

BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE CREATES JOBS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for this opportunity. At least once a week we come before the House to talk about jobs, that little four-letter word that is so important on everybody's mind—can I get a job, will I have a job, what does it take to get a job in America. We still have far too high unemployment, and we still have a great need to ensure that our jobs produce the kinds of wages and opportunities that Americans really want. They want to be able to buy a home, have a car, raise their families, provide the necessities, and see their kids get a great education and opportunity.

We have a long way to go. We have come a long way, but we still have a long way to go. One of the critical ways that America can and must build jobs is build the infrastructure, to make sure that those foundations of the economy will grow, upon which cities will be built, those things that allow us to prosper, the critical investments. In this case, the physical investments are the issue that we are going to talk about today.

We have an opportunity. Beginning tomorrow, a conference committee will be formed here in the Capitol made up of Senators, Republican and Democrat, and Members of the House of Representatives, both Republican and Democrat, sitting down together. Oh, yeah, together, actually at the same table, tomorrow morning, 9:30, to beginning a conference committee on the Water Resources Reform and Development Act, otherwise known as WRRDA. If you are around here long enough, you know what that means, but I guess the rest of the world really needs to know it is the Water Resources Reform and Development Act.

And so 13 million jobs, 13 million jobs in America depend upon how well that conference committee does its work. The House of Representatives a few weeks back put out its version of the bill. The Senate did several months ago. Senator BARBARA BOXER from the State of California, my colleague, will be chairing that committee. We have work to do. We have the task of making sure that 13 million American jobs that depend upon the Water Resources Reform and Development Act will be secure. It is a big one.

So what is involved in the Water Resources Reform and Development Act? Well, how about this: 99 percent of America's international trade travels through our ports and waterways. That is a big number. I suppose there is some 1 percent that travels on airplanes, and those are probably very high-ticket, high-priced items. But if you are talking about the great, al-

most the entire, majority of America's work, that goes through our ports and waterways. This is what the Water Resources Reform and Development Act is all about. It is about our ports, the great ports of America. It is about the waterways of America. It is about the locks and the dams on the rivers.

Let me put this up for just a second. This is an interesting map. I don't know if many Americans have really considered the map of the United States and the waters of the United States. Obviously, the coastline, we don't have Alaska on this map, but it should be there also. The great coasts, the east coast, the gulf coast, the Pacific coast, and of course on and around Alaska. That is not all. Each of these rivers also is a waterway upon which commerce flows; and tomorrow, with the conference committee for the WRRDA bill, we will be discussing how to make these rivers more attuned to the environment and to commerce.

On the great Mississippi River, the Missouri, the Ohio, and the Illinois Rivers and all the way up into Wisconsin, an enormous amount of America's commerce flows along those rivers. And joining me in just a moment will be Representative BILL ENYART from the State of Illinois, and he will be talking about some of these issues as they relate to that part of the world. But this great river system in the central part of America is a major highway. There are interstate roads, to be sure, and there are local and county roads, but most of them feed into this great system that moves up and down the Mississippi River. The Water Resources Reform and Development Act is all about that. It is all about that commerce on that great river and about whether the locks and the levees that are on that river are adequate to meet the needs of commerce and the needs of public protection.

For those of us on the west coast and the east coast and even into the gulf, it is about the ports. It is about the ports of America and whether those ports are adequate for the commerce that we need to have. So when you happen to go by a port and you see one of these tied up at the dock, you can think about the American economy and about 99 percent of the international trade that goes in and out of our ports. It is a big deal. It is a very, very big deal, and most of America's ports are antiquated. The shoals, that is the mud and sand at the bottom of the ports, have been accreted, that is, built up over the last several years; and it needs constant dredging. And so part of what we will be dealing with at the WRRDA conference committee is the dredging of the ports and quite possibly the shore side, what is going on there.

These are subjects that we will come to in the next few minutes as we talk more about how we can build jobs in America and simultaneously build the American economy by building the great infrastructure.

One more issue I want to put up here before I call on Mr. ENYART is this one.

You see all of these rivers here; they are critically important. They are critically important for commerce and trade and obviously water and agriculture and all the rest. But sometimes—virtually every year—they are also a major problem for America.

This happens to be a picture of a levee break on the Sacramento River system. I happen to represent 200 miles of the Sacramento River. This break is all too common across America; and so the Water Resources Reform and Development Act, which will be up tomorrow in the conference committee—it is not going to be finished but at least it will make some progress toward completion—will deal with the levees.

The Army Corps of Engineers is the responsible Federal agency for the maintenance of the rivers, for the waters of America, whether they are in the rivers or along the shore. They are responsible for the ports, that is, for the maintenance of the ports, not the ports themselves. And in my district, the Army Corps of Engineers plays a major role in public safety because it is their responsibility to make sure that these levees are adequate to the challenge of a flood. When those levees are not adequate, great damage is done across America. It is approximately \$22.3 billion of annual unspent American treasure that is still in the pockets of America and the governments of America when these levees work. When they fail, it is a huge expense—floods, flood damage, and the like.

I would like now to call on the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ENYART) to share with us his view of the necessity for the Water Resources Reform and Development Act and the way it protects and helps his district.

Mr. ENYART. I thank the gentleman from California for this time to speak about the importance of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act.

Mr. GARAMENDI was talking about the coast, the east coast and the west coast and the great coastlines of our Nation. I always like to tell folks out here that I represent the west coast of Illinois. I always get a strange look when I say that, and sometimes a chuckle. But I represent the westernmost counties of Illinois, the river counties, reaching from Alton, Illinois, just north of St. Louis, all the way to Cairo, the very southern tip of Illinois. That piece of Illinois encompasses the great maritime highway that is the economic backbone of our inland agriculture industry, indeed, all of our inland industries.

Just north of my district, the Illinois River, which transits from the Mississippi up to the Great Lakes, flows into the Mississippi. Directly across from my district, the Missouri River feeds into the Mississippi; and then as you go downstream, the Mississippi and the Ohio converge at the very southern tip at Cairo, Illinois.

So we understand in southern Illinois the importance of these river systems. We understand the importance of port

authorities. Port authorities aren't just limited to Los Angeles and New York and the east coast and the west coast or the gulf coast, but they are very important to our inland maritime industry also.

Back when I served as the adjunct general or the commanding general of the Illinois National Guard, I had the unfortunate problem of dealing with floods on the Mississippi and on the Ohio. Back when I was a young officer, we had the terrible flood of 1993. We had the flood of 2008 and then the flood of 2011. And then just last winter, we had the terrible drought that wound up dropping the river levels in the Mississippi so low that it nearly stopped navigation on the river. So we need to work on this infrastructure for the three reasons that I ran for Congress. When I ran for Congress, I said I ran for jobs, jobs, and jobs. And that is what this is about.

When the rivers started drying up and when that drought hit and those barges couldn't transit the Mississippi and were having to go up and down the Mississippi with significantly lighter loads, it did several things to impact our economy. First, the barges couldn't transport nearly as much corn or as much soybeans; and at one point, the world's corn supply was down to less than 30 days, 30 days for the entire world. The world needed that corn from Illinois and from Iowa, the Dakotas and Missouri. That corn gets shipped on the Mississippi River and the Missouri River. When that river was drying up, that corn didn't flow.

□ 1800

Coming upstream is the oil that goes into the refineries at Wood River, Illinois, the steel that gets processed at the steel mills in Alton, Illinois, and Granite City, Illinois, and the fertilizer that goes on the fields throughout southern and central Illinois.

There are several provisions in this bill that have passed through the Senate that we think need to be added to the House bill that would help those navigation requirements on the Mississippi River.

Additionally, we have provisions in the bill that, as Mr. GARAMENDI talked about, would improve the levee system. The levee system is critical not only throughout my district, but, indeed, up and down the rivers because of the problems with flood insurance. I have families who have lived for generations in homes located near the Mississippi River and other contributory rivers who, because of the potential rise in flood insurance rates, will be unable to afford to pay the insurance and unable to sell their homes, to relocate as necessary. We need to improve those levees.

By the way, while we are improving those levees, what are we doing? We are putting people to work.

This bill is supported by multiple groups throughout our Nation. It is truly a bipartisan bill. It passed the

House 417-3 and the Senate by a vote of 84-14. You can't get much more bipartisan than that.

Let's look at the supporters of this bill. Labor supports the bill because they understand the importance of these jobs, and they understand the importance of maritime industry along that river. The Chamber of Commerce supports this bill. The National Association of Manufacturers, the American Farm Bureau, the Illinois Farm Bureau all support this bill because it is important to all of those industries and to all of those jobs. It is not just the local economy of southern Illinois. It is the regional economy, the national economy, and, indeed, even the world economy.

Remember when I was talking about when the world's corn supply was down to less than 30 days. If we can't ship corn from Illinois and Iowa and the Midwest and out to the world, we will have a very serious food problem.

The bill provides provisions for the Corps of Engineers to maintain navigation on the river, to improve the navigation aids that were virtually useless during the drought. Some of those navigation aids are simply lines painted on bridges. Those are navigation aids that date back to the 19th century, back to Mark Twain. Today I think we can do a little bit better than painting lines on bridge abutments to provide navigation aids for our maritime industry.

Additionally, the Corps, at this point, is restricted to working in the 300-foot congressionally mandated channels. So 300 feet going down the river the barges transit through is the only place the Corps is allowed to work. This bill would give the Corps more authorities to work outside that channel to ensure that we have safe navigation for those barges filled with oil and with fertilizer and other industrial materials.

The bill would also provide for a Greater Mississippi River Basin extreme weather management study. Today, we don't understand how the river system operates, and we don't treat it as a system. When you look at that map that Mr. GARAMENDI showed you of the river system, you see an entire system. You see the Mississippi, the Ohio, the Missouri, the Illinois. Those aren't separate entities. But today, in the law, we treat them as separate entities. The Missouri River is governed under completely different legislation than the Mississippi River is. And the Corps of Engineers, even if everybody agreed, couldn't release water from those Missouri River dams down into the Mississippi River to help the navigation because they didn't have the authorities to do so. That doesn't make a whole lot of sense, and I think we need a commonsense solution to that: we treat the entire system as it is, indeed, a system.

Another issue that we need to consider is the locks and dams. Many of those locks and dams are 70 years old.

They are in need of maintenance. They are in need of improvement. Those locks and dams, many of them are only 600 feet, and for efficiencies they need to be 1,200 feet in order to get the barge tows through. That will do several things. It will help the economy by lessening shipping costs, by making the cost of transportation for that corn, for that fertilizer, for that oil that gets refined into gasoline, dropping those transportation costs, making it less expensive to process and to buy.

It would also be good for the environment, because by using bigger tows, you are burning less fuel to ship the same amount of goods. Shipping by barge in the inland waterways is by far the most fuel efficient method of transportation compared to either rail or trucking.

Clearly, for all of those reasons, we need to get this bill passed. We need it for my three issues: jobs, job, and jobs, for southern Illinois, for the region, for the Nation.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you very much. Sometimes I want to call you Congressman, and sometimes I want to call you General. Always we are going to say that you really know the Mississippi. You served there in the National Guard, providing the protection to the people, and to have a very good sense of what is necessary in that part of Illinois and beyond.

As you were talking about the issues of moving goods and services up and down the great Mississippi River system—Ohio, Missouri, and the other rivers—there is about \$1.4 trillion of goods that move down that river into the other ports across America and is shipped out across the entire world. That is 30 million jobs. You were talking about that.

You also raised a point that is very important, and that is that it is not just the ongoing jobs of the tugboats and the barges, the granaries and all of that, but it is also the job of building the infrastructure itself. The men and women that are going to get out there and put together the new docks, the new levee systems—all of those things require manpower. And we know that there is an enormous benefit. Every dollar that is invested in infrastructure returns well over \$3 back into the economy immediately, to say nothing of the long-term benefit that comes of having that new lock system in place, more efficient, longer locks so, as you said, more of those barges than just one towline can work their way through the lock and not have to be broken up into smaller towlines.

So there are a lot of issues in this piece of legislation. It is going to be an extremely important moment in moving the economy forward. This is the first time in 6 years. It has been 6 years since the Congress and the Senate got together to do a water resource reform and development program. Why? I guess we just couldn't quite figure it out, but we have to do it this time.

There is a need for very serious reform in this system. We know that many of the projects that are undertaken, that the Corps of Engineers is working on, are forever trying to get in line and get in place.

We know that many projects simply are derelict; they never should be built. So the bill removes \$12 billion of derelict projects that should never be built and replaces them with new projects that are critically important. Some of those are the locks along the Mississippi and the Ohio system and some of the other dams that are out there.

For me in California, we know that these projects are critically important. The city of Sacramento, Mr. ENYART, is one of the most flood-risk cities—in fact, it is No. 2 in flood risk; probably No. 1, now that New Orleans has had an opportunity to have its flood walls rebuilt following the devastation of Katrina. Now it is Sacramento. It is a huge population in a very risky area, a population that I represent part of and share with Congresswoman MATSUI, the city of Sacramento.

It is a little different than New Orleans. When Katrina came through, it was flooded, to be sure, and terribly damaged. Many lives were lost. But the water was warm. In Sacramento, if the levees were to break on the American River or the Sacramento River system and flood that system, we are talking about very cold water, water that people would not survive in for more than a few minutes because of the temperature and hypothermia. So we really need to build those levees.

As I go into this task of being on the conference committee where I will serve as one of the representatives of the House of Representatives, I will be looking at those kinds of projects that are really about human life, the safety of my constituents and the safety of constituents all around this Nation where these levees need to be built to a high standard. Many of them need to be repaired in my district, the delta of California. Many of the levees are over 100 years old and were never built to standards that would be applicable today.

So we have work to do. We have levees to build. We have ports to build. We have channels to dredge. We have jobs that will be created when we pass this bill and adequately fund it.

One other thing that is possible here is not only will we create jobs directly in building the ports, dredging the rivers and channels, building the levees and repairing them—those are direct jobs. Not only will we do that. We will also have the long-term foundation, the investment necessary for future economic growth. We will also, if we do one more thing—and I hope to get this into the legislation. That is to make sure that there is a strong buy America provision.

This is going to be American taxpayer money that is going to be used for the steel in the locks, for the cement, for the pilings in the piers and

probably the dredges that will be used for the channel. This is all American taxpayer money that will be used to buy and maintain that equipment. If it is American taxpayer money, then, by golly, you ought to be buying American goods. So buy American. Use our taxpayer money to build the rest of the manufacturing sector of America. Build our steel industry by buying American steel for the locks and for the piers and for the cement and for the other work that needs to be done. Make it in America. It is very simple. Use American taxpayer money to make it in America and to buy American goods.

So I am going to be working very diligently on that conference committee to make sure that this buy America provision is strongly embedded in the legislation. I know that if we are able to do that, we will not only improve our levees, dredge the channels, build the ports, but we will also have the opportunity to make American jobs in the manufacturing sector.

Mr. ENYART, you may have some additional thoughts that you would like to bring to our attention. If so, please have at it.

Mr. ENYART. Thank you, Mr. GARAMENDI. Actually, I do.

I would like to point out that the Democratic motion to instruct conferees—as you pointed out, you serve on that conference committee—passed on November 14 with bipartisan support. That motion encouraged the conferees to reauthorize an effective dam security program.

The goal here is to reduce risks to people, to life and property from dam failure. With the age of some of these dams and the aging infrastructure in place, the potential loss of life and limb and property is astronomical. By putting money into maintenance now, we are saving not only lives and property, but saving money downstream because we know that sooner or later, with the age of that infrastructure, that it is going to fail. That is one of the important things that the Democratic motion to instruct conferees did.

Additionally, Mr. GARAMENDI, I signed the bipartisan letter to the House leadership of both parties requesting a speedy conference report. We need to move this conference report. As you pointed out earlier, Mr. GARAMENDI, this has been waiting for 6 years. We can't afford to wait another 6 years. So we need a speedy conference report between the Senate and between the House so that we can merge that legislation, add the items that we believe are on the House bill that need to be part of that Senate bill and vice versa so that we can begin bringing these jobs back to America and bringing the use of these American products to our districts.

That letter emphasized the importance of WRRDA, not only to the district, but also the difficulties which it imposes on business and on labor and on the trades if this bill is not moved in a prompt manner.

One of the other important aspects of the bill for my particular district—you were talking about the Sacramento River. But one of the particular parts of bill that we want to see added that has passed the Senate establishes the Metro East Flood Risk Management Program. What we are talking about there is the urban industrial area in southwestern Illinois across from St. Louis, running all the way from Alton, down through east St. Louis, south to Columbia, Illinois.

□ 1815

It encompasses three counties, with a population of about 600,000 folks. So it is very significant. It includes oil refineries, steel mills, chemical plants, residential areas, and many of the bridges, both rail and passenger car, that transit the Mississippi there. So it is critical that we get this taken care of.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Well, we also, Mr. ENYART, in California we have those same issues. Let me swap places with you. I want to put up one of the maps here of California.

Mr. ENYART, you were talking about the central part of America. You certainly can see it here, as you were discussing the Mississippi River system and your area, up here in the Illinois area.

In California, we think we are a real big State and we have got a lot of people, and this legislation is extremely important for California. I am going to just point out some of the—San Francisco Bay, one of the great maritime bays in the world. We would argue there is none more beautiful nor more important than the San Francisco Bay.

In and out of this Bay flows a vast amount of commerce to the Port of Oakland, and also up to the rivers, into the central part of California, through the delta on the Sacramento and the San Joaquin River, where trade now goes, international trade, to the Port of Sacramento and the Port of Stockton.

Very, very important because, like Illinois and the great Midwest, we have a vast agricultural economy here in the central valley of California, and a lot of that, particularly rice from my district, goes out of the Port of Stockton and Sacramento.

Both of those ports now have channels that are of insufficient depth to bring in the large ships, and so it becomes much more expensive. The issue you raised, Mr. ENYART, about the cost of shipping, if you have small ships that can't carry a full cargo because of the depth of channel, it gets more expensive.

So in this area, channel maintenance at the Port of Oakland, channel maintenance for the Ports of Sacramento and the like and, of course, up along the Contra Costa County area, where the refineries and the oil tankers come and go.

As you move further south, we have got the ports, mostly fishing down here along the coast and, of course, Monterey, which is famous, Pebble Beach and the Monterey Bay area.

Then you get down to Los Angeles, and the two great, great harbors of America, side by side, together form the largest harbor system in this Nation, and you can argue whether it is the largest in the world, but it is surely big, the Port of Los Angeles, represented by Congresswoman HAHN, and the Port of Long Beach, side by side there in the Los Angeles area, Long Beach represented by Mr. LOWENTHAL.

Those ports are really one of the major engines of international trade and economic growth, and of course, from those ports, those great cargos move in and out, all across America on the railways and highways. So we have that.

Then of course you can get down here to San Diego, some other harbors along the way in Orange County, and then the harbor of San Diego, which is extremely important for the military. Any time you happen to get to San Diego, you will see the aircraft carriers there from the U.S. Navy and other critical equipment and ships of the U.S. Navy. All of that is important.

Here in my district—I am going to put up another map, and this is where I really get involved. This is a map of, obviously, San Francisco Bay here, with the harbor of San Francisco, the Port of San Francisco, the Port of Oakland, Alameda in here and up along the Contra Costa coast.

As you get into the delta, this is the largest inland delta, or the largest delta on the west coast of the Western Hemisphere, and one of the great inland deltas of the world. There are more than 1,000 miles of waterways here in this delta area.

I represent about half of that area, the Sacramento River going up here and the San Joaquin River coming here, and then down into the great San Joaquin Valley. These areas are all protected by levees, and so the rivers are confined within those levees, and many of those levees, as I said a while ago, are more than 100 years old, and they need protection.

The water system of California, water flowing from the north, across these, through these waterways that are channeled by the levees to the great pumps down here, delivering water to southern California and the San Joaquin Valley, depends upon these levees.

This is part of the WRRDA bill, and so these levees and protecting the water system of California and the great agricultural enterprises of the delta are critically important, and the Water Resource Reform and Development Act provides money for the maintenance and the continuing studies of these levees, as well as for many of the critical environmental habitats in the area.

As you move up the Sacramento River, you will come to the great metropolis of Sacramento, which I talked about, and here, the American River coming in with the Sacramento River. Right in this area is, arguably, the

highest flood danger area in America, and there is a project right here in the Natomas area that is absolutely crucial, crucial to life and limb.

Then as you move on up in the rest of my district, going up 200 miles from here to here, you have Yuba City and Marysville, again, communities that have flooded in the past, with the loss of life, and those too are dependent upon the success of the WRRDA bill.

Now, what we are going to do tomorrow, and in the days ahead as we move through this conference committee—and my task, is to get the policy set. But the other side of it is the money. Where's the money coming from?

Well, the austerity budgets that have been such the prize of our Republican colleagues really have stripped money away from the projects that we have been talking about, stripped money away from the maintenance of the ports, the dredging of the channels, and the protection and enhancement of the levees. That money has been stripped away.

So, with the first sequestration that took place about 8 months ago, \$250 million of money that the Corps of Engineers would have for the ports, for the channels, and for the levees, disappeared. That was Sequestration 1.

On January 15, Sequestration 2 hits, with another \$90 billion hit, and we are not sure exactly how much the Corps of Engineers will lose, but they are going to lose a vast amount of money.

So all of the talk, all of the energy that we are putting into writing the appropriate policies to reform, to improve, to put programs in place for the American economy, aren't going to happen. Well, many of them are not going to happen because of the austerity budgets and the two sequestrations.

This is a critical problem, a critical problem, and I would reach out to my colleagues, both Democrat and Republican, and say, but there is money. There is money available, but we are not spending it in the right place.

In the budget bill that passed the House of Representatives a few months ago, there was an increase in the authorization well above what the President wanted to build and rebuild nuclear bombs, over \$12 billion over the next decade, for just one life-extension program on a nuclear weapon, the B-61—\$12 billion.

Now, it can be argued, and I would argue this, that that was an extraordinarily inappropriate place to spend money. We don't need that bomb for deterrence, I don't believe. The military may argue that we do, but then they can never get enough of these things.

My argument is, we need to spend the money where real danger exists, and that real danger exists on America's rivers when these levees are not up to standard. When the levees protecting New Orleans were not up to standard, people died, billions upon billions were lost.

When the levees in Sacramento are not up to standard, billions will be lost and people will die, and that is an immediate threat.

We have got plenty of other nuclear weapons for deterrence, but to spend \$12 billion in a way that I believe would be better spent on things that protect real people in real-life situations—so we are making judgments here. First of all, we are making a judgment—well, I wouldn't say either you or I, Mr. ENYART, are making this judgment, but our colleagues, particularly on the Republican side, are making a judgment that they believe you can build the American economy with austerity; that is, to cut the Federal expenditures. I disagree.

There are critical investments that the Federal Government should and must make. This is not new. Often we hear the talk around here, the Founding Fathers.

Mr. ENYART, have you heard people talk about, well, the Founding Fathers would do thus and so? We hear it all the time.

The Founding Fathers, let's take Washington and Hamilton, shortly after he was inaugurated—

Oh, by the way, Washington refused to be inaugurated in a suit made in England. He was inaugurated in a suit made in America. There was only one tailor at the time that would do that, but he did it.

Then he told Hamilton, I want a policy to build the American manufacturing sector. Hamilton came back some days later, probably 2 or 3 months, with a program, not 2,000 pages, but probably a couple of hundred pages at the most, and he said: We need, in America, to do the following things: to build the American economy and the American manufacturing base.

He said, one, we need to build ports. We need to build canals, and we need to protect American industry by using American taxpayer dollars to buy American-made goods. He said, beware of trade policies.

Hamilton and Washington wanted trade policies that protected the American manufacturing sector and American agriculture.

Interestingly, in the next few days, or in the next few weeks, we are going to have the question of trade policy before us here in the House of Representatives, and it is likely to be the Trans-Pacific Trade Program.

What is it?

Well, they want to fast-track it, where not one person on this floor will be able to say, wait a minute; we ought to change this, or we ought to change that. So we ought to be paying attention to the Founding Fathers who said, watch trade policy. Protect American jobs.

So as we go through all of this, in my district, we are going to have to have the money, American taxpayer money, plus a lot of local taxpayer money to protect the citizens in my district and the ports.

About \$1.8 billion is collected at the ports to rebuild, to dredge, and to maintain the ports. About half that money is siphoned off for other projects.

Beware of austerity budgets. No more sequestration. This Nation cannot afford that terrible policy of sequestration because it will rip the heart out of the critical investments that America has to make.

I have rambled on here for a little while and went off to some other things. Mr. ENYART, would you like to pick it up for a while?

Mr. ENYART. Thank you, Mr. GARAMENDI. I appreciate that.

You know, what we are really talking about here, Mr. GARAMENDI, it seems to me is, are we spending money, or are we investing in America?

I like to tell folks at home that when that roof starts getting old on your house, and you know those shingles need to be replaced, do you want to replace those shingles?

Do you want to put a new roof on that house before it starts to leak?

Yes, you want to do that because you are going to save the money then of the damage that is going to be caused when this roof does start to leak.

We are really talking about the same thing. We are talking about investing in America. We are talking about investing in our house, investing in our home, protecting that infrastructure, protecting that roof before it does begin to leak.

It is interesting you were talking about how money gets siphoned off, and this bill does change that. This bill would increase—you know, we have a special fund that is supposed to go to the maintenance of harbors and of ports, and this bill would increase the investments in improving our Nation's ports by increasing the percentage of the money that is collected each year through the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund.

□ 1830

As you pointed out, it is unfortunate, but half of the money that is collected to maintain harbors gets siphoned off and spent on other things.

Now, I believe and you believe, we believe, and the folks who voted for this bill believe that we should spend that money for the purpose for which it is collected, and that is to maintain and improve our harbors and our ports.

Now, you know, some of the Democrats on the committee have said that the bill is a compromise. Some of the folks don't like the fewer environmental reviews. But, you know, we voted for it. We pushed it forward even though it was a compromise. And sometimes in this business, you have to give a little to get a little. And it is like I talk about at home. When you go buy that new pickup truck, the dealer wants one price, and you want another price, you have got to meet somewhere in the middle to get there.

Mr. GARAMENDI. But "compromise" is not a dirty word in my

lexicon. Compromise is absolutely necessary. There are things in the bill that I would have written differently. In the conference committee, there are going to be differences between the House and the Senate in how we do.

You have mentioned some of the issues. The environmental issues, some of them are controversial. But there is a major part of this bill to speed these projects forward and to hold the Corps of Engineers responsible for getting things done. Part of it is they have got 3 years to do the initial study, and they have got \$3 million to get that study done, and their feet are going to be held to that commitment to get these projects moving forward. So there is a lot of reform in here, in the bureaucracy of the way this system has worked. There is also a lot of reform in this on allowing the local partnerships.

All of these programs are partnerships. They are partners with the local governments, ports, as you described earlier, local levee districts, and the like. Those partnerships, under present law, have a very difficult time to start a program early, to get it going without the Corps' permission. So what we have, we call it "crediting." And that allows these local governments, local ports to begin a project. Eventually, there is a whole new process in here for selecting which projects will be done.

By the way, we are not going to do earmarks. There are no earmarks in this legislation. No earmarks are allowed in the future. But there is a process to prioritize projects across the Nation, and ultimately, Congress is taking back some of its power to set the priorities for the Nation.

But that crediting that allows the local governments to get started, we are going to want to move that a little bit forward because in my district, because of the austerity budgets and the sequestration, many necessary projects are not allowed to move forward. But with a little tweaking of this language, which I will be working to get done, it will allow some of these projects to go forward. And the local share would then be counted if and when—if and when the Federal Government, the Corps of Engineers, actually decides to make that a national project.

So this is going to be very important. It is probably important in your area, for some of the levees in your area that are maintained now by the local levee districts and flood protection districts.

We spent a lot of time in the House and also in the Senate. We are going to have to work out some of the differences, some of the compromises. Not so much Democratic and Republican, but some regional differences and some differences about how the system should work, so we will work on that.

We have got about another 5, 7 minutes, so if you would like to wrap, and then I will wrap. And then I am going to do something that is not too common here. I am going to take this ball of some of this international trade and I am going to toss it to my Republican

colleague, and we will let him bat it around for a while.

Mr. ENYART. Wonderful.

Well, you know, Mr. GARAMENDI, while you are working on that conference committee, I would really appreciate it if you could see fit to—and this goes back to the environmental piece a little bit.

The Senate bill includes the Middle Mississippi River Environmental Pilot Program, which gives the Army Corps of Engineers authority to restore and protect fish and wildlife habitat along the Middle Mississippi River while they are undertaking navigation projects.

Right now, they are just constrained working on navigation. Well, doesn't it make a lot of sense, by the way, while you are working on navigation to also, when you can, improve the fish and the wildlife habitat.

In southern Illinois, fishing is a big sport. We have a lot of tourists come in. Hunting, goose hunting is a big sport and deer hunting. And if you can improve that wildlife habitat, it is going to help the environment as well as help our tourist economy in southern Illinois.

Now, that was part of the bill that I introduced, but it got stripped out before it passed the House. But it did pass the Senate. So as part of your conference, if you could help me out with that, I would really appreciate it.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Well, this is part of what we ought to be doing, and that is looking at these issues and maximizing the potential and the benefit that comes from a project. Let me give you another example of the same thing, and it is along the environmental line.

Right now the Corps of Engineers, while dredging in the San Francisco Bay area—let's just say the Port of Oakland over here. When they dredge there, they have to use the cheapest way of disposing of the dredging materials, called spoils, mostly sand and clay. They take it out here to Alcatraz, and they dump it in Alcatraz, and the tide takes it out past the San Francisco Golden Gate.

Well, we are saying, wait a minute. That is extremely valuable material to build habitat in areas that have been despoiled over the years. For example, down here in the southern part of the bay, these were great salt flats where the salt industry used the bay and evaporated the bay water to get salt. Well, those need to be restored. And it is quite possible that the material from the dredging could be used in that way or another habitat program, even up here into the delta. But it is not the cheapest.

So we are looking at a little tweak here that would allow the Port of Oakland or the other ports in the San Francisco Bay area and, really, around the Nation to do an environmental project along with the dredging project very similar to what you are talking about on the Mississippi River.

So I see common cause here. I see common cause where we can maximize

the total benefit for the Nation. It could be an additional cost that the port will have to pick up. Okay. But we get a twofor. We get environmental benefits as well as the economic benefits to the port.

Have you got any other things on your list?

Mr. ENYART. I will just close out with saying, Mr. GARAMENDI, thank you for the time this evening. I think this has been a true team effort from manufacturers and business groups, labor unions, port authorities, and the Agriculture Committee.

You know, I sit on the Agriculture Committee, and the ag community knows how critical this legislation is for Illinois. And Congress needs to get things done for the American people, and no job is more important than keeping our economy strong right here at home.

Mr. GARAMENDI. General Enyart, Congressman ENYART, or Bill, thank you so very, very much. I really appreciate working with you tonight on this critical issue, the fundamental investment.

Let's remember, this is not new. The Army Corps of Engineers has been around since the very earliest days of our democracy. The Army Corps has been responsible for the waterways of America, and the Water Resources Reform and Development Act is going to be an opportunity for America to really move its infrastructure, particularly the trade.

Remember, just to review, we are talking 13 million jobs immediately depend upon the Water Resources Reform and Development Act. We are talking about 99 percent of our trade travels through our ports and waterways, whether it is on the Mississippi, the Sacramento, the San Joaquin Rivers, or the great ports and the coastal part of America. It is critically important.

And as we do these things, we have the opportunity to reach back into the history of America and remember what the Founding Fathers talked about way back in George Washington's very early days: that these fundamental investments in what they called canals and ports and roads were critical to the growth of the United States at the very, very outset. George Washington and Alexander Hamilton also recognized the importance of international trade and that we get those trade policies correct.

So as we get ready to do the Water Resources Reform and Development Act, which is critical—and the conference committee starts tomorrow, and I have the honor of being on that conference committee—we also think about the way in which the trade of America is dependent upon our work in getting sound policies in place.

And it is also critically important in dealing with the issue of international trade agreements, whether it is the transpacific trade program or the new one that is being worked on with Europe, we have to protect our own jobs.

We have to protect the American economy. And in doing so, we must carry out our constitutional responsibility given to us by the United States House of Representatives and the Senators. The Constitution says that it is the legislature, Congress and the Senate, that shall set trade policy, and that requires that we have the opportunity to look at the details of every trade policy and not fast-track trash through the House.

Joining me and taking up, as I wrap up my hour, is my colleague on the Republican side. Why don't you take my last couple of minutes, and then you can have your own half hour.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Well, first of all, let me thank the gentleman for yielding to me. I know it is a bit unusual when Democrats and Republicans come down and share portions of the time. I think it is actually what the American people want a little more of. We should do this more often.

I am giving a talk in a few moments on health care. You and I will probably disagree to some fundamental philosophical approaches to that, and that is fine. You are in one party; I am in another. You have your own inclinations; I have my own inclinations and approaches. But to try to work constructively toward problem solving, I think it would behoove us all if we could figure out a better pathway to do that.

And that is why I am grateful to you for just leaving me a few moments because as I was listening to your speech, you talked about something I didn't know, that George Washington refused to wear a suit made in England and went back and said, Give me a manufacturing policy for this country. It was a very curious but good story to demonstrate a particular dynamic that, as you rightly pointed out, is part of our modern-day debate about how we do trade agreements in this fast-track authority. I think we have to be very, very cautious about this.

Trade can have the potential benefit to raise all boats. It has to be fair. It has an element of free, but it also has to be enforceable. And there are other dynamics to trade other than just the economic benefit that should be measured, such as the human cost of production in various societies. And we have glossed over those things in the past.

So I just wanted to commend you and thank you for raising this issue of giving, basically, over our authority by saying, we will vote to deny our authority to review the fullness of a trade agreement should one come through to us. I think that is a serious concern. So I want to commend the gentleman for raising the issue.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Well, thank you so very much. And I look forward to working with you on that issue. I know it is going to be coming.

Well, we don't know exactly when. But they are trying to wrap up. Our trade rep, our ambassador is trying to

wrap this up and present it to us. And they are talking fast-track. And I am going, time-out, guys. Time-out. We need to review. We need to make sure that it is fair trade. Not just free trade, but fair trade—fair to the American worker, fair to the American manufacturer, farmer, and the like.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. If I could add something, I think we ought to call it "smart" trade.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I like that word, too. Can we compromise on that?

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Yes, sounds good.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I yield back the balance of my time.

HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DESANTIS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) for 30 minutes.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, thank you for the time.

I don't have to tell you all that there is a debate raging in our country about the future of health care. I want to share, first of all, a story that I received by email from Yvonne who lives in the town of Firth, Nebraska, right near me. She says this:

We are a farming family of five in southeast Nebraska and recently received notification from Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Nebraska—an insurance company—that our insurance premiums are increasing from \$578 per month to \$1,092 per month. That is \$514 more, resulting from the misnamed "Affordable Care Act."

Yvonne goes on and says:

Even if I play with the numbers and drop our family income to be eligible for subsidies, my family has never needed government assistance in the past to pay for health insurance. Why should we need it now, other than Washington's interference? Would you please tell me how I am supposed to find an extra \$500 in my monthly budget to afford this new improved policy.

Mark, who lives in Lincoln, says he is 49. He said he had his insurance canceled, and he had a very good policy. And this is what he had to say:

I had a \$5,000 deductible policy; and after that, everything was covered. My policy was not a junk insurance policy. And it was canceled.

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Mr. Speaker, many Americans are awakening to sticker shock and are feeling, frankly, very betrayed by the earlier comments that if you like your health care plan, you can keep it. Clearly, there is a significant problem here. And what has happened?

Well, Mr. Speaker, we need the right type of health care reform—health care that is actually going to reduce costs and improve outcomes while also protecting vulnerable persons. But what we have gotten instead through the new law is a shift of cost to more unsustainable spending by government, a shift of cost from one American to