

of Representatives himself for many years. He said about that House bill that it was "the worst transportation bill I have ever seen" and that it would "take us back to the horse and buggy era."

So with bipartisan opposition to this extreme, the worst bill that Secretary LaHood had ever seen, Speaker BOEHNER was forced to pull it, and that was that for that effort.

Then they spent months going after budget proposals that would reduce spending on our highways and on our bridges. Ultimately, they have thrown in the towel. They have no transportation bill in the House. They cannot get one up for a vote. So they have fallen back on trying to pass short-term extensions.

Well, first of all, that is not a great outcome for jobs and for the economy. According to the Rhode Island Department of Transportation, short-term extensions have had significant detrimental effects. These include delaying \$80 million worth of projects, which equates to the loss of 1,000 job-years of work; delaying planning for needed safety and structural improvements of a \$300 million to \$400 million interchange that is in deplorable condition; delaying the advertising and awarding of the entire 2012 formula-funded construction program, which may cause the State to miss an entire construction season, putting the entire road construction industry out of work for that season; making long-range planning and the development of a sound State Transportation Improvement Program nearly impossible; and, last, jeopardizing the State's plans to design and construct the replacement of the Providence Viaduct I spoke about.

So the idea that an extension just carries on the status quo, it is more or less OK, it will not create harm, and it will not cost jobs is just plain dead wrong. There is job loss and there is economic loss associated with these extensions.

So how have they done on the extensions? Well, they have not even managed to pull themselves together to deal with the extensions. The House leadership has proposed 60-day extensions and 90-day extensions to the Federal transportation programs. Twice they have placed these proposals over on their calendar, but both times they have had to pull the proposals down because they do not have the votes.

So what do they have over there? They have no bill they can vote for. The bill they did put up was called one of the worst and most extreme transportation bills in history by a former Republican Congressman. They cannot get their act together to pass an extension. Even assuming it is not a bad idea to pass an extension for our economy, they still cannot do it, even as bad of an idea as that is. So they have nothing, and we are coming up on a deadline. On March 31, the authority to draw funds from the Highway Trust Fund runs out. So we are up against a

pretty serious time constraint. As we whittle away to those last days, and as they get ready to leave the House and head home without having done their work on transportation, it is becoming more and more urgent that they take some action. If they cannot do a bill of their own, if they cannot pass a 90-day extension, if they cannot pass a 60-day extension, there is one obvious solution that is standing there as big as the proverbial rhinoceros in the living room; that is, pass the Senate highway transportation bill.

It is right there. It is ready to go. It could be on the President's desk in just days. It is bipartisan, with 75 votes in the Senate. It preserves these important programs and saves or creates nearly 3 million jobs in this country. The people of America understand that our highways, our roads, and bridges are important. They want us to go forward on this bill. This is not controversial. This should be easy.

So the House needs to take a look at where they are and make a hard decision.

They should not go home without addressing this problem and let us hit the deadline wall—particularly not with a good, solid, bipartisan Senate highway bill waiting to be taken up, waiting to be voted on, and waiting to be signed. All of the indications are that if the Senate highway bill were taken up by the House, it would pass overwhelmingly. Who would vote against a bill that creates 2.9 million jobs? Who would vote against a bill that maintains our highways, our roads, and our bridges? Who doesn't get it that in this country, our highway, bridge, and road infrastructure is in terrible shape? We understand this. The Nation's civil engineers have given our infrastructure near-failing grades in these areas. Other countries spend 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 percent of their gross domestic product on infrastructure, keeping it right, knowing it helps grow their economy. We are down below that.

It is very unfortunate that the House at this point cannot sort itself out to come up with its own transportation bill, cannot sort itself out to pass an extension—they cannot even do that. A deadline is coming at them that is non-negotiable. Ideology, partisanship, rhetoric—all of those things don't matter against the hard deadline they are driving this country toward. I hope and urge that they take up the Senate Transportation bill, put it to a vote, let's get going, let's put 2.9 million people to work rebuilding our roads and highways, and let's get America moving and working again.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BEGICH). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## TRIBUTE TO MR. BILL SWOPE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today I rise to commemorate my very dear friend, Mr. Bill Swope of Elizabethtown, KY, for his many successes in business and in life. Mr. Swope has made many contributions to philanthropy and his local community, and has affirmed a commitment to public service on behalf of the Commonwealth while setting an example for his family and others of what it means to be a distinguished citizen.

I have been very closely acquainted with Bill Swope, his brother Sam, and the rest of their family for quite some time. Bill was born in 1922 in Cleveland, Ohio. He graduated from Miami University in Oxford, OH, with a degree in business administration. Bill served in the U.S. Army during World War II as a sergeant specializing in artillery. He recently received the French Legion of Honor in 2009, and is now considered a knight of the French Republic.

His wife Betty was a lieutenant, junior grade, in the Navy WAVES before she married Bill on July 26, 1945. According to Bill, the couple's long-lasting relationship is because Bill has always remembered who holds the higher rank—and it isn't him.

The first business venture of Mr. Swope was established in 1952 in Winchester, KY; it was called Swope Motor Company Plymouth-Dodge. There were many doubts about the future of the young company in its beginnings, but the Swope family business survived and thrives. This year marks the 60th year of the family business. Bill is now retired has left the running of the business to his three sons Carl, Bob, and Dick.

The first generation of Swopes laid the foundation of the business. The second generation is now in charge and makes sure the business runs smoothly. One thing both generations can agree on is that the company needs to remain a local, family-run enterprise. Bill is excited about the next 60 years in the automotive industry, and he is the first to tell you how proud he is of the three generations of Swopes' leadership.

Mr. Swope has been involved in a tremendous amount of volunteer activities, charities, and leadership roles throughout the years. He has been an active member of the Lion's Club since 1952, a deacon, elder and trustee of First Presbyterian Church in Elizabethtown, KY, and the past president

of the Fort Knox Chapter, Association of the United States Army in Fort Knox, KY. As a former member of the Elizabethtown City Council, he holds his community very dear to his heart. He has made sure to give back to the place he calls home in just about every way possible.

If you ever have the chance to sit down and talk with Bill Swope, you would quickly learn his passion for cars. Starting a company that has sold over 500,000 automobiles is just the beginning of his immersion in the industry. Bill likes to collect and restore antique and classic cars. Over the years he has become so good at this that in 1999, he opened Swope's Cars of Yesterday Museum in Elizabethtown, KY. The museum is open Monday through Saturday, and admission is free. The attraction houses every type of classic car you could imagine, and people from around the world have made a trip to the Commonwealth just to take a look.

Bill is very proud of his accomplishments in the business world, not because of the success he himself acquired, but for the opportunities he has helped to provide for so many other Kentuckians. Bill is a sensitive and thoughtful individual, and a natural-born leader. And he is first and foremost a loyal family man, a husband, father, foster-father, grandfather, and great-grandfather.

Bill is a joy to be around, he has a great sense of humor, and he always knows how to make you smile. He is an instrumental part of the economy of Hardin County, he is a vital part of the success of the State of Kentucky, and I am proud to say he is my good friend. I extend to him my heartiest congratulations on his lifetime of accomplishments, and I look forward to his future endeavors, wherever they may lie.

I would like to ask my U.S. Senate colleagues to join me in paying tribute to all Bill Swope has achieved for the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

An article was recently published in Hardin County's local newspaper, the News-Enterprise, which highlights the life of Mr. Bill Swope, and also follows Bill as he looks back on over 60 years of success in the private sector. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that said article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to appear in the RECORD as follows:

[From the News-Enterprise, Jan. 29, 2012]  
SWOPES CELEBRATE 60 YEARS IN BUSINESS  
(By Sarah Bennet)

Nearly 60 years ago in March of 1952, Swope Dodge-Plymouth was celebrating its grand opening at the corner of College and Mulberry streets. The dealership already had been open for a couple months, but people crammed into the one-car showroom for the event.

As Bill Swope remembers, two competitors, Buick and Pontiac dealers, were there that day and were overheard to make the following exchange: "I'll give them six months," one dealer said about Bill Swope and his brother Sam.

The other replied, "I think you're being pretty generous."

This year marks 60 years in business for Elizabethtown's Swope Family of Dealerships and Louisville's Sam Swope Auto Group.

Combined, the two Swope businesses have sold more than 500,000 automobiles, Bill said.

"We're kind of proud of that," the 89-year-old said during a phone interview.

"We think the 60 years have given us pretty good practice, and we're pretty well set for the next 60 years," he said.

Today, Bill is retired and his sons are managing the family business. Bob, 64, is president of Bob Swope Ford, while Carl, 54, is president and CEO of Swope Family of Dealerships. Their brother, Dick, is CEO of Sam Swope Auto Group.

As the second generation closes out the family's first 60 years, Carl said the "dynamic third generation" is getting involved with the business, which will continue to be a local, family-owned company.

"As the successive generations get involved, there's more of them," Carl Swope said. "There's certainly an increased capacity to do things. We're very excited about the next 60 years and think that the growth of the family business will be even more fantastic than what we've seen."

"I think that's very important," Bill added about keeping the Swope Family of Dealerships both local and family-owned. "We're very proud of our family. Our family seems to be well-adapted to the automobile industry. We're very proud of the products that we're selling and certainly of the people that we have, our associates, that help make our business successful."

But as the Swope men point out, the 60 years in business hasn't been a cake walk. The automobile industry has had its ups and downs throughout the years, and in January 1966, the Swope's second location at the corner of St. John Road and U.S. 31W burned down.

The building was a total loss, and the Elizabethtown Swope dealership was without a home for nearly 12 months.

"We ran an ad in the paper at the time—a picture of the building totally destroyed," Bill said. "Here it is, winter time. I'm standing in the rubble of the building and there's still smoke billowing up from the ashes. We ran a full-page ad and the headline of that ad was, Low overhead? We have no overhead."

But, somehow, with help from some competitors and their hard-working employees, the Swope family stayed in business, he said, and they began building where the Swope Chrysler-Dodge-Jeep-Ram building is today.

"January to December 1966, we were kind of operating out of the backseat of our cars and out of briefcases and various stalls that were loaned to our technicians," Bill said. "We moved out to what was then out in the country, and we dubbed that part of Dixie 'The Miracle Mile.' It wasn't much of a miracle at the time, but we thought it would be. Certainly it has turned out that way."

Asked about the recent downturn in the automobile industry, the Swopes stay optimistic.

Americans love their automobiles and will always need a way to travel from Point A to Point B, they say. That fact always will remain true regardless of how cars evolve in the future.

"Over that 60 years, we've seen a number of ups and downs in our industry," Bob Swope said, "and we certainly learned to make adjustments that were necessary for getting through those slow periods. It seems like each time we've experienced slow periods, the industry then comes back very robust."

The recent downturn was difficult for the entire industry, Carl said, but the Swope

family made it through without making any layoffs.

"I would give a lot of credit to our associates for how they responded to (the downturn)," he said. "Our people rose to the occasion. They became more efficient and effective in what they do."

Bob said over the years the Swope Family of Dealerships has developed a culture in its stores that values its associates and makes them part of the family, a business practice that has contributed to the company's longevity.

"One of the things that we learned very early on was to make sure our associates were also very happy with their working experience," he said. "So we work very hard to try to make sure that they feel like they're just an extended part of the family."

In 2011, the Swopes were up 20 percent compared to the previous year, Carl said, partially because of activity at Fort Knox. The Hardin County locations sold 4,538 retail vehicles, which was "a pretty steady mix" of both used and new cars.

Combined, the Elizabethtown and Louisville locations sold more than 22,000 vehicles in 2011, he said.

As they celebrate 60 years in business, the Swope family is expanding. Later this year, the business will hold grand openings for a new Nissan dealership as well as the expansion of its museum, which is one of Bill's projects.

Bill referred to it as a tribute to the Hardin County community and the customers who have supported the Swope family over the years. Open each Monday through Saturday, admission is free.

Reminiscing about the early years in the business, Bill recalled one of the first business deals he and Sam made in January 1952, not long after they opened the Swope Dodge-Plymouth doors for the first time. An Elizabethtown cab company, Dixie Cab, wanted to increase its fleet.

"So one of the first orders we got was a big order," he said. "They increased their fleet from two cabs to three, which is 50 percent. That was one of our first sales, and it was a Plymouth Cranbrook for Dixie Cab."

Bill recently located a 1952 Plymouth Cranbrook with some 15,000 miles on it which he plans to detail.

"You don't see many of those anymore," he said. "You will see that car parked out in front of the museum when it is completed."

#### TRIBUTE TO FRANCE CORDOVA

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Dr. France A. Córdova, Purdue University's 11th president and the first woman to head that institution.

Dr. Córdova became president of Purdue on July 16, 2007, and has overseen a strategic plan that emphasizes student success, research deliverables and global engagement. During her presidency, she has led Purdue to record levels of research funding, reputational rankings, and student retention rates; championed diversity among students, staff and university leadership; and promoted student success, faculty excellence, education affordability and programmatic innovation. Under her leadership, Purdue has expanded its role as a top research institution on the global stage and raised more than \$1 billion through private philanthropy.

President Córdova will retire from Purdue at the end of her 5-year term,