital to interstate commerce, national defense, and economic growth. His plan also established a user fee-based financing plan through a gas tax and this funding source is still the bedrock of the current Federal Aid Highway Program.

Congress passed the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 in June of 1956, and on June 29, 1956, President Eisenhower signed the bill into law and set in motion the interstate system as we know it today.

I am honored to be here this afternoon to recognize the 50th anniversary of the interstate system, and I look forward to taking part in the other events that are planned throughout this month to honor this historic anniversary.

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

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

I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin for his very thoughtful historical rendition of the evolution of the interstate highway program.

This resolution honors the golden anniversary of the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways. But the original interstate highway, one that linked several States, was charted by George Washington in 1784, a year after the Revolutionary War concluded. Traveling to the Ohio country on horseback, Washington carefully observed the people and the land. He saw that settlers were trapped, that they could fall under the control, as he wrote, of "the Spaniards on their right or Great Britain on their left." He recognized the need to unite our new Nation by opening, as he called it, a smooth way through the Appalachian Mountains to enable the settlers, again as he put it, "to pass our markets before the trade may get into another channel." A quaint way of saying things.

Washington determined the best route through the mountains was Nemacolin's Trail, a network of old Indian hunting paths that Washington knew well from his early days as a surveyor. It took almost 50 years to convert the trail into the first federally funded interstate highway that we now know as the National Road.

There is little dispute that, as Chairman PETRI mentioned earlier, Thomas Harris MacDonald, chief of the Bureau of Public Roads for 34 years, from 1919 to 1953, was the visionary who devel-

oped the initial plans for the present day interstate highway system. In fact, Chief MacDonald's stature was such that when I started here on the Hill as a junior staff person on the Subcommittee on Rivers and Harbors of the Committee on Public Works his name was revered. The people almost bowed in mentioning his name. He really developed the plans for the present interstate highway system.

In 1938, the Congress mandated development of a plan for an interstate highway system. MacDonald laid out the plan in a report entitled "Toll Roads and Free Roads," 1939. Based on that report, Congress in 1944, as it could see the end of World War II, directed the Bureau of Public Roads to undertake a study of a nationwide system of interconnected highways, totaling some 44,000 miles.

□ 1330

That national system of interstate highways directive by the Congress, was carried out by the Bureau of Public Roads, with a plan to link major cities; that is, those of 50,000 population and more. But it did not provide a funding mechanism.

And in the aftermath of World War II, as the Nation rushed to reintegrate the 16 million men and women who served the U.S. in the great war, put aside the development of a highway plan as we rushed to convert to civilian purposes industries that had built machinery of war.

But MacDonald continued working tirelessly with State departments of highways, with urban planners, with others, to continue developing this idea of an interstate highway system. He had sustained it through the Great Depression, he had sustained the idea through World War II.

He was not dismayed by the rush to civilianize the war-time economy of the United States. He kept working on this until his retirement in 1953. Indeed it was, as Chairman PETRI said, President Dwight Eisenhower who exercised the political will and leadership to take this vision to reality.

But there was also another force, the increasing congestion on our Nation's highways, and with it, the increasing death rate on our Nation's highways. It was projected in 1951, 1952, that if we did not do something about the congestion on our highways and the rising death toll, we would be killing 100,000 people a year on America's highways. That was the driving force behind moving to the next stage and bringing the vision of an interstate system to reality.

I will not repeat the very thoughtful and I think erudite presentation that Mr. PETRI cited of President Eisenhower as a lieutenant colonel taking the convoy across the United States. He stated that was an experience that lingered in Colonel Eisenhower, General Eisenhower, President Eisenhower's mind as he confronted this issue.

His great thought was to tap General Lucius Clay to head a commission to take the idea of the 1944 Congress report, the MacDonald report, and work with the Governors again, with other interested parties, and develop a plan to finance this system. That is what the Clay Commission report did that was really different.

It set forth a plan for a viable funding mechanism to undertake the interstate highway system with an idea that you would have a dedicated revenue stream so that at the beginning of the project planners could see their way to the end of that project.

That was what truly launched the interstate highway construction program. My predecessor, John Blatnik, who served in this body for 28 years on the Committee on Public Works and was its chairman for 4 years, was one of the five House co-authors. It was largely the House of Representatives that drove this issue forward.

I remember many discussions with Mr. Blatnik talking about the discussions that went late into the evenings and about how to finance the interstate highway system.

President Eisenhower's Secretary of the Treasury favored a bonding program, which would have greatly enriched Wall Street investors, but the House held out for an egalitarian tax that everybody would pay, calling it a fee, a fee to build the interstate highway system.

And that fee started out to be 3 cents, a fuel excise tax. But after one year of experience with the 3-cent tax, they realized this was not going to be enough and came back the following year, in 1957, and passed 1 additional cent, an increase in that fee. That passed this body, if you can imagine it, on a voice vote. We can hardly pass anything on a voice vote today. But that was done in those days, because there was a need to move ahead.

The original authorization was for a system of 42,500 miles and today, as Mr. PETRI already said, it is 46,876 miles. You have to keep asking the Highway Administration how many more miles have been added because some continue to creep in as designated segments of the interstate.

But the States responded immediately. Eisenhower signed the bill into law June 29, 1956. By September, projects were under construction, because the States were ready. They knew they had to move ahead quickly. They knew we needed this system of divided, access-controlled, interconnecting highways that would theoretically allow you to travel from coast to coast or from border to border without a traffic light.

Now, of course today that is not possible, but the principle of coast to coast and border to border travel was realized with the interstate highway system. We now have invested \$128.9 billion, the Federal Government in partnership with the States, the Federal share an estimated \$114.3 billion.

And the marvel is that this system that represents 1 percent, just a little over 1 percent of the Nation's total public road mileage, carries 24 percent of all the highway travel, 40 percent of all travel by single-unit and combination trucks, 721 billion vehicle miles estimated to travel annually on the interstate highway system.

It is the marvel of the world. Every year there are delegations from other countries who come here to meet with us on the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure to ask how did you do it? How did you finance it? How do you keep it going? How do you keep it in good shape? It is an engineering marvel of the world.

Washington, President Washington, General Washington's original version of a national road has now been fulfilled.

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

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the resolution. I thank the gentleman from Michigan for his remarks. My particular interest in this legislation, in honoring the interstate transportation system, is the gentleman that has been mentioned in both remarks, and that is President Eisenhower, a fellow Kansan, and that historic moment on June 29, 1956, when our President initiated the interstate highway system, is one that we memorialize in Kansas. We are very much a transportation-dependent State. We are land-locked in the middle of the country and roads and highways that lead elsewhere are lawfully important to us, particularly in the sense of commerce and moving industrial goods and agricultural commodities to market.

But President Eisenhower, in his life and his involvement in the interstate system, is memorialized in Abilene, Kansas, his hometown, at the Eisenhower Center where photographs of the interstate construction are on display.

Mr. Speaker, I rise this afternoon just to again remark about this remarkable individual, this former general, this former President of the United States, who had the foresight as a military leader and commander to bring the country together in regard to a transportation system that is so important to us today.

So as a Kansan, I am here to pay tribute not only to the interstate system, but to President Dwight D. Eisenhower. I thank the committee and the gentleman for yielding me the time and for bringing this occasion to the House floor today. I urge my colleagues to support this historic occurrence that matters so much to Kansas and Americans in 2006, 50 years later.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, can I inquire how much time is remaining on our side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 9 minutes remaining.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for the time. I too rise to commemorate the 50th anniversary, the great vision of President and General Dwight David Eisenhower, in terms of the national highway system.

Fifty years. It is a long time. And now we need to look forward to the next half of the first century of the national highway system, and that is going to constitute quite a challenge. We, just after some lengthy struggle, finally reauthorized the highway program with SAFETEA-LU last summer.

But what we see looming before us is a system that is starting to show its age. The cracked bridge problem in Oregon, failing bridges that were constructed actually with 1950s technology, just before we moved to prestressed concrete, the cast-in-place bridges, and other places around the country. The system is showing its age, the wear and tear, it is showing in places that it is not up to the task of current traffic volumes, and we need to look to the future of this great artery of commerce and transportation and recreation transport for Americans, daily commutes to work, to long trips to far-away places within this wonderful country.

And that is a challenge that the chairman of the committee has begun to address with hearings to look at what the future sources of funding will be to meet even greater demands than the initial construction of this system.

So I rise today both to commemorate the 50th anniversary and the visionaries who gave us this great system, and to join with my colleagues here who I know will be part of the solution about how it is going to be celebrated yet another 50 years from today as still an essential artery for commerce and transportation in the United States, because visionaries in this and some near subsequent Congresses recognized the need to continue to invest, reinvest and enhance the system.

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT).

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for the work on this legislation today and for making note of the anniversary of the interstate highway system, and as we also honor the work of our past President Eisenhower for his work to make sure that we bear the fruits of the system 50 years later.

The 50th anniversary, we come here today on, but perhaps at this time it is appropriate also that standing on his shoulders we could do what he would like to see at this point in time as we move forward to the second half of that century to build upon what he has already done, to create a new system as we honor his work of the past.

You know, this new system would be one in which we return some of the authority that we have now assumed on the Federal level back to the States to give them more discretion, basically to maximize the resources that are out there to create that great transportation system that we have in this country today. We could do that by returning primary transportation authority and responsibility and taxing authority back to the States.

What would this do? This would free State transportation dollars from the Federal micromanagement that we have seen in the past and other budgetary pressures as well. It would let people back at the States, people who actually use these roads and bridges and tunnels and what have you, to help make the decisions to decide when, how and where and how they are going to finance them. They would make the decisions in the future how they would finance it, they would make the decisions how they would be regulated.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I say in conclusion on this that we can honor this President who was indeed a great President for what he did for this country, but you know he was a greater general for all that he did for this country as well. And as a general he knew that sometimes the best decisions were made by those field commanders who were in the field. And I would just suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that now is the time to allow the States to assume command.

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA).

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, first of all I want to thank the chairman of our Highway Subcommittee and the ranking member for their leadership and taking time to recognize our interstate system. It is one of our most important Federal assets, particularly as we pay tribute now to the 50th anniversary of our interstate system founded in 1956. You have heard some references to President Eisenhower and his vision, a conservative Republican President in 1956.

And actually some of the history of the idea and really the push for an interstate system was delivered by Vice President Nixon on July 12, 1954.

□ 1345

Vice President Nixon was sent to the National Governors Conference in Lake George in New York, where the Governors had assembled. At that conference, in 1954, is where he proposed to all the Governors on behalf of President Eisenhower an interstate system.

Now, you have to put this in perspective, folks, because the Federal budget was \$71 billion in 1954, and he was proposing what would be probably a half a trillion dollar system and infrastructure project in that day. I am sure there must have been a couple of people who said, that is going to be a highway to nowhere.

But, again, that is the kind of vision, that is the kind of foresight leadership

that has meant so much to this Nation, particularly because our roads, our ports, our airports are all the heart of our infrastructure and allow us to do the business of our country. The business of our country is commerce.

The current state of our interstate, I am sad to rise on the 50th anniversary and say that it is in disrepair. We heard Mr. DEFAZIO talk about it, but we are congested from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from sea to shining sea. Our interstate needs cry out for help. We need new financing. We need new projects and partnerships to move the business of this country on our interstate highways that are clogged.

We do have two problems. One is financing. We are looking, instead of a trillion-dollar system that might have been proposed in 1954, trillions of dollars in infrastructure. The other thing is regulatory reform. These projects get bogged down in delay. We need to speed up that process which in time can also have costs attached to it.

So we need a vision like Richard Nixon proposed to the Governors association in Lake George in 1954. We need the vision of Dwight David Eisenhower, a conservative Republican President who proposed an interstate system which now links one end of this country and all corners of this Nation together.

Again, this is important, not just looking at the past, but looking at the future and building on what we have inherited and the significant milestone and anniversary in the history of our interstate system.

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

Mr. Speaker, what was unique about and continues to be unique about the interstate highway system is the Federal-State partnership that I referenced earlier, not public-private financing, not bond financing, as was proposed by Eisenhower's Secretary of Treasury and rejected by this House of Representatives, but a shared partnership, shared in financing 90 percent Federal, 10 percent State, shared in designing the route structure and the system to connect cities of 50,000 or greater population throughout this country, and to vastly enhance safety.

What we are hearing since enactment of SAFETEA-LU that took the Federal highway program to new financing, \$286.3 billion, is worry about availability of funds for the future and the surface transportation subcommittee, under the leadership of the gentleman from Wisconsin, has held several very thoughtful, productive, in-depth hearings on how not only the interstate, but how the total national highway system will be financed in the coming years.

We also directed a commission to be established in the enactment of SAFETEA-LU to evaluate financing plans and to report back to the Congress on financing.

I am not enamored of public-private financing issues. I am not enamored

and am very much opposed to toll systems. They will not be a sustained program. Toll roads, toll bridges would not have brought us the interstate highway system that we have, we enjoy today that was a marvel of the industrial world.

We need to sustain the highway trust fund, keep it a user-based system, and its inherent genius is that it never has nor can it or ever will it run a deficit. In contrast, the surplus funds in the highway trust fund for many years, from 1968 through 1998, were used to finance, to cover up deficits and finance other activities of the Federal Government. We must not allow that to recur, although it has.

There is a surplus built up where the trust fund is being used to overshadow parts of the deficit. We must continue this sustained financing, self-supporting financing mechanism that does not run a deficit, that is user-based, that is broad-based, that is egalitarian in its application.

For President Eisenhower, I would say history should and has already judged him very warmly, not only for his military leadership, but for what he has done for infrastructure and his support, not just passing, but from personal experience of the interstate highway system, which we have already discussed. But he signed into law the legislation establishing the St. Lawrence Seaway, providing for the U.S. partnership in Canada in opening the fourth sea coast of the United States, and creation of the FAA from the old Civil Aeronautics Authority, the first-ever construction funding to help build runways to accommodate the Jet Age in 1958, which was just dawning upon America.

We didn't know what to do with this new-type civilian aircraft, but we knew and engineers knew that they had to have better runways, better taxiways, better terminals. President Eisenhower understood that and signed into law the legislation not only to create the Federal Aviation Administration and the old CAA, but also funding for the construction of the needed high-quality runways to accommodate the Jet Age.

His legacy is really remarkable when we think back in perspective of what was needed to build the base of America, build our economic strength through our transportation infrastructure. What we celebrate in this legislation today is the accomplishment of that interstate highway system. It is a golden anniversary. As my colleague from Oregon, Mr. DEFAZIO, said, I am looking forward to the next 50 years, provided there is enough fuel to get us there.

I join with my good friend and colleague from the State of Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI). His leadership on the subcommittee of surface transportation has been superb in asking all Members to join in support of this legislation honoring the 50th anniversary of the interstate highway program.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, just to conclude and build on the remarks of the dean of our committee, Mr. OBERSTAR, we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of a remarkable thing, a generation of Americans, some have said the Greatest Generation, that thought not just of itself, but of its country and its future and invested in the future.

They were not borrowing against existing assets, against existing assets for current expenses. Instead, they were taxing themselves or paying fees themselves to build for the future to create a greater, productive enterprise here in the United States, one symbol of that, of what we are celebrating today, the 50th anniversary of the interstate highway system, the envy of the world, the backbone of the strongest economy in the world.

I had the opportunity, as a much younger person, to meet Dwight Eisenhower on several occasions. I got out of school when I was in fourth grade to go down to the railway station in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, one of the last whistle-stop campaign trips, and again once while in high school. These groups come from all over the country to visit their legislators and so on. I was with a group about to meet President Eisenhower in the Rose Garden in the White House.

But in those days Presidents would often, not only Eisenhower, address the country. Not because there was some great crisis, but because they were always trying to rally people to a constructive cause. I remember him often speaking and saying as a former general who had known war that the true strength of a country was not embodied just in its army, though military, though that was a part of it; the true strength of a country was the moral fiber of its people and the productive capacity of its economy.

If those were tended to, you could always build military strength out of that. But if you relied solely on military strength, you would have a hollow strength and would not have the sustainability that the strong economy and character of the people could provide to face any threat.

Part of that strength is our interstate highway system. He led us to build it. It is our job to sustain and to renew it in future generations and, as a part of that, to commemorate its great contribution and success through this resolution. I urge all Members to join us in supporting it.

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 agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 372.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORTING RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD, PROMOTING MARRIAGE, AND ENCOURAGING GREATER INVOLVEMENT OF FATHERS IN THE LIVES OF THEIR CHILDREN, ESPECIALLY ON FATHER'S DAY

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 318) supporting responsible fatherhood, promoting marriage, and encouraging greater involvement of fathers in the lives of their children, especially on Father's Day, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 318

Whereas married fathers are more likely to have a close, enduring relationship with their children than unmarried fathers;

Whereas according to a 1996 Gallup poll, 90.3 percent of Americans agree that fathers make a unique contribution to their children's lives;

Whereas in a study of fathers' interaction with their children in intact two-parent families, nearly 90 percent of the fathers surveyed said that being a father is the most fulfilling role a man can have;

Whereas a broad array of the Nation's leading family and child development experts agree that it is in the best interests of children and the Nation as a whole to encourage more two-parent families where the father is actively involved with his children;

Whereas promoting responsible fatherhood can help increase the chances that children will grow up with two caring parents;

Whereas children with fathers at home tend to do better in school, to be less prone to emotional and behavioral problems, and to have more successful relationships;

Whereas boys and girls alike demonstrate greater self-control and ability to take initiative when fathers are actively involved in their upbringing;

Whereas children who are apart from their biological fathers are, in comparison to other children, 5 times more likely to live in poverty, and more likely to bring weapons and drugs into the classroom, commit other crimes, drop out of school, commit suicide, abuse alcohol or drugs, or become pregnant as teenagers;

Whereas the promotion of responsible fatherhood should not denigrate the standing or parenting efforts of single mothers, whose efforts are heroic, lessen the protection of children from abusive parents, cause women to remain in, or enter into, abusive relationships, or compromise the health or safety of a custodial parent; and

Whereas Father's Day is the third Sunday in June; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends the millions of fathers who serve as wonderful, caring parents for their children;

(2) calls on fathers across the Nation to use Father's Day to reconnect and rededicate themselves to their children's lives, to spend Father's Day with their children, and to express their love and support for their children;

(3) urges men to understand the level of responsibility fathering a child requires, especially in the encouragement of the moral, academic, and spiritual development of children; and

(4) encourages active involvement of fathers in the rearing and development of their children, including the devotion of time, energy, and resources.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Res. 318.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Nebraska?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 318, and I would like to congratulate Representative SULLIVAN on this resolution. The upcoming celebration of Father's Day is time to reflect on the role that fathers play in the development of our children and the stability of our families, and an ever-increasing amount of research supports what common sense has told us all along, that fathers are essential for children's development.

Unfortunately, far too many children today are growing up without the presence of their father, with 24 million children in our country, approximately one-third of all American children, living apart from their biological fathers. Even more alarming, 40 percent of those children, with absent fathers, have not even seen their fathers in the last year. Given what we know about the importance of fathers for children, this statistic is truly alarming.

In my previous profession, I saw firsthand the increase in fatherlessness and witnessed this devastating effect on the young men I worked with. I was excited to receive a call one day from one of my player's fathers who wanted to reestablish contact with his son after many years' absence.

I was really excited and went and found the player, told him his dad had called. I knew that he hadn't seen him for 15 or 20 years. So I told him about this call. I remember the player saying this: he said, you know he really didn't care about me when I was little, and now he only wants to see me because I am doing well in football. The player didn't even call his father back after 20 years. So fatherlessness has become very real to me because of those experiences.

Research performed by the National Fatherhood Initiative has indicated that children, both boys and girls with involved loving fathers, are more likely to do well in school, have healthy self-esteem and avoid high-risk behaviors. But just as the presence of a loving father has positive overwhelming effects on a child, the lack of a father carries extremely negative effects.