

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.

Thank you, Mr. BLUMENAUER.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you very much, Congressman CLEAVER. I appreciate your painting a very powerful picture, taking it home, as an example, and the work that you have done, both in Congress and as a local leader, a mayor, a member of the city council.

You understand this. You understand that the infrastructure in Kansas City, Missouri, used to be a point of pride. It was something that brought people together, but that is not unique to your community or mine.

Infrastructure used to be a point of pride that united Americans across this great Nation. 152 years ago, the Transcontinental Railroad under, I might say, a Republican President—President Lincoln—helped us be able to develop the United States.

It tied the country together. It helped in terms of the opening up of the west, and the United States from that point, until the end of World War II, had the finest passenger rail system in the world—not there anymore.

As was referenced, under the leadership, signed into law by President Eisenhower, there was a bipartisan initiative, a Democratically-controlled Congress, a Republican President, who initiated the interstate highway system.

The United States, over the course of a quarter century, had the largest public works project in our history to that point. It was in every State in the Union. It created more economic value than it cost, and it was a point of pride to have the finest road system in the world.

Similarly, we have made great advancements in our history dealing with water and sewage systems.

The simple fact is, as was referenced by both my colleagues already this evening, the United States is falling behind. We are no longer rated number one in the world. The last survey I saw put us at 14th and falling.

We are investing the smallest amount of percentage of our economy as we have in 20 years—less than 2 percent—and far less than our competitors in China, in Europe, Japan, India.

The United States is in trouble. Unless and until we are able to get our act together to be able to protect, maintain, and enhance our infrastructure, we are not going to be able to meet the needs of the American people, and in fact, we are going to lose our competitive position around the world.

On top of this, we are in the midst of a funding crisis for our infrastructure, and this could not come at a worse time.

As both my colleagues indicated, investing in infrastructure is one of the best ways to create family-wage jobs. The estimates are between 25,000 and over 30,000 jobs for each billion dollars that is invested.

The most recent report I saw from Standard & Poor's said, for \$1.3 billion, it is 29,000 jobs.

That investment would actually lower the deficit \$200 million, and it

would increase overall economic activity in the United States a third more than the \$1.3 billion invested. The \$1.3 billion gives you, overall, \$2 billion rippling through the economy.

While we are slowly falling apart, while we are struggling with a jobless recovery, and how we could desperately use these family-wage jobs that will be created in every State in the Union, there is also ongoing damage to individuals. They don't have to be on a bridge that collapsed.

AAA tells us—and that is the pre-eminent organization nationally that represents motorists—they have followed this very closely. Their estimate is that the average motorist incurs \$323 a year of damage to their cars because of inadequately maintained roads, so it is not just that they are not getting the service.

It is not just that they are trapped in congestion. It is actually costing them money every month, in terms of damage to what, for most Americans, is their second or third most valuable asset.

Last Congress gave up on a 6-year reauthorization. They just couldn't do it. They walked around it, but they couldn't deal with the funding question, so they settled for a short-term, 27-month extension that expires in 98 days. September 30, it is over, but the money in the transportation trust fund will not last nearly that long.

My colleague mentioned that, next month or so, we are going to drop below the trust fund balance that the Department of Transportation tells us is necessary to be able to manage the hundreds and hundreds of contracts all across the country that are part of the unique Federal-State-local partnership.

They can't take the trust fund down to zero, so they are going to start cutting back this summer, and because our partners around the country in State and local government understand what is happening, they are starting to cut back now.

More than eight States are already signaling what they are going to have to forego this summer, so we have got a summer slowdown, and it is only going to get worse, and Congress, in the meantime, spins its wheels.

It is hard to be meaningful in efforts to reauthorize the surface transportation bill, which is on the verge of expiring, if you don't even know what your resources are.

We have no idea what the resources are that are available to the House Transportation Committee and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works because we haven't established how we are going to pay for it.

Now, we have heard gimmicks from our Republican friends. You know, last Congress, their solution was to take away all the guaranteed funding for transit and for transportation enhancements.

The enhancements, by the way, are the most popular program that the De-

partment of Transportation administrators. They were going to take away that guaranteed funding.

I find that somewhat ironic because that guaranteed funding came from Ronald Reagan. In the Reagan administration, they decided that they were going to have 20 percent in the transit account and 80 percent in the highway account, so you wouldn't have uncertainty. You wouldn't have people battling every year, year in and year out, about going forward on major projects.

Most important, if you are going to deal with major transit and highway projects, you need certainty; and President Reagan and his administration, in their wisdom, promoted a program that established the highway trust fund and had a separate account for transit.

Well, last Congress, the gimmick was: we will just strip away all that guaranteed funding, and we will have some theoretical money to keep the transportation program afloat.

It blew up in their face. They were able to get it through the Ways and Means Committee on a party line vote, by the way, never having a hearing on it, just moved to a work session, and it was roundly attacked.

Groups, truckers, business, environmental groups, local governments, transit, the entire infrastructure community rose up in rebellion against this goofy idea that was not going to deal with the fully funding needs, and it was going to pit people against one another.

The outrage was so strong that our Republican friends couldn't even bring their own bill to the floor, and it collapsed, and we were ending up with this 27-month gimmick.

It was funded by simply draining every dollar out of the highway trust fund, and in so doing, they thought they could maybe last for 27 months. Well, as we are finding out, they can't.

The next gimmick that we are hearing about—and I love this one—it is fascinating. Our Republican friends have required the post office, unlike any other agency—or near as I can tell, any business—to prefund the health insurance of future employees, so they are charging the post office an extra \$5 billion a year for employees that aren't even on the payroll, let alone their retirement in the future.

So the post office has some challenges in terms of different patterns, in terms of this prefunding obligation, shifting use of the post office, and the refusal of some in Congress to allow the post office to operate like a business, so it has got a funding crisis.

The Republican alternative is to take a post office that has a funding crisis—it is a real one, it was artificially created, but it is a real crisis—and to eliminate Saturday mail delivery for 10 years and take these theoretical savings by eliminating Saturday home service and use these theoretical savings from an agency that they claim is going bankrupt, and they are actually trying to make go bankrupt, and use it

for another bankrupt institution—that is the highway trust fund.

Ludicrous—10 years' savings of eliminating home delivery, which are theoretical, no sense at all that they are going to materialize, but for 10 years—and it would just produce enough money to get us into the next fiscal year, and leave the post office worse off than it is now.

Luckily, I think our friends on the other side of the aisle have realized that is not a solution, and I think they have dropped that, realizing it is not going to go anywhere.

There are actual proposals that would meet this challenge. I have got legislation that has been endorsed by the AFL-CIO, by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, by both the truckers and AAA, the contractors, engineers, local government, transit, to just—straight up—deal with the fact that we haven't raised the gas tax for 21 years—pretty straightforward. It works.

□ 2115

My colleague, PETER DEFazio from Oregon, a senior member on the Transportation Committee, has proposed looking at a barrel tax for oil and makes a strong case that this would have significant advantages and would allow us to go forward.

You know, I don't care what solution we come up with. There are a number of good ideas. Last week, Senator MURPHY of Connecticut and Senator CORKER of Tennessee came up with a proposal in the Senate that they thought would provide those resources.

What is interesting is that the House has been AWOL on this. We have not had a single hearing in Ways and Means this year, last year, the year before that, or the year before that. It has been 42 months since the Republicans took over. We haven't had a single hearing on transportation finance. I find that shocking. I find it embarrassing as a member of the committee and as a Member of the House of Representatives. As an American, I find it shameful that we are not doing our part.

Luckily, the other body is moving. My friend and colleague, Senator RON WYDEN of Oregon, the chair of the Senate Finance Committee, is moving ahead with some alternatives that would help keep the trust fund afloat so that we can avoid the summer shutdown and we don't have to stop the programs and put these people out of work. It will give us breathing room so that the people in the House can step up and do our job.

Mr. Speaker, every single Democrat on the House Ways and Means Committee requested the Republican leadership—months ago—to at least give us a hearing. You don't have to buy into any solution, but let's come together, look at the problem, and hear solutions from the Americans who are dealing with it. Let's hear from the Governors. Let's hear from the transit agencies, from the State transportation commis-

sions, highway departments. Let's hear from the men and women who work in the maintenance and construction of our infrastructure—the bridges, the roads, the transit. Let's hear from the engineers, the truckers, the representatives of the automobiles. They have got some strong opinions. They have potential solutions. They have done research that the committee should hear about, that every Member of Congress should hear about.

Sadly, as the clock winds down, as we look at the summer shutdown and the pending bankruptcy of the highway trust fund, the House is frozen in place. Time is slipping away. We have just a few dozen legislative days before the House is scheduled to adjourn for the election, and we have not one thing on the agenda to deal with this.

I hope that my Republican colleagues on the Ways and Means Committee will join us in at least having a hearing, listening to alternatives, working together to analyze the pros and cons of the various approaches going forward. I hope that every Republican and every Democrat makes a commitment that we are not going to adjourn for the year until we provide the American people, the businesses and communities that depend on it, a robust, well-funded, stable highway transportation trust fund with dedicated funding. That was the key to President Eisenhower and the success of the interstate freeway system. That has helped us with aviation. It has made a difference in terms of transit.

The American people deserve no less than us our doing our job—robust funding, stable funding, dedicated funding that will allow American communities to have the partnership of the Federal Government that they need for the infrastructure they deserve. I strongly urge my colleagues to reflect on this, and I hope each American makes clear their desires and their expectations about how Congress meets this responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak this evening, and I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. FITZPATRICK (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of travel delays.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for June 24 after 5 p.m., June 25 and June 26 on account of a family emergency.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 316. An act to reinstate and transfer certain hydroelectric licenses and extend the deadline for commencement of construction of certain hydroelectric projects.

SENATE ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to enrolled bills of the Senate of the following titles:

S. 1044. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to install in the area of the World War II Memorial in the District of Columbia a suitable plaque or an inscription with the word that President Franklin D. Roosevelt prayed with the United States on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

S. 2086. An act to address current emergency shortages of propane and other home heating fuels and to provide greater flexibility and information for Governors to address such emergencies in the future.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 19 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, June 25, 2014, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

6114. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting Biennial Core Report to Congress, pursuant to Public Law 112-81, section 2464(B)(e) (125 Stat. 1368); to the Committee on Armed Services.

6115. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter notifying that the Department intends to assign women to previously closed positions in the Marine Corps; to the Committee on Armed Services.

6116. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting authorization of 14 officers to wear the authorized insignia of the grade of rear admiral (lower half); to the Committee on Armed Services.

6117. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's report on the amount of purchases from foreign entities in FY 2013; to the Committee on Armed Services.

6118. A letter from the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Paying Benefits received June 9, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

6119. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishing a List of Qualifying Pathogens Under the Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act [Docket No.: FDA-2012-N-1037] (RIN: 0910-AG92) received June 9, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6120. A letter from the Director, Office of Government Relations, Corporation for National Community Service, transmitting the Corporation's semiannual report from the office of the Inspector General for the period October 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.