

I would remind the people, Mr. Speaker, who are sending their children here, releasing a child and saying, Go across a thousand miles of Mexico, go with enough pesos to pay mordida to get to the United States, and present yourself to the Border Patrol and say, I am afraid that I'll be killed in my country, I remind them that in this country, if a mother or a father loses track of their child and their child wanders off down the street, they are guilty of child endangerment. They are guilty of child abandonment.

If they are guilty of that, maybe not always on the first offense, but on subsequent offenses we do this. We take those children into the custody of our Health and Human Services, whichever the State may be, and we can terminate the parental rights and we can place that child into foster care and we can transfer that child into adoption. Because we in this country do not tolerate parents who abandon their children or fail to take care of their children or endanger their children.

That is the very description of what happens if you send a child across a thousand miles of a country. That has got to stop, Mr. Speaker. I will be introducing legislation very soon that addresses that very topic.

I appreciate your attention and indulgence, and I yield back the balance of my time.

MAKE IT IN AMERICA: INFRASTRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FRANKS of Arizona). 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, I have to catch my breath after listening the last hour to an unbelievable stream of consciousness.

I want to be very specific about some things that we really need to do here in Congress.

Often, we come to the floor in the evening and we talk about the subject of making it in America, rebuilding the American economy brick by brick, road by road, job by job, and putting the manufacturing sector back on its feet.

Today, my colleagues and I want to talk about one part of that Make It in America agenda, and that is not the trade, taxes, energy, labor, education, or research, but rather the infrastructure part of that equation.

Infrastructure is the foundation upon which any economy grows. And the American infrastructure has a problem.

Here is the problem.

The American infrastructure is falling down, falling apart, overused, overworn, and in desperate need of rebuilding. We can do it. America once built the greatest infrastructure in the world. We are falling way, way behind

in our own country and we are not even keeping up with other countries, such as China, which is building everything everywhere and laying in place an infrastructure that will carry them into the future.

□ 2045

Here is why we are not keeping up. Here is why we are falling down. Here is why we have potholes. Here is why cars are losing their ability to stay on the road. It is not because the drivers can't drive but because we are not spending the money that we once did. Way back in 2002, we were spending some \$325 billion a year. Right now, we are down to somewhere below \$250 billion on infrastructure. That is why we see bridges collapsing. That is why we have the transportation snarls and all of the problems in our transportation system.

As they say in the Middle East, just wait. It will get worse. Here in America, we are just 2 months away from this happening. We are going to fall off the transportation bridge. The funding for transportation programs, funded by the Federal Government, will run out of money sometime in August, perhaps in early September, depending on several factors that are simply unknown, but the funding for the maintenance and construction of our roads and bridges by the Federal Government will be over. There will be no more Federal funding available unless this Congress acts.

We have a roadmap. We have a plan. We have a program. President Obama and the Transportation Department, with Secretary Foxx, recently laid out a program called the GROW AMERICA Act. It is a program that would provide \$302 billion over the next 4 years, which is money that is desperately needed for rail, buses, ports, the freight system—"buses" meaning light rail, heavy rail. It is for the transit systems in our cities and the rail systems—Amtrak—bridges and highways. All of this is available. The GROW AMERICA Act is a real proposal. It is one that this Congress should take up. If there are some who have better ideas and better plans, bring them forward. For highways, it is about \$199 billion. For bridges and buses, it is about \$79 billion and about \$10 billion for the freight systems. For the rail, it is another \$10 billion to \$12 billion.

All of this is possible, but we need to do this. We need to finance it, and this program by the President is fully financed. The \$302 billion relies upon the existing excise tax that all of us pay for our gasoline, for our diesel fuel. The President would add another \$100 billion or so to fill up the pot so that we would have the \$302 billion, which is some 27 percent more than we presently are spending on the transportation system. Where does that extra money come from? It comes from corporate reforms, but that is not the only proposal on how to finance our transportation system.

In a few minutes, I will turn this over to my colleague from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), who will talk about that in some more detail. Also joining us tonight is my colleague from Kansas City, Missouri (Mr. CLEAVER), who will be talking about his transportation system in that area.

But this is a real plan—a real proposal—all of the details that we would need on how we could develop the freight programs: where you would connect the ports to the rail systems, how you would provide those intermodal proposals, how we could repair the bridges—the funding for it—over a period of time, and the highways. It is all coordinated around fixing the things that are broken, not necessarily adding but fixing first, fixing what is broken.

For the rail systems, critically important is the intercity rail, which is the Amtrak system here on the east coast. Then this happens to be the Capitol Corridor in my own district, which runs from Roseville, all the way through San Jose and through San Francisco. It is one of the most heavily used rail corridors in the entire system.

One of the things that we also talk about here in the Make It In America is that we spend our tax money on American-made goods. If we are going to spend \$302 billion of American taxpayer money, my legislation would increase the Buy American provisions, and I want to give you just one brief example of what it means:

This is the most modern locomotive in the United States, and it is, arguably, one of the most modern electric locomotives in the entire world. It is built in Sacramento. This is money that was made available in the American Recovery Act, the stimulus bill. Written into that bill was a provision that said that money—some \$800 million—for Amtrak locomotives had to be spent 100 percent on American-made locomotives. Siemens, the big German manufacturing company, looked at that, and it said: \$800 million and 100 percent American made? We could do that. So they took their factory in Sacramento and expanded it, and this is the first locomotive among those that will come off the lines—some 70 or 80 of them—that will be 100 percent American made. This locomotive will soon be operating here on the East Coast Corridor. Eventually, we will get those in Sacramento, but those will be diesel electric.

The final point I want to make before turning this over to my colleague Mr. BLUMENAUER is this. These were men and women in my district—Fairfield, California—in December of last year, who attended a job fair that I put on in Fairfield. I expected to find a few of my fellow citizens attending that. This job fair took place in December, and the temperature was just below 40 degrees. It was a foggy and rather cold day. More than 1,000 people lined up outside our job fair seeking a job.

Americans want to go to work. Americans want to work. They want those good, middle class jobs that come from building the infrastructure. It is just not the hard hat jobs. These are the technicians, the engineers, the accountants, the secretaries, the people who are working on the software. There are all of those jobs, and these are the men and women who want them.

So our plea today to our colleagues on the Republican side is: Let's go to work. Let's go to work here in the Congress. Let's put forward a transportation bill that avoids that transportation cliff, that allows the American public to go back to work—tens of thousands of jobs. Indeed, 3.5 million Americans will lose their jobs in the coming year if we fail to put together a transportation bill. That 3.5 million plus thousands upon thousands more will be able to go to work if we get this transportation program moving.

The President has given us a program, the GROW AMERICA Act. If there are those with better ideas, they should come forward. We should act upon that legislation, improve upon it and figure out the financing. If the President's notion of ending unnecessary corporate tax loopholes and giveaways isn't the best way, then let's put together a better way.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would yield back my share of the time and, if possible, turn it over to my colleague, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), to manage the remaining portion of this session.

TRANSPORTATION—A VISION FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for the remainder of the hour.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin, if I could, by thanking my friend from California for his ongoing leadership, advocacy, and focus on how we are going to rebuild and renew the country—making these critical investments, putting people to work, and calling upon this Congress to get in gear to be able to move the country forward. I appreciate his courtesy and his leadership.

I would like to begin, if I could, by turning to another of my colleagues from Kansas City, Missouri, Reverend EMANUEL CLEAVER, who is a gentleman who was kind enough to give me a visa to visit his district recently. I watched not just the affection that his constituents had for him but the big plans, evidenced in his community, that were dealing with how we put the pieces together for a more sustainable future—a vision for transportation. It was fascinating for me to watch, and I appreciate his allowing me to be a part of it.

I yield to the gentleman from Kansas City at this time.

Mr. CLEAVER. Thank you, Mr. BLUMENAUER.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to be here, particularly with Mr. BLUMENAUER and Mr. GARAMENDI, who spoke earlier, because they have long histories—longer, in fact, than I have been in the House—of pushing for transportation issues.

I think that this is a rather sad and somewhat tragic moment in our history. The interstate highway system was developed and put in place in 1956, and who would have thought when we entered the 21st century that the Congress of the United States would fail to keep that system in top condition?

The transportation bill affects Americans in every State of this country. A robust Federal investment in transportation is an economic engine, strengthening hundreds of communities. The thing that I have said often in my district and, frankly, in hearings is that the best stimulus for the economy—the very best stimulus—is a transportation bill. The weird thing is that the infrastructure is the backbone of our economy upon which businesses, families, and communities thrive. Everyone is involved in this. Red or blue, urban or rural, we all rely on transportation and infrastructure. Ensuring economic prosperity is of paramount importance. It is not a Republican or a Democratic goal but one that we all share.

One of the things that has troubled me most since being elected to Congress 10 years ago is that we have somehow narrowed everything down to the point at which it is either red or blue—it is either Republican or Democratic. I am not sure how we can look at highway systems in terms of political tribalism. I served as the mayor of Kansas City for 8 years during the 1990s, and I can truthfully say that I had no idea on a day-to-day basis, based on what people said and did, who the Republicans were and who the Democrats were. We were all interested in trying to preserve Kansas City. When there was a pothole in one of the streets in Kansas City—and Kansas City is a huge city. It's 322 square miles. To give you an idea, you can put San Francisco inside our city limits 30 times or St. Louis three times. It is a huge city—what we all were interested in is making sure that it was fixed because there was no Republican way of fixing it, and there was no Democratic way of fixing it. We fixed the pothole. One of my great disappointments when I arrived here was that there was a Republican or a Democratic philosophy on everything, including on transportation and infrastructure.

Every dollar invested in Missouri transportation generates \$4 of economic activity. The Federal Highway Administration actually estimates that, for every \$1 billion spent on transportation, 34,000 direct and indirect jobs are created. Just think about that. There are 34,000 indirect and direct jobs that are generated. That is why I take every opportunity I can to talk about infrastructure and improvements to our roads and bridges and wa-

terways in my district and in districts around the country.

Investments in transportation and infrastructure generate growth and jobs during initial design, construction, and then postconstruction. I can tell you that, at a time like this when we are still having some healing needed with our economy, this is the time to pump it up. We don't need QE4. We don't need to do another Dodd-Frank. We need to pass a transportation and infrastructure bill. That will begin to help heal this economy because it is a job creator.

According to the American Society of Civil Engineers' 2013 report card—and I hope the people at home get this—3,500 bridges in Missouri alone are considered structurally deficient. There are 3,500 bridges in my State that are considered structurally deficient.

□ 2100

Over 3,300 are considered functionally obsolete. That is 14 percent of the bridges in the State of Missouri are functionally obsolete, and every day, Kansas Cityans and Missourians are driving over those bridges.

That is a tragedy because it is not only bad in Missouri, it is that way all over this country—all over the country, and this body is the only body that can address the problem.

While I agree that States should step up to raise the necessary revenues and make crucial investments themselves, it should be no surprise that interstate commerce is a duty in which this Congress is uniquely poised to fulfill.

We are a nation of red States and blue States, urban communities and rural communities. I represent both. While each State must make investments within the communities, the responsibility to ensure our Nation remains connected and globally competitive falls on this Congress.

Bridge after bridge after bridge is in danger. Highways are crumbling, and we cannot sit by and play partisan politics and argue while our infrastructure continues to deteriorate.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am here tonight, hoping that these words are not falling on the floor and will not be impactful. When we come in here like this, we are hoping that these words matter and that things can change and that they will change.

It is my hope that this Congress will act and act quickly because we cannot wait until the last minute, going into August, when we will end up looking at a highway trust fund becoming insolvent, and that means it will drop below the \$4 billion funding level as soon as next month, July. We must do something, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to thank Mr. BLUMENAUER for all the work that he has done on this issue over the years, and I hope that the American people will just saturate us with letters telling us: Pass a highway and transportation infrastructure bill.