

Mr. BOSWELL. I would like to thank Mr. DAVIS for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased today to congratulate an inspirational young woman from my district, Shawn Johnson, the daughter of Doug and Terri Johnson of West Des Moines, Iowa, who recently won the 2007 World Artistic Gymnastic Championship, which took place in Stuttgart, Germany. At the age of 15, Shawn has achieved more and seen more than many high school students dream of. She has done it all while maintaining her status as an honor student alongside her friends at Valley High.

Shawn has traveled the world, winning title after title. This past July, she won five medals at the 2007 Pan American Games in Rio de Janeiro. Winning the 2007 Visa championships in San Jose, California, made her the United States champion in gymnastics. On September 9, Shawn became the world all-around champion, taking home three gold medals at the World Artistic Gymnastics Championships in Stuttgart, Germany.

While her shows are exciting and full of grace, one of the most inspiring things about her championship is that Shawn is shaping history. Having joined an elite group of women gymnasts, Shawn is one of only four American women to win the 40-year-old competition.

Shawn has impressed many around the globe and has made Iowans incredibly proud. She is reminding us how important hard work and dedication are. In honor of Shawn's accomplishments, Governor Chet Culver declared October 17 Shawn Johnson Day in Iowa, and we are extremely proud to join my fellow Iowans in congratulating Shawn and thanking her for making history in the great State of Iowa.

Shawn's positive attitude to achieve has taken her to amazing places. I suspect she's not quite finished. Promising to be ready for the Beijing Olympics, she told a reporter that she would "put in 100 times more effort and hopefully come back with another gold."

Again, congratulations Shawn, and good luck at future competitions. You make me proud, you make our congressional district proud, you make your school in west Des Moines proud, you make our State of Iowa proud, and you make our country proud. We wish you continued success. On to the Olympics.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that everyone will support this resolution.

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

Today, I rise and urge passage of H. Res. 684, congratulating Shawn Johnson on her recent national championship in women's artistic gymnastics. Just this year, Shawn has won the all-around competition at the Pan American Games, the American Cup, the national championship and the world championship. She has appeared on "ABC World News Tonight," "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" and at a gala

for Pink With a Twist, a group that fights cancers among women.

She has been honored with Shawn Johnson Day in Iowa, with the Longines Prize for Elegance, and as ABC's Person of the Week. All this for a 15-year-old, 4-foot 8, 88-pound high school sophomore who sometimes finds time to walk dogs at shelters and serves as a ball girl for her school's football team.

She never bothered to crawl, according to her mother, Terri Johnson. At 9 months old she simply arose and began to walk. At age 3, her mother enrolled her in gymnastics class "just to channel all her energy," her mom said. I think it's important to point out that it was her mom who drove her so many times to so many practices, because with all great athletes, we have to acknowledge that the parents play such a great role in it.

At the age of 6, she showed up at Qiao Gymnastics in Des Moines, where Qiao was working. A former top gymnast from China, Qiao had come to the United States to study English at the University of Iowa. Although her first coach said that she had more raw strength than gymnastic ability, Coach Qiao saw her potential immediately and worked hard to nurture that talent.

This means long and busy days for Shawn. After school, she heads to the gym for a 4-hour workout, then home to do school work. Yet, she maintains a 4.0 average. Unlike traditional gymnasts, artistic gymnastics traditionally has not been a sport where 15-year-olds excel. It combines the disciplines of gymnastics and ballet, and few athletes as young as Shawn have been able to master it.

□ 1730

But through hard work, discipline and the ability and the tutelage of a good coach, she has already made her mark as one of the world's greatest gymnasts. With Pan Am, national and world titles behind her, Shawn now points towards 2008 to the summer Olympics to be held in Beijing. "I think it would be cool, not only for me, but for him," she said, "and I think it would be a proud moment for both of us."

What I want to say to my colleagues is this is a special young woman and one that I know everyone in Iowa has a lot of pride in, but everybody in the United States shares in that pride, and I urge passage of this legislation.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I am pleased to join my colleague in the consideration of H. Res. 684, a bill that congratulates Shawn Johnson on her victory in becoming the 2007 World Artistic Gymnastics Champion in women's gymnastics.

H. Res. 684, which has 57 cosponsors, was introduced by Representative LEONARD L. BOSWELL on September 26, 2007. H. Res. 684 was reported from the Oversight Committee on October 23, 2007, by voice vote.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Shawn Johnson, at the age of 15, won three gold medals at the World Artistic Gymnastics Championships in Stuttgart, Germany. She became the fourth United States woman ever to win a world all-around title with her come-from-behind victory in the women's all-around finals of the 2007 world championships. She joined Kim Zmeskal, Shannon Miller and Chellsie Memmel as the only U.S. women to win a world all-around title in gymnastics.

This year, Ms. JOHNSON was first at the 2007 Tyson American Cup. She won the all-around title at the 2007 Pan Am Games, along with the U.S. women's gymnastic team, receiving gold medals for the uneven bars and balanced beam events. She also won the silver medal for the floor exercise event. At the 2007 Visa Championships, she won her first senior U.S. all-around title.

So, Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleague, Representative BOSWELL, on congratulating the outstanding accomplishments of Ms. JOHNSON in becoming the 2007 World Gymnastics Champion in women's gymnastics and urge the swift passage of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time and urge passage of this resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 684.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMEMORATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 808) commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 808

Whereas, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments is an independent, nonprofit organization, founded in 1957, and comprised of elected officials from 21 local governments of the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia, plus area members of the Maryland and Virginia legislatures, the U.S. Senate, and the U.S. House of Representatives;

Whereas in April 1957 forty officials from Washington area jurisdictions voluntarily

gathered to establish an organization where they could exchange ideas and work together on regional issues such as transportation, the environment, and public safety; this organization became the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments;

Whereas during the past half century COG's activities have touched every aspect of the life of the citizens of the National Capital Region and have improved the quality of life for all residents;

Whereas COG has facilitated the development of effective responses to such issues as the environment, affordable housing, economic development, human services, land use development, public safety and emergency response, and transportation that have had a profound and positive impact on the National Capital Region;

Whereas these responses include galvanizing the region's response to the September 11th attacks and the ongoing emergency preparedness programs, cleaning up of the Potomac River, spearheading a number of regional health programs including one of the nation's first regional conferences on AIDS, creating the region's express bus lane system, reducing air pollution through a model law and establishing the region's daily air quality index, and founding the Foster and Adoptive Families program for vulnerable children and teenagers;

Whereas COG has served as the Metropolitan Planning Organization guiding the region's transportation planning in partnership with the state and local departments of transportation since the 1960s and has served as key advocate for increased funding for the region's transportation needs;

Whereas COG's air quality committee created by the State of Maryland, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the District of Columbia, has worked successfully to reduce pollutants in the region's air;

Whereas COG has worked with area governments and law enforcement and emergency response officials to improve public safety response and coordination for over four decades, starting with the "mutual aid agreements" that began with the opening of the Wilson Bridge in 1962 and continuing to the present with homeland security planning and initiatives such as the regional pawnshop database that has helped recover millions of dollars of stolen property; and

Whereas COG managed a Federal pilot program to provide treatment and support services to women who abused alcohol and drugs, and currently works with area health officials to improve the region's emergency preparedness by developing a disease and syndromic surveillance system: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the United States House of Representatives does hereby offers its sincerest congratulations to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments in recognition of its 50th Anniversary and its legacy of outstanding service to the governments and citizens of greater Washington, D.C. metropolitan region and expresses its appreciation for a job well done.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. I thank my good friend and distinguished colleague from Illinois for yielding me the time. I have the great honor to offer this resolution on behalf of all of my colleagues in the Washington metropolitan area.

The Council of Governments of the Washington Metropolitan Area began 50 years ago, in 1957. In the ensuing 50 years, it has become the premier group for collaboration on transportation, air and water quality, regional growth, emergency response, and any number of other domestic issues that are important to its individual jurisdictions. We will be honoring the Council of Governments Thursday night in their 50th anniversary gala, and all of our Washington area colleagues, including Ms. NORTON, Congressman VAN HOLLEN, Congressman HOYER, Congressman WYNN, Congressman DAVIS and Congressman WOLF, will all participate, as they have been participating since they have been elected to office in the Council of Governments.

Since its first meeting during the Eisenhower administration where there were seven charter member governments, it has grown to include 21 local jurisdictions. As it has grown, it has become the place to discuss and address and solve so many of the region's problems.

Because of the Council of Governments, this is one of the finest regions in the country in which to live. But it wasn't always that way. Fifty years ago, it had half of its current population, it had no Metro system and no interstate highway system. Imagine, just 50 years ago. But the visionary leaders of this area got together, and in working with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, have made enormous strides in creating a region that is proud to be the capital of the free world, and those who live here reflect that pride. But it didn't happen by accident. COG has been an essential component of that growth.

In 1967, COG was responsible for the D.C. Air Pollution Act. It was a model that was created by the Council of Governments, signed by President Johnson. The fire chiefs of the area got together and put together a mutual aid agreement. That became the model for the 9/11 Commission's recommendation for all metropolitan areas in the country. The response of the Council of Governments on September 11, 2001, in pulling together all of the emergency responders, was tremendous and deserves great credit as well. The Regional Incident Communication Coordination System is a model in the country.

Now those 21 local governments have over 250 members. We have one of the

highest quality of life achievements in the country and the Nation's strongest economy. And as we plan for an additional 1.6 million people and 1.2 million more jobs over the next 25 years, COG will continue to address those challenges. When we look forward to the next 50 years, COG predicts that by the year 2057 the average home in metropolitan Washington will cost more than \$14 million. That means a lot of pay increases for all of the Federal workers, I guess including the Members themselves. But we are going to be part of a mega-region stretching from Baltimore to Richmond. The way in which we use energy is going to be a key determinant in terms of the region's prosperity.

There will be enormous changes that take place. But whatever changes take place, we know that the Council of Governments is going to be there as a meeting place, as a forum, as a facilitator, to address all of the challenges that confront us.

So, after 50 years of tremendous achievement, we do want to recognize this organization, and I very much appreciate the committee giving us the opportunity to do so. I think I have used my time, and I don't think there is much controversy, so I will conclude my remarks at this point.

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to join with the gentleman from Virginia, my friend, in enthusiastically supporting this legislation. After 50 years of this kind of a Council of Governments' working, it deserves the recognition it will receive here on the House floor today. I certainly believe that Mr. MORAN has done a very, very good job of outlining the 50 years of success, beginning in April of 1957, and I think we should briefly reflect on what 1957 until day was all about.

This is a time in which the District of Columbia went through terrible upheaval. Maryland and Virginia had to reinvent themselves. All of this could not have been done without the kind of cooperation that this council produced. I think it is certainly unique to have the District of Columbia and two States, five counties, two cities and dozens of Maryland counties all working together. These jurisdictions are cooperating.

I think that is a legacy that has only half finished its work. I think on a bipartisan basis we all recognize the improvements in the quality of living here, the transportation and infrastructure that makes it possible for us to get to work by road or by rail.

So, I look forward to this organization continuing for another 50 years serving what is today 1.6 million people, and certainly a growing population, both in and out of the district.

With that, I very much urge passage of this bill.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join with my colleagues, and I commend Representative MORAN for his introduction of H. Res. 808, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the regional planning that has taken place in the Washington, D.C., area. It has been instrumental in making this, as he indicated, one of the most desirable areas of the country in which to live. I commend them for their effort and salute him for his introduction of this resolution.

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 Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 808.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3074, TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

Mr. OLVER submitted the following conference report and statement on the bill (H.R. 3074) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes:

CONFERENCE REPORT (H. REPT. 110-446)

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 3074) "making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes", having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses as follows:

That the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate, and agree to the same with an amendment, as follows:

In lieu of the matter stricken and inserted by said amendment, insert:

That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Secretary, \$93,782,000, of which not to exceed \$2,310,000 shall be available for the immediate Office of the Secretary; not to exceed \$730,000 shall be available for the immediate Office of the Deputy Secretary; not to exceed \$18,720,000 shall be available for the Office of the General Coun-

sel; not to exceed \$11,874,000 shall be available for the Office of the Under Secretary of Transportation for Policy; not to exceed \$9,417,000 shall be available for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Budget and Programs; not to exceed \$2,383,000 shall be available for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Governmental Affairs; not to exceed \$23,750,000 shall be available for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration; not to exceed \$1,986,000 shall be available for the Office of Public Affairs; not to exceed \$1,516,000 shall be available for the Office of the Executive Secretariat; not to exceed \$1,335,000 shall be available for the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization; not to exceed \$7,874,000 for the Office of Intelligence, Security, and Emergency Response; and not to exceed \$11,887,000 shall be available for the Office of the Chief Information Officer: Provided, That the Secretary of Transportation is authorized to transfer funds appropriated for any office of the Office of the Secretary to any other office of the Office of the Secretary: Provided further, That no appropriation for any office shall be increased or decreased by more than 5 percent by all such transfers: Provided further, That notice of any change in funding greater than 5 percent shall be submitted for approval to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations: Provided further, That not to exceed \$60,000 shall be for allocation within the Department for official reception and representation expenses as the Secretary may determine: Provided further, That notwithstanding any other provision of law, excluding fees authorized in Public Law 107-71, there may be credited to this appropriation up to \$2,500,000 in funds received in user fees: Provided further, That none of the funds provided in this Act shall be available for the position of Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs.

OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

For necessary expenses of the Office of Civil Rights, \$9,140,900.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING, RESEARCH, AND DEVELOPMENT

For necessary expenses for conducting transportation planning, research, systems development, development activities, and making grants, to remain available until expended, \$14,000,000.

WORKING CAPITAL FUND

Necessary expenses for operating costs and capital outlays of the Working Capital Fund, not to exceed \$128,094,000, shall be paid from appropriations made available to the Department of Transportation: Provided, That such services shall be provided on a competitive basis to entities within the Department of Transportation: Provided further, That the above limitation on operating expenses shall not apply to non-DOT entities: Provided further, That no funds appropriated in this Act to an agency of the Department shall be transferred to the Working Capital Fund without the approval of the agency modal administrator: Provided further, That no assessments may be levied against any program, budget activity, subactivity or project funded by this Act unless notice of such assessments and the basis therefor are presented to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations and are approved by such Committees.

MINORITY BUSINESS RESOURCE CENTER PROGRAM

For the cost of guaranteed loans, \$370,000, as authorized by 49 U.S.C. 332: Provided, That such costs, including the cost of modifying such loans, shall be as defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974: Provided further, That these funds are available to subsidize total loan principal, any part of which is to be guaranteed, not to exceed \$18,367,000. In addition, for administrative expenses to carry out the guaranteed loan program, \$523,000.

MINORITY BUSINESS OUTREACH

For necessary expenses of Minority Business Resource Center outreach activities, \$2,970,000,

to remain available until September 30, 2009: Provided, That notwithstanding 49 U.S.C. 332, these funds may be used for business opportunities related to any mode of transportation.

PAYMENTS TO AIR CARRIERS

(AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND)

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

In addition to funds made available from any other source to carry out the essential air service program under 49 U.S.C. 41731 through 41742, \$60,000,000, to be derived from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, to remain available until expended: Provided, That, in determining between or among carriers competing to provide service to a community, the Secretary may consider the relative subsidy requirements of the carriers: Provided further, That, if the funds under this heading are insufficient to meet the costs of the essential air service program in the current fiscal year, the Secretary shall transfer such sums as may be necessary to carry out the essential air service program from any available amounts appropriated to or directly administered by the Office of the Secretary for such fiscal year.

COMPENSATION FOR AIR CARRIERS

(RESCISSION)

Of the remaining unobligated balances under section 101(a)(2) of Public Law 107-42, \$22,000,000 are rescinded.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS—OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

SEC. 101. The Secretary of Transportation is authorized to transfer the unexpended balances available for the bonding assistance program from "Office of the Secretary, Salaries and expenses" to "Minority Business Outreach".

SEC. 102. None of the funds made available in this Act to the Department of Transportation may be obligated for the Office of the Secretary of Transportation to approve assessments or reimbursable agreements pertaining to funds appropriated to the modal administrations in this Act, except for activities underway on the date of enactment of this Act, unless such assessments or agreements have completed the normal reprogramming process for Congressional notification.

SEC. 103. None of the funds made available under this Act may be obligated or expended to establish or implement a program under which essential air service communities are required to assume subsidy costs commonly referred to as the EAS local participation program.

FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

OPERATIONS

(AIRPORT AND AIRWAY TRUST FUND)

For necessary expenses of the Federal Aviation Administration, not otherwise provided for, including operations and research activities related to commercial space transportation, administrative expenses for research and development, establishment of air navigation facilities, the operation (including leasing) and maintenance of aircraft, subsidizing the cost of aeronautical charts and maps sold to the public, lease or purchase of passenger motor vehicles for replacement only, in addition to amounts made available by Public Law 108-176, \$8,750,000,000, of which \$6,383,216,000 shall be derived from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, of which not to exceed \$6,969,663,000 shall be available for air traffic organization activities; not to exceed \$1,082,653,000 shall be available for aviation safety activities; not to exceed \$12,549,000 shall be available for commercial space transportation activities; not to exceed \$102,221,000 shall be available for financial services activities; not to exceed \$91,214,000 shall be available for human resources program activities; not to exceed \$290,872,000 shall be available for region and center operations and regional coordination activities; not to exceed \$166,543,000 shall be available for staff offices; and not to exceed \$39,552,000 shall be available for information